

# 5 Identifying your oases and your safe space



If you are working through *The Warrior Within*, these two exercises and further useful information to help you in your recovery can be found on pages 15-16. These two exercises assume you have completed exercise sheets **1 Starting an activity journal** and **4 Creating a 'mood box' or 'mood basket'**.

Two other powerful sources to help you regulate your mood are having an oasis and safe place to which you can go to when you feel overwhelmed. These will be activities or places that will ground and soothe you.

## Identifying your oases

In your journal make a list of activities, people or places that are associated with pleasure and which have a calming and soothing effect on you. You might also include some that you find uplifting and invigorating and which restore a sense of well-being. These will form the basis of your oases and safe place. You can collect images of these and put them into your mood basket to use as required.

Your oases could include activities that help you to relax such as having a warm bath, massage, meditation, sitting in the sunshine in the park,

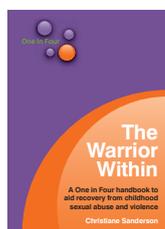
reading, watching a film, listening to music, going to a concert, or watching or playing sport.

Alongside this you could identify a grounding position which is comforting such as curling up, squatting or lying down with a favourite blanket. You may find it uncomfortable to relax and so prefer invigorating activities that are a source of pleasure such as swimming, exercising, playing sports, dancing, singing, going for a walk or running.

Once you have listed these, identify those that you could easily integrate into your life and make a commitment to engage in these activities regularly so that they become an established part of your daily life.

## Finding your safe place

Next think of a safe place, past or present, which has been, is or could be, a site of protection. If there has never been a safe place in your life, then try to imagine one. Whether real or imagined, it is helpful to associate as many sensory cues as you can to this safe place – the smells, the sounds, the feel, the sights and the taste. In writing down as many things associated with this safe place you will be able to enter it whenever you need to.



The content of this exercise sheet is based on *The Warrior Within: A One in Four handbook to aid recovery from childhood sexual abuse and violence* by Christiane Sanderson

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