

Instructions for Imagery Rescripting

Eckhard Roediger (taken from “Contextual Schema Therapy” published by New Harbinger)

This Imagery in the first part connects the clients with the underlying schemas fueling the present mode states. After the perspective changes and releasing functional emotions in the rescripting phase clients learn to impeach defeating people and care for their vulnerable self.

1. Enter the current scene: *Bring up an image of the situation you want to work with. What do you see? What do you hear? Is there anything you smell or taste? How does your body feel? What are your feelings now? [If there are other people in the image, ask] What do the people around you do? Now let the image start to move. Do your feelings get more intense? Go over the most intense part again in slow motion. What do you feel in your chest and your stomach?*

2. Float back: *Let the image fade, stay in touch with these feelings, and drift back in time to your adolescence or childhood. What pictures come to mind? Our mind always has images, which is why we dream in images while sleeping. What picture comes up right now? Tell me without trying to analyze anything! [Don't forget to continue repeating these sentences in a trance-inducing way to keep the client in touch with the feeling and prevent them from flipping back to cognitive processing]*

3. Let a childhood scene appear in the client's mind, guided by the emotions: *What scene are you in? What do you see? Give me some details. Let the emotions come. Everything is on hold right now. You have the remote control in your hand. So nothing happens! You have full control. What do you feel? What do you need right now?*

4. Change perspective: *Can you picture yourself entering the scene as the adult you are now? [We recommend entering the scene as the therapist and watching the scene side by side] What do you feel now, as an adult, coming in and watching the scene? What do you feel now, seeing how the child suffered? How does that resonate in your body? [If the client remains blocked, use the extension or substitution technique, act as a role model, or go backstage to assess the client's Inner Critic mode beliefs blocking the constructive emotions.]*

5. Reappraise the scene and choose sides: [Look at the effects of the caregiver's behavior on the child. Do not judge the caregiver. However, disregard the caregiver's intentions and reveal this person's self-centeredness. Let the client choose sides.]

6. Impeach the significant others (if constructive anger is sufficiently activated. Make the client physically stronger, if necessary): *What do you want to say or do now, making use of the power of your constructive anger?* [Leave the significant others in the care of somebody else.] *How do you feel now?*

7. Care for the child: *Looking at the child now. What do you feel now?* [Be aware whether the client is feeling some compassion for the child. If not, ask for interfering critic mode beliefs: *What does the voice in your head say right now?*] *What do you want to say or do now to care for the child? How does the child react? What do you see in the child's eyes? What else does the child need?* [Eventually, let the client take the child's role.] *How do you feel now, at the end of this exercise. How about your feelings? Can you feel any difference?* [Exit via safe place imagery or by going back to the initial scene.]

8. Return to the current scene: *Now very slowly bring up the image of what you first talked about. Bring it up slowly enough that you can stay in touch with your current emotions.*

9. Find an adaptive solution: *Now that you're again in the scene we started with, what would you like to say or do to bring about a better result? Can you see yourself doing that? How do the other people react? Can you try something else?*

10. Discriminate and extract a take-home message: [Once the scene comes to an end, ask] *How do you feel? If you compare your feelings now with your initial feelings, is there a difference? If you were to try to say, in one sentence, what you learned from this experience, what would be the take-home message?* [Count back from ten to one, and let client open his or her eyes.]