

# Relaxation and Visualization Exercises



## Setup

It's best to lie flat on your back on the floor. If the situation does not allow that, sit up straight in your chair. The point is to have as much of the body supported by the floor or chair as possible. In the lying position have arms at your sides. No body parts should be resting on other body parts (no crossing your ankles).

If elders have too much trouble on the floor, they can sit in a chair nice and straight with the back firmly against the chair back, feet flat on floor and arms resting in lap.

If lower back is too tight and this causes pain, the knees can be bent and feet scooted toward your bottom.

This is a serious exercise. If youth will be tempted to goof off by being next to a friend move them apart now. No one should be in contact with any part of another's body.

Gently close your eyes and keep them closed until we finish. Awareness is often equated with our five senses, but it is so much more. These five senses are our main sources of information. Most of us rely on our sense of sight as our number one source of awareness and information, probably more than the rest combined. So we want to shut it down as much as possible so you will be conscious of the other types of awareness.

As you lie on the floor your body should be balanced, meaning if you drew a line down the center of your body from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet you should have a left and right half that are the mirror image of one another. The arms and hands are the same distance from the hips, feet same distance from that center line, nose pointed straight up at the ceiling.

Clothes should be comfortable, not tight.

The room should be quiet and warm, with lights dimmed. All should participate so no one feels watched.

As your body relaxes you may feel unbalanced, so feel free to read just your body (you may even feel your body twitch and jerk as your muscles let go).

You will not be successful at this activity if you "try real hard." Just relax, listen to my voice, follow my directions and just let go. You are safe.



## Standard Introduction

Calm yourself... Bring all the day's thoughts, experiences, events and concerns before you, and with the exhalations of the next few breaths,...allow them to pass/leave your mind.

If any thoughts come to you...if you begin to carry on internal discussions or become involved with a fantasy, thinking about things other than what's going on right here, right now...just relax and let them pass over and through you...Don't hold on to them...but don't reject them too strongly either...Just allow them to come and go...Don't evaluate them, and don't judge yourself for having them...If you lose your focus, gently return to your breathing and then my voice. (Allow longer pause, about a minute, for wiggling, getting set and getting used to the exercise).





## Standard Ending

Now, with the control you have over your own awareness and attention, please focus just on the inhalations of your breaths...These inhalations are a natural mechanism for energizing and invigorating your being... Please take a very slow, controlled, deep, deep inhalation... and then let it out again very slowly, very controlled and very completely...(Allow a longer pause here to allow a few breath cycles to pass so all can start together again.)

Now, let's take a second deep, deep, even deeper inhalation . . . and again let it out very slowly, very controlled, and very completely... (again longer pause). And finally, let's take a third deep, deep, even deeper inhalation... and let it out very slowly, very controlled, very completely, and open your eyes and get ready to come back to your normal state of awareness or consciousness.

Please DO NOT try to get up quickly! When you're ready, roll onto your side for a moment—do not do a sit-up—when ready move to a seated position, then after a bit you can get up and go about your day.

