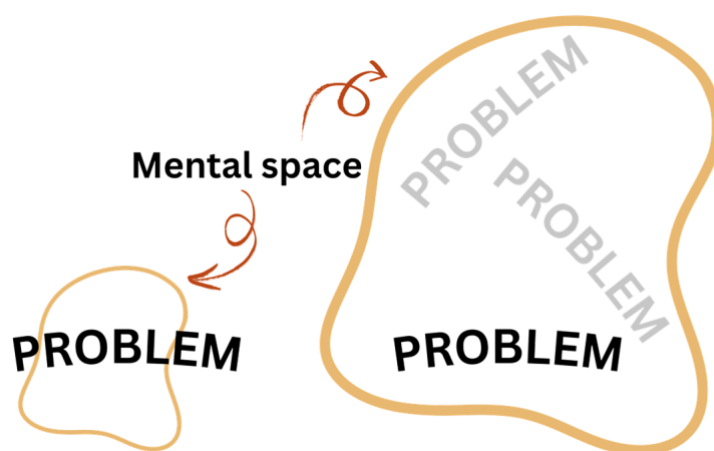


Expanding Mental Space for New Knowledge

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Antonieta Contreras



Introduction

The mind can only hold so much at once. When it's crowded, confused, or overwhelmed, the felt sense is one of compression: not enough room for what's actually there.

This exercise uses imagination deliberately to expand that room. It simply builds more space around it. Scene construction, interoceptive awareness, working memory, and the capacity to observe content from a slight distance all activate together, producing a state that is calmer, wider, and less crowded than the one the person walked in with.

This is a resourcing exercise. Its effect isn't insight. It's capacity.

What This Exercise Is About

This exercise develops the ability to hold more than one thing in mind at once, a thought, a feeling, a perspective, without needing to merge them, resolve them, or feel overwhelmed by them. It works by activating imagination-based scene construction

alongside interoceptive and observing-self capacities, producing a genuine expansion of available mental space rather than a technique for managing a specific problem.

It's useful whenever a person feels mentally crowded, foggy, or overwhelmed, before difficult material, before complex decisions, or simply as a way to restore working capacity when the system feels compressed.

Before you Begin

Find a comfortable position, either seated or lying down. Take a moment to notice where you are: the room, the chair, your body. Now, you may prefer to close your eyes to shift your attention to what you brought into this room today, conceptually. Maybe a problem. Your mood. Your tiredness. You don't need to examine or evaluate any of it. Just notice that it's there. It has weight, maybe shape. It certainly takes up space in your mind.

Step 1: Create the Room

Now, imagine your mind as a room. It doesn't need to be a room you know. Just a room that belongs to this moment. Take a minute to picture it.

Once you have it, notice its size.

Now, begin to expand it. Make it larger.... brighter.... quieter.... Much more spacious than you might initially imagined.

Take your time with this. There is no correct size. Just keep expanding it little by little until the room feels open enough. Until it has more space than you need.

Step 2: Place What You Know

When the room feels spacious enough, take what you brought with you today: your training, your framework, your clinical knowledge, memories, purpose, or something else. Choose one and place it somewhere in the room. Go one by one, and place them in the room. They can be objects, shapes, words. They could be solid, liquid, shapeless. Whatever form feels natural to you. Notice each one there. Present. They simply occupy a place in the room.

If there is no space for them, keep expanding the room until they can fit and there is more space for something else.

Step 3: Notice the Space

Now look around this mental room. Notice what surrounds what you placed there. Space. Light. Silence. Room for something else to enter without displacing what is already there. Sit with that for a moment. The space in between is not empty space. It is actually full of availability, full of opportunities for something new.

Step 4: Rest in the Space

There's no need to invite anything else in unless something naturally arrives. Simply stay with the room as it is now, spacious, open, holding what you placed there without being crowded by it.

If something new does arise on its own, a thought, a feeling, a shift, let it be present too, without needing to examine or resolve it. If nothing arrives, that's complete as it is. The expansion itself is the point.

Step 5: Return

When you are ready, let the image of the room gently fade while keeping the sensation of expansiveness. Take a breath. Notice your body in the chair. When you feel ready, open your eyes.

Reflection

Take a moment with these questions before finishing. You can reflect by yourself or with someone else:

- ☐ What did you place in the room? What form did it take?
- ☐ Was there any difficulty making space? If so, where did you feel it?
- ☐ What's different in your body or mind right now, compared to before you began?
- ☐ How might you use this the next time you feel crowded, foggy, or overwhelmed?

Variations

For general use: Use whenever the mind feels crowded, foggy, or overwhelmed: too many demands, too much noise, no clear sense of where to start. The room doesn't need anything placed in it with intention; whatever is already crowding the mind can simply be acknowledged and given space, without needing to be worked through.

For clinical use with clients: The content placed in the room can be a difficult feeling, a persistent worry, or an experience that feels too large to hold. The exercise doesn't resolve or reframe it. It simply gives the system more room to hold it without being overwhelmed.

For supervision: Use before or after a difficult session, when a clinician feels depleted, crowded by a client's material, or unable to think clearly. The exercise restores working capacity rather than solving the specific difficulty.

For personal practice: Use anytime the mind feels compressed, too much to think about, too little space to breathe. The goal is making room.