Imagery based Mindfulness Exercises

*Waves:* This is best done lying on your back in a comfortable position. Begin with belly breathing. With each inhale imagine a wave cresting just above your belly button, and with each exhale imagine the wave crashing out in every direction, washing away tension from every muscle in your body.

*Colors:* Think of a color that is soothing to you. Imagine that with each inhale you are breathing in air that is rich with that color. With each exhale the air you breathe out is a little lighter. The rich soothing color fills your whole body, getting deeper and richer with each breath.

*Sponge:* Imagine that your body is a sponge and you are sitting or lying in a pool of very warm or hot water. With each inhale your body soaks up some of the warm water, and with each exhale the warm water saturates your body-sponge. As you continue you body becomes warmer and warmer, as well as softer and softer.

*Countdown in the sand:* Imagine yourself sitting or lying on the beach in the sand. With your non-writing hand smooth a small area of sand in front of you. With your writing hand write the number 10 in the sand. With your non-writing hand smooth the sand over, and with your writing hand write the number 9. Continue smoothing the sand over and writing numbers in reverse order until you reach 0. Vary by starting with any number you wish.

*Under the waves*: Imagine that you are a pebble and you have been dropped in the ocean. The waves may be stormy or calm on the surface of the ocean, and you pass through them. As you sink lower and lower you notice that the water becomes more and more still and calm. Look up and notice the waves and weather on the surface of the ocean, while remaining in the calm and still place deeper down in the water.

*Firefly*: Begin with belly breathing. With each inhale imagine that you’re bringing light and energy into your body. With each exhale imagine the light and energy flowing out through every pore of your skin. Imagine your body creating a rhythmic glowing, like a firefly.

*Balloon:* Begin with belly breathing. Imagine that each inhale fills your body with a little more air, as if you were blowing up a balloon. First fill your chest and torso, then your arms, then your legs, and finally your head. Imagine the air filling your body from the top of your head, all the way to your fingertips, and all the way to your toes.

*Appreciation/Heart coherence:* Begin with belly breathing. Imagine that your breath is massaging your heart with each inhale and exhale. Think of something you appreciate or otherwise bring a positive emotion to mind. Focus this positive feeling right on your heart, and imagine your breath massaging it into your heart with each inhale and exhale. (Adapted from HeartMath Quick Coherence Technique)