



## Creativity and Imagination Exercise

Think of the phobia or situation that makes you panic or dissociate. We are going to turn the incident or fear into an image or a metaphorical experience. This allows us to learn new information about the fear and emotions associated with the event. It can also allow you to have more control over the experience and your reaction to it.

When we have a phobia or a trauma, often times our surroundings do not merit the feelings that we have. When you design your image or metaphor in this exercise, think about the scenarios that *would* merit your feelings. Think about the way that you are feeling about the world and try to make a “picture” or metaphor of that feeling.

1. Think of the incident or fear that you have. How does it feel when you revisit it. What are you afraid will happen?
2. What happens in your body when you think of the fear or phobia?
3. What are the other times or situations in your life that you have felt this same feeling?
4. Think of what it *feels* like is going to happen to you in the situation. Eg. is everyone in a crowd going to laugh at you? Is an unseen tiger stalking you and waiting to pounce? Does it feel like there is a time bomb or you are playing russian roulette?
5. Take this image and think of details that could embellish the image to make the situation more similar to the way you feel. Add these details into the narrative of the metaphor. Eg. Are you all alone on a desert island? Are all the people watching you secretly aliens or spies? Is a tiger stalking you through a Jungle?
6. Think of yourself in this image. Change yourself into something that is more fitting to the way you feel. Are you a mouse in a field? A child peeking out of a closet? Are you a bird in a storm? Are you a pearl in an oyster?
7. What is the setting of the image? Jungle, Boat, House, Space?

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What is the final image that you have created about your fear or phobia?

Draw the image or metaphor that you have made below. If you need more space draw on the back of this paper. Don't be embarrassed, you don't have to be an artist. Draw stick figures if you want. The important thing is that you get the image onto the paper.



Write eight descriptive words around the image that you have drawn to help bring it to life. Eg. dark, scary, happy, mean, etc.

What are the main themes that are going on in the image or metaphor that you have made. Think about it like a dream or story. What are the archetypes? What are the tropes?

Do you recognize any of the elements from this metaphor in other parts of your life? Do you recognize them from fiction or other stories?

Is there anything that you learn about the experience when thinking about it as an imagined archetype?