Future Self Exercise

The following visualizations are based on a future self exercise used in a Coaches Training Institute workshop. Feel free to use these exact words. We recommend that you have the client get comfortable, perhaps lower the light level, make sure there will be no distractions, and play quiet, meditative music. When the client is grounded and ready, begin the visualization. Pause at appropriate times throughout the visualization to give the client sufficient time to be with the location or answer the questions. Allow a little time at the end for debriefing, but make continued exploration of the visualization the homework for the upcoming week. The week after debriefing the visualization in detail, do the second visualization exercise to reveal the gift the client's future self will be giving the client.

Visualization 1

Get into a comfortable position. Now allow your eyes to close and begin by focusing your awareness on your breath. Breathing in and breathing out. Breathing in easily and effortlessly. Then breathing out. Each breath allows you to become more relaxed and comfortable. Outside sounds only allow you to go deeper inside: a reminder of how good it is to leave the noise and stress of the outside world and journey into the quiet and peace of your inner world.

(Include the next paragraph only when you want the client to go to an even deeper meditative space.)

As you allow yourself to go deeper into a state of relaxation, perhaps you can remember a time when you stood before a pond or a lake and it was quiet and peaceful. You may have tossed a pebble into the center and noticed the ripples spreading out. One ripple after another, flowing outward, farther and farther. The ripples slowing down, becoming farther apart, until the water was once again calm and peaceful. I'm going to invite you now to imagine that your body is like that body of water. And as you drop a pebble into the center of your body, you can feel ripples of relaxation rippling out. Waves of relaxation flowing through your body. Up through your torso into your chest and your back. Up through the vertebrae and spreading out into each and every muscle of your back. Through your shoulders and arms, up through your neck, your jaw, face, scalp. Feeling those ripples relax you as

your muscles let go and become soft and loose. Feeling the ripples of relaxation flowing down through the bottom of your torso. Flowing through your abdomen and your pelvis. Down through your thighs, calves, ankles, and toes. Know that each time you drop a pebble into the center of your body you can become more relaxed.

As you become more relaxed, you find yourself becoming more quiet and peaceful. Now bring your attention to the spot between your eyes: the third eye. Imagine a light there. What color is the light between your eyes?

Now imagine that light becoming a beam that extends out into space. Follow that beam as it leaves this building, as it travels above the city, as it continues out, so that you can view the entire area. Keep going farther and farther into outer space and notice the curvature of the earth. As you keep going farther and farther out, you find yourself enveloped by the softness and quiet of space. Notice the big blue-green ball below you with the white clouds wisping around it. Allow yourself to enjoy this perspective for a moment.

Now notice another beam of light very near to you, a different color from the one you followed into outer space. Begin to follow that beam back down to earth. The beam is taking you back to earth twenty years from now, twenty years into the future. Keep following this beam down, noticing the curvature of the earth and the geography stretched out below you. As you come closer to the end of the beam, keep noticing where you are. This is where your future self lives—you, twenty years from now. Come into contact with earth and notice where you are. Notice what dwelling or nature surrounds you. Now move to the dwelling of your future self. What does it look like? What kind of landscape does it have? Are there trees? Flowers? What kind? Get a sense of this place.

Now have someone come to the door. On the other side of the door is your future self, waiting to greet you—yourself, twenty years from now. As the door opens, what do you notice? Greet your future self and notice the way your future self returns your greeting, welcoming you into this time and place twenty years in the future. Take in this person, your future self. What does this person look like? Notice how this person stands, what this person is wearing. Get a sense of this person's essence. Notice the inside of this dwelling. What kind of person lives here? What are the colors of this place?

Now move with your future self to a comfortable place for a conversation. Perhaps your future self offers you something to drink. Settle in and make yourself comfortable for a talk with your future self. There are questions that you might want to ask your future self. Begin by asking: "What is it that you most remember about the past twenty years?" Take a moment now to hear the answer. (*Pause*) Now ask your future self the following question: "What do I need to know to get me from where I am now to where you are? What would be most helpful?" Listen to what your future self has to tell you. (*Pause*) Good.

Now take a moment and ask your future self your own questions. What other questions would you like to ask your future self? (*Pause*) And now ask your future self one final question before you go: "What name, other than your first name, are you called by? A special name. It could be a metaphor or a symbol of your essence. What is this name?" (*Pause*) Good. Bringing this visit to a close, thank your future self for being here with you today and sharing so much wisdom.

