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WORK

You're reeling from a stressful conference call when another pile of papers appears on your desk, requiring a late-night work session. It's the kind of thing that could send you over the edge—but after a few deep breaths you're feeling calm again. Your stay-cool tool? The desk-top altar you've made to keep yourself centered.

To collect the items for such an altar in your workspace, Julie Lusk, a yoga teacher in Cincinnati and the author of *Desktop Yoga: The Anytime, Anywhere Relaxation Program for Office Slaves, Internet Addicts, and Stressed-Out Students*, suggests sticking to simple objects that are linked to a specific memory, belief, or goal. That might mean a special shell, stone, photograph, flower,

fountain, book, plant, or even a simple saying that inspires you.

"An altar need not scream 'Spiritual!'" says Lusk. "What makes your collection an altar is your intention—which can be as simple as your desire to return to the present each time you see it." TONI KLYM McLELLAN

tunnel of peace

"Work is love made visible," said the poet Kahlil Gibran. To make this aspiration a reality, take a look at psychologist Howard Schechter's *Rekindling the Spirit in Work*. Full of insight and practical exercises, like the following meditation, this book can help you visualize the ideal work situation so you can bring it to life. Have a friend read this meditation to you, or record it and then play it back to yourself. Read it slowly, to give yourself access to deeper wisdom and guidance.

go inside

Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Bring your attention to your breath, and as you exhale, imagine tension leaving your body.

visualize

From this deep state of relaxation, imagine a place in nature where you feel comfortable, safe, and secure. Take in all of the sensations of the place. Breathe in the smells and hear the sounds. See it clearly, as though you are focusing a camera on a very large image.

There's a tunnel in the distance, made of tree boughs, flowers, or earth and rock. The tunnel is supportive of your effort to gain deeper knowledge about yourself. Walk through the tunnel, leaving the everyday world behind. Once on the other side, see yourself in your "perfect" work environment. You don't have to try. Simply be open to the impressions, insights, and feelings. Allow information to come to you about your life's work and the steps you need to take to manifest it.

emerge

After about five minutes, return through the tunnel and rest in your beautiful starting place on the other side. Bring your attention to your breath and body. Get a good sense of returning to wakeful consciousness. Open your eyes when you are ready, and write down what you've learned.

HOWARD SCHECHTER