

Finally, Sam decided to talk with his parents.



However, if an emotion is taking over and stopping us from doing what we need to (like getting to sleep), it can be helpful to try and feel better by using strategies such as the imaginary relaxing place. In addition to asking a child to imagine their relaxing or happy place, we also like to ask the child to draw a picture of their imaginary place. As suggested in *Sam and the Imaginary Relaxing Place*, parents can be a wonderful support in helping their child to process and respond to challenging emotions. We do hope that you find this strategy helpful but we also recognise that we are all individuals, hence the same approach won't work for all.



Sam's Dad invited Sam to get comfortable and close his eyes. He then asked Sam what he could see when he went swimming. Next, Sam's Dad asked him what he could hear. Then he asked what Sam could feel when he was swimming. And smell. Finally, Sam's Dad asked him what taste when he went swimming.

Sam's Mum then asked if Sam had a relaxing place he liked to go? Or somewhere that made him feel happy? She said that it didn't have to be a real place - Clara likes to imagine Chocolateland where everything is made of chocolate! This made Sam laugh. After some thought, Sam said that he loves to go swimming.



I am terrible at maths.

Maths is too hard.

Everyone will make fun of me.

What if I do really bad on the test?

I'm so stupid!

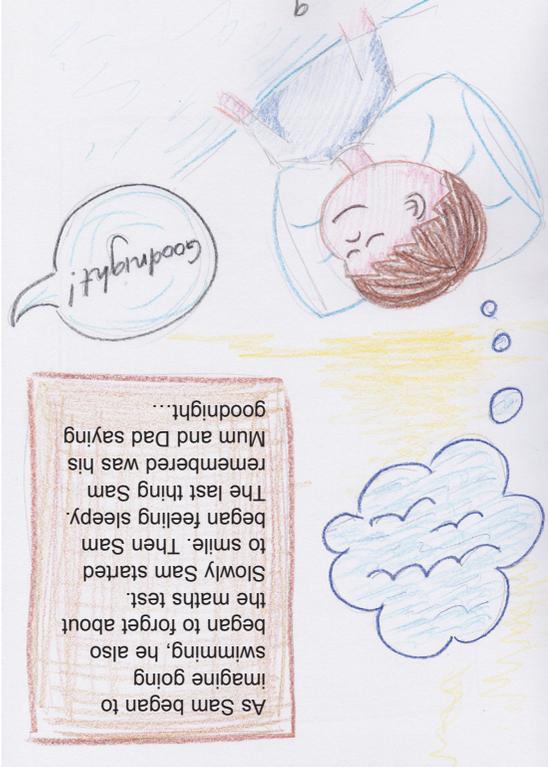
Then, what if everyone finds out how bad I did?

Sam and the Imaginary Relaxing Place





Sam's Dad asked if he had tried using his imagination? Sam's Dad explained. He loves to go bushwalking and finds it very relaxing. But he can't just go bushwalking whenever he feels worried. Instead, Sam's Dad closes his eyes and uses his imagination to pretend he's bushwalking.



As Sam began to imagine going swimming, he also began to forget about the maths test. Slowly Sam started to smile. Then Sam began feeling sleepy. The last thing Sam remembered was his Mum and Dad saying goodnight...

Notes for parents, counsellors and other adopters of the book
 The story of Sam and the *Imaginary Relaxing Place* is based on an adaptation of the book 'Journey' introduced in the book *Counselling Children* by Kathryn Geldard, David Geldard and Rebecca Yin Foo. While in the story Sam uses the imaginary relaxing place to help stop his worries, imagining a relaxing or happy place can also be useful when experiencing other emotions, such as anger or sadness. When talking with children about their emotions, it is important to highlight that we all feel different ways at different times and that is ok. Often, if we simply sit with and experience our emotions, they will pass.



Sam's Mum said that everyone worries sometimes - even she can't sleep sometimes because of worrying!



Sam couldn't sleep. He was just too worried!



At school today his teacher said that there was going to be a really important maths test tomorrow. Sam just couldn't stop worrying about the test.