

## ***Rest and Recreation***

### **Before the Gathering**

Read the description of the Reflection segment (below) to familiarize yourself with the technique of progressive relaxation. Read the description of the first round of sharing (below) and think about your response so that you will be prepared to go first.

### **At the Gathering**

#### *Sharing*

For the first round, ask participants to think about the recreation activities they listed in their preparation. Invite group members to briefly share one of their most effective recreation activities. Go first to model this sharing, then proceed around the circle (15 minutes). For the second round, invite people, speaking in any order, to share more deeply about relieving stress or their experience with one of the activities in their preparation (35 minutes). As time allows for the third round, those who wish to may share additional thoughts or reflect on what others have shared (10 minutes).

#### *Closing Activity*

Read the following guided meditation. Make sure you count to ten slowly to yourself every time you tell the group members to take ten seconds.

Sit comfortably in your chair. Take a deep breath and let it out slowly. Do it again. Now we will be alternately tensing and relaxing specific groups of muscles. After tensing, a muscle will be more relaxed than it was before the tensing. Concentrate on the feel of your muscles, specifically the contrast between tension and relaxation. If it is difficult to tense, just do the best you can.

Try not to hold your breath or grit your teeth. Breathe slowly and evenly and think only about the contrast between tension and relaxation. You will hold the muscle group in tension for about ten seconds; then you will relax the muscle group for about ten seconds.

Let's start with your feet and legs. Tighten the muscles in your feet, toes, and legs and hold for ten seconds. Now relax your feet, toes, and legs for ten seconds.

Now tighten the muscles in your stomach and buttocks. Hold the tension for ten seconds. Now relax those muscles for ten seconds.

Now tighten the muscles in your arms and hands for ten seconds. Now relax your arms and hands for ten seconds.

Now tighten the muscles in your back and shoulders for ten seconds. Now relax your back and shoulders for ten seconds.

And finally, tighten the muscles in your face and jaw for ten seconds. Now relax your face and jaw for ten seconds.

Now just relax your whole body for a few minutes.

Wait about two minutes. Then say, "Let's end by going around the room and saying a word or two about how we are feeling right now."