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## Deep Centering Technique

**Notes:** If you feel uncomfortable during this technique, stop and try it again at another time. If you continue to have difficulty with it, ask someone with experience to guide you. Practice the technique in a sitting position so that you do not fall asleep.

**Purpose:** A partial list of benefits to practicing this technique on a regular basis includes: enhanced ability to effectively produce visualization and mental imagery; better oxygen circulation; improved digestion; increased energy; general relaxation; improved sleep; decreased physical and emotional pain; reduced fear and anger; a reduced effort of the heart; lengthening of life; and a pathway to feeling a personal spiritual connection.

**Procedure:** Breathe deeply and slowly – preferably through your nose – from the diaphragm (just above the stomach), trying to expand this area first as you inhale. You may want to imagine filling your stomach with air as if you were blowing up a balloon. After your diaphragm is full, begin filling your chest with a smooth rolling motion, remembering not to release the air in your diaphragm as your lungs fill. If it helps, place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest while you breathe. As you breathe in, your bottom hand should rise.

When you fill your lungs by “rolling” more air into your chest, your other hand will rise as well. Fill both your diaphragm and your lungs before exhaling through your mouth.

Now breathe deeply through your nose (you can use your mouth if necessary), inhale to a slow, silent count of three. Hold your breath for a count of one and release it through your mouth (or your nose, if you prefer) to a count of three.

Repeat the process to a count of five, holding for a count of two and releasing to a count of five. Take a third slow deep breath to a count of seven, hold for a count of three and release it to a count of seven.

Notice any sounds and let them go. Follow your breath for a few moments. Now breathe normally and think about the top of your head. Notice how it feels and

allow it to relax. Try to create a feeling of warmth there, and release any tension or stress from this area. As the top of your head relaxes, begin to think about relaxing your forehead. Create a cool feeling surrounding your forehead by imagining it as the color blue and as smooth and cool as a piece of glass. You may even imagine a cool breeze caressing your brow. Allow this area to totally relax.

Now, imagine a beautiful white light. Creating a feeling of warmth and relaxation, breathe the light into the remaining parts of your body in this order: eyelids, mouth and jaw, neck, shoulders and upper back, upper and lower arms, elbows, hands, fingers, chest, abdomen and stomach, lower back, hips, thighs, knees, calves, ankles, tops of feet, toes, and finally, the soles of the feet.

Once you complete this, relax and enjoy the feeling. When ready, tell yourself that when you reach the count of five, your eyes will open and you will be refreshed, relaxed, and feeling wonderful. Then count yourself out from one to five.