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.

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.