

14 Practice Relaxation and Imaging Techniques

TRANSITION OBJECTIVE

Students will learn to apply relaxation and positive imaging techniques to visualize themselves as successful.

RELEVANCE TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

Relaxation and positive imaging are effective tools for changing behavior and reaching desired outcomes. Relaxation and imaging also allow the use of creativity.

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

❑ STEP 1: Update Journal

In the future I see myself doing . . .

❑ STEP 2: Convene Roundtable

"If I were a powerful animal, I would be a _____."

❑ STEP 3: Advance Organizer

"Today you will practice relaxation and imaging skills that you can use to see yourself as successful in the future."

42



PERSONAL MANAGEMENT: Unit 1
LESSON 14

Power Images

Aristotle was an important philosopher. Some people think he may be the smartest man in history. He made the following statement: "Thought is impossible without pictures."

Scientists have discovered that Aristotle was right. We do not think in words. We think in pictures. In fact, Albert Einstein, one of the most important scientists in history, said that his "thoughts were based on images."

For a long time, scientists have ignored the importance of using images. Now, scientists and other professionals, like doctors and sports stars, believe that our thinking can affect our success in life. Using our thoughts to see positive pictures of ourselves can greatly improve our lives.

At small children we used our imaginations when we played. Can you remember some of the imaginary places or people you saw as a child? Some of us have had an imaginary friend. We probably played with GI Joe, Barbie dolls, Legos and Lincoln Logs. While we played, we imagined we were someone else, like Wonder Woman or Superman.

Many of us stopped using our imaginations as we grew older. Our job now is to begin using our imaginations again. Seeing ourselves in a positive way is very powerful. It is a tool we can use to make our lives better in many ways.

Many people have used this tool called imagery. They have found improvements in their memory, thinking and listening skills. They have improved their health, self-esteem, creativity and respect for themselves and others.

It is important to learn how to think in pictures and to practice each day. The first step is to relax and focus on something positive you want to have happen, like passing a test. Next, create a picture and think about what you see, feel, smell, taste and hear.

When you finish thinking and seeing your picture, write or draw about what you saw. Finally, talk about your image to obtain feedback from others.

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42

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT: Appendix A
UNIT 1: LESSON 14

Relaxation & Imagery

Relaxation Exercise
Read this section slowly with a relaxed voice and frequent pauses.
Get into a comfortable position in your chair. Relax your eyes. Close them gently. Begin to take deep breaths and breathe slowly. Think about your breathing. As you breathe take in, then, clear out... breathe out all of your stress and worry. Follow your breathing and notice as your breathe in and out... in and out... in and out. Continue to breathe for one minute in silence. Feel your body relax... Let your mind be quiet and relaxed. As your mind becomes relaxed, realize that it is clear. You are relaxed and clear... Breathe in and out, (wait for one minute). Now think about your feet. Stretch your feet... Wiggle and relax your toes. Turn your ankles in a circle and relax them... Tighten the muscles in your thighs... Now let your legs completely relax. Tighten your stomach. Let it relax slowly. Now notice your lower back... Tighten your upper back... Let your back relax and sink into the back of your chair. Breathe deeply... in and out. Let your chest relax as you take each breath. Relax your arms... Shake a fist, then relax your hand... Let it feel heavy as each finger relaxes. Breathe deeply and let your shoulders relax. Now, relax the back of your neck... Let it feel completely relaxed. Feel your head relax from the back and around the top of your forehead. Starting of your forehead, relax your face... Let your eyes relax, then your nose... Now, let your mouth open slightly as it relaxes... Your whole body is now relaxed... Breathe deeply, in and out... You now are relaxed on alert as we start guided imagery.

Guided Imagery
Power: In this relaxed position, imagine you are a powerful animal. What animal would you like to be. See yourself as this animal. Feel yourself walking as this animal. What do you see around you. Look around of the ground, what

do you see? Look up of the sky, what do you see? Are there trees, buildings, or mountains?

Courage: How see yourself as an animal of great courage. What animal are you? Look at your feet... what do you see? Look around you, what other animals do you see? What does the air feel like where you see? What do you smell? Think about why you have courage. Do you provide protection? Are you a leader? What are you doing right now? Think about courage and what makes a courageous animal. See the respect in the eyes of the other animals as they look at you and recognize your courage.

Caring: Next, see yourself as a cuddly animal. What kind of animal are you? Are you big or small? Are you soft, furry, long, or short? Where do you live? Who like to cuddle you? See yourself being cuddled. Feel how nice it is to be held lovingly. Feel how safe it is to be cared for... Keep this feeling for one minute as you breathe slowly and continue to relax. (wait one minute). Now count to ten with me. At ten, wiggle your fingers and feel alert and relaxed. Begin now, one, two... ten.

Making a Connection
Now think about the three animals you imagined. Which one do you feel most like today? On your paper, draw or write about that animal. Include the surroundings, what you were doing, and the other animals around you.

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A7

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❑ STEP 4: Activity - 20 Minutes

Before reading the story, **Power Images**, have students discuss with a partner the different ways they use their imaginations. Ask students to discuss the following question: "Do you think in words or pictures?" Now have students read the passage, taking turns with their partner. Tell students to skip or guess at words they do not know so that they can keep moving through the passage. After reading, have pairs underline three of the most important ideas in the passage. Ask for volunteers to share their ideas.

❑ STEP 5: Activity - 25 Minutes

Tell students that they will now experience imaging. Explain to the students that each

time they practice imaging, it is important to become relaxed. Follow the directions on the **Relaxation & Imagery** passage. Help students feel at ease and encourage them to take the relaxation and imaging exercise seriously.

Have students work in groups of three to share their animal choices from the imaging experience. Remind students to listen to each other with respect. Ask for volunteers to share their animal choices with the class. Discuss the activity by asking the following questions: "Did you feel uncomfortable at any time?" and "What did you like about the activity?" Call time after three minutes and

ask for several students to share their answers. Review the importance of using one's imagination and thinking in pictures and explain that you will be using this technique throughout the year to build success.

❑ **STEP 6: Evaluate Outcomes**

Imagining the animals made me feel "___."

❑ **STEP 7: Connecting Activity**

Ask students to practice the relaxation exercise one time before the next class. Tell them that they will be required to tell their group about when and where they practiced their relaxation exercise and how it felt.

KEY WORDS

relaxation	imagination	imaging	listening	memory
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MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- Student Handouts: **Power Images**, page 42; **Relaxation & Imagery**, Appendix A, page A7.
- Become familiar with the **Power Images** handout.
- Prepare for imaging activity using the **Relaxation & Imagery** guide in miniature on the first page of this lesson. This imaging technique is based on research by Dr. Lane Waas in her book, *Imagine That!*

SCANS FOUNDATION SKILLS

- Basic Academic Skills: Reading, Writing, Listening
- Thinking Skills: Visualizing
- Personal Qualities: Self-Esteem, Self-Management