## Handout: Simple Visualization Techniques

Practice visualization often, as much as three times a day. Have patience with the process as you learn.

**Eye** **Relaxation**

Put your palms directly over your closed eyes. Block out all light without putting too much pressure on your eyelids. Try to see the color black. You may see other colors and images, but focus on the color black. Use a mental image such as black fur or a nearby black object to help you remember the color.

Continue this way for a few minutes, thinking and focusing on black. Slowly open your eyes, gradually getting re-accustomed to the light. Experience the sense of relaxation in the muscles that control opening and closing your eyes.

**Laughter**

Laughter stimulates your circulatory, respiratory, vascular, and nervous systems, reducing emotional and physical tension, and creating a feeling of well-being. Try this humor exercise:

Close your eyes. Experience yourself becoming increasingly relaxed as tension leaves your body. Begin imagining yourself using humor in a difficult situation. Think of something that is happening in your life right now, and create a humorous alternative to your usual stress response.

**Listening to Music**

Prior to the presentation, create a half-hour playlist on your MP3 player or on your laptop. Use music that you find peaceful and relaxing. If you choose music you have enjoyed and found relaxing in the past, the use of same music will create a positive association that you can continue to use in the future.

To maximize the use of your music session, set aside 30 minutes of time alone. Find a comfortable position, close your eyes, and turn on your music. Mentally scan your body, noting areas of tension, pain, and relaxation. Notice your mood, too. If an unrelated thought enters your head, toss it aside, remembering the music instead. You can also say to yourself “Relax,” or “Music relaxes me.”

When the music is finished, mentally scan your body again. Does it feel different compared to before you started? Is there any difference in your mood?