



MAINTAINING OBJECTIVITY

Another approach to maintaining self-control is to ask yourself during moments of conflict whether what you are doing is *helping you reach your goal*.

- What is my goal? (for my child to improve his behavior)
- What am I doing now? (getting angry)
- Is what I'm doing helping me reach my goal? (no, we're arguing)
- If it isn't, what do I need to do differently? (relax, take some time to think about what is going on, and clearly state what I want)

RELAXATION PROCEDURES

Many people must learn to relax before they can control their self-statements. The following is a relaxation procedure that can be learned without extensive training.

1. **Get comfortable in your chair. Close your eyes.**
2. **Become aware of your breathing.**
3. **As you breathe in and out, slow your breathing down.**
4. **As you slow down your breathing, with your next deep breath slowly count from 1 to 10 as far as you are able to in that single breath.**
5. **Now exhale slowly, and count from 1 to 10 again until you are out of breath.**
6. **Visualize yourself calm and in control.**
7. **Tell yourself that you are doing a good job and making progress.**
8. **Repeat this deep, slow inhaling and exhaling while counting, until you feel relaxed.**

Remember, there will be times when it is difficult to use these self-control techniques. Relapses are to be expected. With practice, however, you will find it much easier to relax.