Now find your way back to the beam of light and journey back up the beam, watching this world of twenty years in the future grow ever smaller as you move out into space. Again, you see the ball of blue and green below you, clouds swirling around it. Notice that your beam of light has intersected with a different beam of light that will bring you back to this year and this location. Follow this beam of light back to the present time on earth. As you travel down this beam, notice the earth growing bigger and bigger. Moving farther down the beam, notice the geography of the area, the skyline and landscape of the area, and, finally, come back into the room here. Good. In a few moments, I'm going to count from three to one. At the count of one, you will be refreshed and alert, as if you've had the perfect amount of rest, knowing you can remember everything you wish of this inner journey.

When you open your eyes, please remain silent and jot down things you want to remember about your journey. *Three.* Coming back to present time, becoming more alert and refreshed. *Two.* Stretching your body, feeling the ground beneath you. And *one.* Eyes open, refreshed and alert.

Visualization 2

Just make yourself comfortable and allow your eyes to close and begin by taking long, slow, deep breaths. Breathing in through your nose and holding it . . . and breathing out through your mouth. Just allow yourself to be aware of your breathing. Easily, naturally, and freely.

I'm going to invite you to take a mental inventory of your body now. Beginning at the top of your head, become aware of any tension or tightness you might find. And just give that tension or tightness a color and let it drain out the tips of your toes and the tips of your fingers. Just allow that tension or tightness to drain away. And moving down your body, bring your attention to your neck and arms. Again, if you find any tension or tightness, just let it drain away. Take your awareness now down along your back, down into your abdomen and pelvic area. Again, notice any tightness you might find there and just eliminate it. Imagine it just melting away, draining out through the tips of your toes. Noticing if there is any tension or tightness in your legs or your ankles and feet and just allow it to drain out your toes. Now imagine you're like a strong and sturdy tree, putting roots down into the ground, allowing those roots to go deeper and deeper, spreading out, connecting you solidly to the earth.

Now bring your attention to the spot between your eyes: the third eye. Imagine a light there. What color is the light between your eyes? Now imagine that light becoming a beam that extends out into space. Follow that beam as it leaves this building, as it travels above the city, as it continues out, so that you can view the entire area. Keep on going farther and farther into outer space and notice the curvature of the earth. As you keep going farther and farther out, you find yourself enveloped by the softness and quiet of space. Notice the big blue-green ball below you with the white clouds wisping around it. Allow yourself to enjoy this perspective for a moment.

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Now is your opportunity to ask whatever questions you'd like of your future self. You might want to know your next step. Who you need to be right now in order to

move forward. Or ask your future self anything that feels right to you. (*Pause*) Now take a moment to listen to your future self's response. (*Long pause*)

I am going to invite you now to take a deep breath and allow yourself to step into the being of your future self. Allow yourself to merge into this person's body. Experience what it feels like to be this future self. Be aware of how you feel. Of how good it feels in your future self's body. What does the world look like through your future self's eyes? Walk around, feeling yourself move as your future self. Notice if there's one particular place in your body where you can feel your future self's power most strongly. This is the power of being your future self. Allow that feeling to expand, filling your whole body, into your very cells. You may want to touch that place on your body now in order to anchor that feeling. And know that whenever you wish to connect with your future self, you can touch that place on your body and bring forth these positive, powerful feelings. When you touch that place, these feelings and this experience will flood your body, easily and effortlessly.

Now, looking out through your future self's eyes, look at your present-day self. What do you notice about your present-day self? Looking out through your future self's eyes, what is it that you want to tell your present-day self? (*Pause*)

Now take a deep breath and shift your awareness, leaving the body of your future self and becoming your present-day self once again. Allow yourself to be fully present in the body of your present-day self.

As you look back at your future self, notice that this person has a gift for you: a special gift to remind you of who you are becoming and what you are moving toward. As your future self offers you the gift, ask if there's any meaning to it. Is there anything you need to know about it? (*Pause*)

It's time to leave now. Thank your future self for the wisdom. From now on, your future self will be an inner resource you can use whenever you need to do so. Whenever you seek guidance, whenever you need to know what your next step should be, you can contact your future self, a powerful ally and resource for you. Say good-bye now, knowing that you will remember everything you need to from this visit.

Now, find your way back to the beam of light and journey back up the beam, watching this world of twenty years in the future grow ever smaller as you move out into space. Again, you see the ball of blue and green below you, clouds swirling around it. Notice that your beam of light has intersected with the first beam of light that will bring you back to this year and this location. Follow this beam of light back to present-time earth. As you travel down this beam, notice the earth growing

bigger and bigger. Moving farther down the beam, notice the geography of the area, the skyline and landscape, and, finally, come back into the room here. Good. In a few moments I will count from three to one. At the count of one, you will be refreshed and alert as if you've had the perfect amount of rest, knowing you can remember everything you wish of this inner journey.

Three. Coming back now, coming back to present time, becoming more alert and refreshed. Two. Stretching your body, feeling the ground beneath you. And one. Eyes open, refreshed and alert.