

Relaxation Exercises

- **Stairway**

Imagine yourself standing on the top of a 10-step stairway, any kind you want. With each breath, count backwards from 10 to 1 as you visualize yourself walking down the stairs, becoming more relaxed with each step.

*Optional: You can continue this exercise by imagining that you have arrived at a special, personal place; then explore this place in your mind.



- **Filling Your Room**

Let your eyes close and relax. Imagine yourself sitting along quietly in an empty room. Notice how you feel. Now imagine adding a person or object that you would especially like to have with you in your room. Observe



how you feel. Now add someone or something else and observe how you feel. Continue adding people and special objects or decorations to your room until you have filled it to your satisfaction. Pay attention to how full, satisfied, and safe you feel.

- **Blackboard Technique**

Sit quietly and take several deep, relaxing breaths. Imagine yourself traveling to a private place where you notice a blackboard. Written on the blackboard are three critical statements that others have made about you in the past. Notice how you feel when you read these. Walk up to the blackboard, erase the statements, and write three positive statements about yourself in response. Notice how you feel when you read them. Take a deep breath and remind yourself that you can make these positive statements to yourself whenever you need to.



Four Fingers

To begin, close your eyes and take several deep and relaxing breaths.

1. Touch your thumb to your index finger. Recall a time when your body felt healthy fatigue, after exhilarating physical activity (e.g. after a race, after a baseball game, etc.).



2. Touch your thumb to your middle finger. Recall a very warm and loving experience.

3. Touch your thumb to your ring finger. Recall accepting the nicest compliment you ever received.



4. Touch your thumb to your little finger. Recall the most beautiful place you have ever seen.