

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 fresh, clean air... Breathe out all of your stress and worry. Follow your breathing and notice as you 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 alert. You are relaxed and alert... 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... Make 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 at 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 and 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 at the ground, what

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

Courage: Now 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 are? What do you smell? Think about why you have courage. Do you provide protection? Are you a friend? 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 small? Where do you live? Who likes 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, snap 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.