

Guided Visualization Exercise

Preparation: This experience works best in a quiet place without interruption. Take a few minutes to explain to your learner(s) that visualization is the act of using your imagination to create a mental picture or mental motion picture of something you want to do, be, have or experience. During the visualization experience, you give yourself permission to live the experience in your mind as if it were actually happening in the present moment.

Explain that visualization can be thought of as a focused, conscious dreaming process. Athletes visualizing successful outcomes are good examples of how the visualization process has been used for years. Remind your learner that the key ingredients for enjoyable visualizations are:

1. See the event as if it is happening in the present moment.
2. Use rich details of color, location, climate, people present, sounds you hear, etc.
3. Connect with how it feels to be successful in reaching your goal or having what you desire. Tap into that feeling and let it be in your body. Experience the feelings.
4. Accept that you are doing this thing in the now moment and that you deserve the success.
5. Be grateful to yourself for the work you did to make it possible.
6. Be grateful to all those who helped you succeed.

After explaining the process, say the following or something similar:

Now we're ready to begin. I want you to get as comfortable as you can. We will begin by relaxing. Let this be a very special time for you. It can be a time for you to connect with your inner wisdom.

Let your shoulders relax. Feel them drop just a little. Now put your attention on your breathing. Breathe naturally and normally. Just begin to pay attention to the rhythm of your breath. Notice the rise and fall of your chest as each breath enters and leaves your body. Allow the breath to find its own natural rhythm. All you need do is pay attention to it. Let yourself feel the flow.

If you're comfortable with the idea, let your eyes close. Continue to focus on your breath and allow it to relax you even more. There is nothing for you to do but sink into the relaxation and comfort that is at the center of you. Feel the breath. Feel the relaxation. There is nothing for you to do.

With each breath feel yourself become more and more relaxed. It feels good. Enjoy the feeling. Let this feeling flow easily throughout your body. Enjoy. Be totally in the place of relaxation. It's a safe and fun place. Allow yourself the pleasure. Sit in this space for a moment or two (*pause for 15 – 20 seconds*).

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Continue to breathe – easily, naturally. Give yourself permission to remain in this calm, centered safe place and prepare for a journey to your future. You get to choose how many years into the future you want to go. Remember you're going on a journey of fun and fantastic possibilities. You're going to connect with your inner wisdom somewhere in the future.

Continue to breathe – easily, naturally. Now I want you to move forward 3, 5, 10 or 15 years. Your life has been amazingly wonderful, and you are going to receive an award for your many successes. People are gathered in a large auditorium and cheering for you. Take a look around the auditorium. What do you see? Is it brightly lit or softly lit? Are there windows all around the building or just on one side? Can you see the seats? What color are they? Focus on as many details as you can. How many people are there? 300, 700, 1000 or more? They are all there to cheer you on. See them smiling at you as you enter the room. Return their smiles.

Take a moment to look down at yourself. What are you wearing? How do you feel? Is there anything different about your appearance on this day? Did anyone enter the room with you? If so, who is with you? How big is your smile? What are you feeling right now? I'm going to be quiet for a while so you can really take in the scene (*pause for 15 – 20 seconds*).

Now I want you to continue to the front of the auditorium and take your seat on the stage. How are you feeling? Let that sensation course throughout your body. Enjoy the feelings. Once you've settled into your seat, give your attention to the master of ceremonies. Who is it? Male or female? Is it someone close to you or a business acquaintance? What is this person wearing? Continue this wonderful, relaxed yet excited feeling. This is your day. Breathe in the excitement. Breathe in the joy. You deserve this. Continue to breathe easily and naturally.

In your mind's eye, see the master of ceremonies, step up to the microphone and begin to speak. As you listen to the master of ceremonies talk about you and your successes, what do you hear? What are some of the goals you set for yourself and have reached? What are some of the main things you are doing now that you couldn't do when you joined the literacy program?

I'm going to be quiet for a while so you can feel the joy and pride of what you've accomplished. Take it all in to the core of your being. Also make a mental note of some of your many successes (*pause for 15 – 20 seconds*).

Isn't this delicious? Let this marvelous sense of accomplishment and success ooze all around you. Allow yourself to be wrapped in the amazing blanket of happiness, amazement and ease. This is your moment. Bask in it (*pause for 15 – 20 seconds*).

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Now that you've experienced yourself in the future begin to think about what you learned about yourself and your road to success. I'm going to ask you some questions that I think will help you get some important details. You don't need to answer aloud. We can talk about it when we're complete. The questions I ask may help you pick up some more details.

Did you notice any repeating theme or qualities in all your successes? Examples might be your giving spirit, your innovative ideas, service to community, serene approach to challenges, leadership abilities or organizational skills. What goals had you made for yourself that helped you become so successful? Do any specific goals come to mind? What about you most helped you reach your goals? Who or what supported your efforts? Continue to breathe – easily, naturally.

It's almost time to return your attention to today, to this room and to this time. Take one last look around the auditorium. See if there is anything more you want to be sure to remember about this wonderful day. This is your day! Breathe it in!

Take your time. Scan the room. Open your mind to receive whatever gift this time and future vision has for you. Breathe easily and naturally (*pause for 15 – 20 seconds*).

When you're ready – there is no hurry – begin to bring your attention back to the present time and this room. Let your breathing bring you back energized, yet peaceful and serene. Take your time. Would you like to talk about your journey to the future? Or would you like to make some notes? Or both?

From this discussion make notes and use them to match with roles and goals forms.

Option 2: Powerful Roles and Goals Related Questions

Below are some powerful questions that may assist you in conversation(s) with your learner(s) about their goals.

Community Member

- When I speak of community member, what comes to mind for you?
- For you, what makes a good community member?
- What are some ways you can see yourself giving to your community?
- What do you want to learn that will help you become a good citizen?
- Which of the following are important to you? And would you like to be able to do them? [Select some items from your current 'roles and goals' forms]

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Family member, Life Long Learner and Worker Roles

Modify the above process to fit the role. Since roles overlap feel free to move from one category to another. Let the conversation, lead by the learner(s), be your guide.