



## Visualization and Relaxation - Movement and Meditation Programs

### Intended Audience

All members including people living with cancer, family members and significant caregivers.

### Program Description

This program combines exercises in visualization and relaxation with meaningful discussion aimed at helping members on their journey of healing. The primary goal is to raise awareness of each person's inner strength, which can be called upon, with practice, whenever needed. The program provides a unique experience for each individual.

### Benefits and Impact

Visualization is a powerful tool in many aspects of life, particularly in the areas of self-direction and self care. Combined with relaxation, visualization can assist members in 'letting go' – a process of shedding restrictive thoughts and freeing unfulfilling emotions. As participants are guided to explore, envision and relax, they uncover their inner strengths, manifest positive affirmations and experience a gratifying sense of well-being.

### What to Expect at a Session

The sessions begin with participants talking about their physical and emotional needs so that this can be incorporated into the subsequent visualization. Next they are facilitated through a guided visualization followed by a focused discussion that encompasses what members have experienced during the visualization and how it can be applied to everyday life. Most members feel deep relaxation, gratifying affirmation and a profound sense of peace, while coming away with vital coping skills and renewed confidence to embrace their paths.

### Participant Comments

*"A beautiful, relaxing, and deeply enriching experience with lasting after-effects that will assist me in the days ahead. It opened up many possibilities and helped me immensely."*

*"The facilitator tailors the meditation to each individual person's needs so everyone gets whatever they need the most!"*

*"The program helped me relax and visualize inner healing and calmness."*

### What the Research Says:

Scientists analyzed the effects of an eight-week mindfulness-based stress reduction program on a group of breast cancer patients. Concepts such as relaxed breathing, being attuned to one's body, principles of meditation such as visualization and imagery, and being mindful of emotions and thought processes were covered. One month after the program, it was found that the mindfulness-based stress reduction group had experienced a statistically significant drop in blood pressure, respiratory rate, and heart rate when compared to the control group who did not receive any teaching. The stress reduction group also experienced a higher mindfulness score (increased attention to internal and external stimuli, being able to describe stimuli, acting with awareness, being nonjudgmental of one's inner experience, and allowing feelings to come and go without ruminating on them).

(Matchim Y, Armer J.A, and Stewart B.R. 2011. Effects of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) on Health Among Breast Cancer Survivors. Western Journal of Nursing Research. 33(8):996-1016.)

### Program Frequency:

**1.5 hours** per week  
**16 weeks** per program  
**1 program** per session  
Winter, spring/summer, fall

Optimum class size:10

### Related Programs:

iRest Yoga Nidra