

Guided Imagery Exercise

Target Population: High School - Adult

Preparation: Read through the activity below so that you are familiar with the information.

Completing the Activity:

Introduce the activity and ask students to get comfortable in their seats. Turn off or dim the lights, if you wish, and eliminate outside noise as much as possible.

Invite the students to close their eyes, focus their attention inwardly, and become aware of their breathing. Ask them to take several slow, deep breaths, exhaling slowly. Invite them to relax any muscles that may feel tense and continue to breathe deeply.

When everyone seems relaxed, use a soft, even tone of voice and slowly read the following script, pausing after each sentence:

Today, you will be able to experience a time in the future when you will be working in your ideal job. It may be 5 or 10 or even 15 years from now. It will be a time when you will have finished your training and will be working in a job you have always wanted – anywhere in the country or the world that you would like to work . . . Imagine now that you're waking up one morning to go to your ideal job. What sounds do you hear when you awaken? What do you see around you? What kinds of clothes do you put on to go to work? What will you eat for breakfast? When you're ready to leave your home, how will you get to work? . . . What sights and sounds do you experience on your way to work? How long does it take you to get there? When you've arrived at work, what do you see? What type of workplace or organization are you walking up to? What kinds of people do you see? How do they greet you?

Now that you're at work, look around you and notice what your office or workplace is like. How do you start your morning? What kinds of tasks do you begin to work on? Do you work on them alone or with other people? Are you using the telephone? A computer? Special tools or equipment? Is there a meeting for you to attend? If so, what kind of meeting would it be? What would be your role at the meeting? Take a moment and try to imagine what your work would be like.

Afternoon comes and you realize that you're getting hungry. Where might you eat your lunch? What might you have? Would anyone be with you? Is work a part of your routine at lunchtime? Imagine that you're now ready to go on with the afternoon's tasks. What kinds of things might you do? Will you need to go anywhere? What kinds of people

might you interact with? Think for a moment about how you would like to spend the rest of your workday.

When evening comes, you realize it's time to go home. What time would it probably be? As you get ready to leave, what would you like to have accomplished during that day? Think for a moment about what you like best about this job.

Encourage the students to experience these thought and feeling for a few minutes longer. Then, tell them that they can slowly open their eyes, and stretch, and “come back into the room” whenever ready. It may take them a minute or two to reorient themselves to their surroundings.

Concluding discussion:

Once the lights are back on and the room is back to normal, lead the students in discussing the activity by asking the following questions:

1. What was difficult about this activity? Easy? Why?
2. What are some of the work settings and tasks that you imagined?
3. Did you learn anything new about your career goals or desires from doing this exercise?

Encourage students to write down work settings, ideas, tasks or environments that they envisioned. This can be used to tie together information they've gathered about themselves from other assessments they have taken.