

Compassionate Imagery

Being able to use a compassionate image is central to Compassion Focused Therapy. We need to create and build an imaginary idea of compassion. It is best to use an object or idea that is NOT a REAL person. This is important, as nobody is perfect.

Whatever image you choose, it needs to have specific compassionate qualities and be: wise, understanding, kind, all-knowing, forgiving and totally accepting (of you, your past etc).

If you can only think about a real person, then **change** that person to look and become the **best** version of them, with those perfect qualities of compassion.

Start by just slowing down, and thinking about your breathing. Slow down your breathing a little and notice the rhythm of your breathing.

Notice what images come up and if you can use one of them. Build the image by thinking about:

What would they look like? Human, animal, light, nature? Single or a compassionate team?

What would they look at you if they were wise, understanding, kind and accepting?

What expression would they have as they looked at you with wisdom, understanding, compassion and acceptance?

How else would you like them to look?

How would they communicate with you?

What voice would you give them?

What would their voice sound like for them to sound wise, understanding, kind and accepting?

What colour do you associate with wisdom, understanding, compassion and acceptance?

How else would they communicate or interact with you?

What does your compassionate image want you to know? What words are they saying?

What do you feel as you spend time with your compassionate image? What do you notice?

Know that your compassionate image is yours and yours alone, is in your mind and therefore is there for you at all times.