

# HELPING HANDS

When a part of us feels upset, we can help it feel safe or soothed by bringing forward another internal Resource that knows how to nurture, protect or comfort. A 'Helper' or 'Nurturer' can offer reassurance. The upset part doesn't need to be fixed. It just needs to know that inside it is safe and cared for. During every day life, you can use this to create an experience that you may not otherwise be able to access or may not have been provided in the past. If you don't have a strong visual imagination, try drawing or writing out the prompts. This exercise was inspired by Emmerson (2014) Forest Imagery Exercise.

## STEP 1: MEET YOUR HELPING PART

Bring to mind a part of you, or a memory, where you felt calm, safe or kind. Spend a few moments connecting with that feeling or memory, in as much detail as possible. It may be a time you have provided nurture or love to a child, loved one, colleague, or stranger. Notice how this Resource is already part of you.

If you do not have a memory of a time you have done this- imagine a loved one or small child is distressed, or a frightened animal, and they are in front of you right now. What would you do to reassure or comfort them?

Notice how this instinct and knowing is already part of you.

Look down at your hands- these helping hands. Notice these are the hands of this kind, reassuring, compassionate Resource. Practice with this imagery until you have a connection to these 'helping hands'

## STEP 2: ASSURE SAFETY AND SUPPORT

Next time you are feeling upset, distressed, alone, or rejected, bring up the image of these Helping Hands. Let the upset part know that it is safe and held, that it can release what was upsetting, and that it will be supported and nurtured.

You might imagine the nurturing part gently saying to the upset part, 'You are safe now. You can rest. You are not alone.'

## STEP 3: ENCOURAGE UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE

Encourage the nurturing Resource to express unconditional love and acceptance. Let that sense of care and warmth move through your body, like a light or a calm wave. This is your own capacity to love and comfort yourself. It belongs to you.

