

8000 Series - Home, Hearth & Health

Creative Living
with Sheryl Borden



Producer/Host

CELEBRATION

45

YEARS
ANNIVERSARY

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Staining and Finishing Nesting Trays

Woodworker's Tip: Though you may be tempted to cut short your sanding, preparation and application time, don't do it.

These tasks are very important steps in obtaining a high-quality finish. Remember, it is the finish, just as much as the fit and smoothness of the parts, that will have great bearing on how people judge your craftsmanship. To ensure an excellent result, follow the steps listed below and also the instructions the finish manufacturer puts on its products.

FINISHING TIPS:

- Test the stains and finishes you are planning to use on scraps of wood. On the back of the scrap, mark the stain/finish combination and the type of wood. Allow all samples to dry thoroughly before making your final finish selection. Save your samples for quick reference on future projects.
- All stains and finishes must be allowed to dry thoroughly between coats. Remember that drying times can vary due to humidity and other climatic conditions.
- If you have some leftover stain or finish, wipe the can rim so that stain or finish in the rim won't dry out and prevent the lid from forming a tight seal.
- Brushes used for water-based products, such as Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stains or Minwax® Polycrylic® Protective Finish, must be cleaned with soap and water; brushes used for oil-based finishes must be cleaned with mineral spirits.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Finish-sand the corners and any other rough spots with 220-grit sandpaper. Dust off the piece and wipe it carefully with a clean, lint-free cloth lightly dampened with mineral spirits.

2. Before applying Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain to a hardwood or softwood, apply Minwax® Pre-Stain Water-Based Wood Conditioner following the directions on the can. Applying it will help to ensure even absorption of stain and prevent blotchiness that can oc-



cur with some woods. After 1 to 5 minutes, wipe off all excess conditioner using a clean, soft cloth. Wait 15 to 30 minutes, then use 220-grit or finer sandpaper to sand off any "whiskers" raised by the conditioner. Proceed to the staining within 2 hours.



3. Do the staining in two steps, starting on the interior surfaces and then moving to the exterior surfaces. Apply the Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain you've chosen to the surface using either a nylon/polyester brush or a cloth. Allow stain to penetrate no longer than 3 minutes. While stain is still wet, wipe off all excess with a clean cloth that's been lightly dampened with stain. Allow the piece to dry for 2 hours before applying a second coat, if desired. Allow the piece to dry overnight before applying the protective clear finish.



Woodworker's Tip: Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain is available in 6 wood tones, a White Wash Pickling Stain, 60 custom-mixed colors, and 8 bold Accents™ colors. This means that you are not limited to just traditional wood colors (pine, oak, walnut, etc.). Instead, you can pick and apply a color to complement the décor of the room in which the piece will be placed. For this reason, make sure you look over all of the Minwax® color charts or go to minwax.com before making your final selection.

4. After allowing the piece to dry overnight, apply Minwax® Polycrylic® Protective Finish following the directions on the can. Stir the can contents



thoroughly before starting and periodically repeat the stirring during your work session.

5. Working a small area at a time to maintain a wet edge, apply the first coat. Work quickly and make the final strokes in each newly finished section using with-the-grain brushstrokes.

6. Allow the finish to dry a minimum of 2 hours. Then sand lightly with 220-grit or finer sandpaper wrapped around a soft backup block. Thoroughly dust off and wipe all surfaces with a cloth lightly dampened with water.

7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 to apply the second and final coat.

Alternate Finish

8. Apply the Minwax® Wood Finish™ you've chosen using a natural bristle brush and a clean, lint-free cloth following the directions on the can. The brush will help you get the stain into the inside corners. Allow the Wood Finish™ to set for 5 to 15 minutes, then wipe off any excess. To achieve a deeper color, you may apply a second coat after 4-6 hours, repeating the application directions for the first coat. Allow the stain to dry 24 hours before applying the protective clear finish.

Woodworker's Tip: When wiping off stain, make certain that your last wipe with the cloth goes with the grain of the wood. This way, any stain you might miss during wipe-off will be visually minimized by the wood grain.

Applying Fast-Drying Polyurethane

9. Apply Minwax® Fast-Drying Polyurethane following the directions on the can, stirring it occasionally. Use a good quality, natural bristle brush. Allow the first coat to dry overnight.



10. The next day, sand all surfaces lightly with 220-grit or finer sandpaper using with-the-grain strokes. Dust off and wipe all surfaces with a cloth lightly dampened with mineral spirits. Apply a second coat of polyurethane and set the piece aside to cure overnight.

11. The following day, sand all surfaces lightly with 220-grit sandpaper. Dust off and wipe the piece with a cloth lightly dampened with mineral spirits and apply the third and final coat of polyurethane.

Applying Clear Brushing Lacquer

12. Apply Minwax® Lacquer Sanding Sealer, if desired, following label directions. Let dry at least 1 hour, then sand with 220-grit sandpaper, moving in the direction of the grain. Remove all sanding dust.

13. Apply Minwax® Clear Brushing Lacquer, stirring it well before and during use to rotate the product from the bottom to the top of the can. **NEVER SHAKE.**

14. Apply a coat of lacquer using a high-quality natural or synthetic bristle brush. Apply sufficient lacquer to seal open joints edges, and end grain.

15. Let the first coat dry at least 2 hours, then apply a second coat.

16. Apply a third coat, repeating the steps above for each coat. Apply a fourth coat, if desired.

17. After the final coat, allow at least 24 hours before using the trays.

PRODUCT SAFETY



For your safety and the safety of those you work with, always read the safety warnings, which manufacturers print on their labels, and follow them to the letter.

WARNING! Removal of old paint by sanding, scraping or other means may generate dust or fumes that contain lead. Exposure to lead dust or fumes may cause brain damage or other adverse health effects, especially in children or pregnant women. Controlling exposure to lead or other hazardous substances requires the use of proper protective equipment, such as properly fitted respirator (NIOSH approved) and proper containment and cleanup.

Woodworker's Tip: To clean spilled candle wax off of furniture and flooring, freeze the wax with an ice cube. Then use a plastic scraper or credit card to pop it off - simple as that!



Minwax® Wood Finish™ Stain Markers are great for quick and easy touch-ups of nicks and scratches on wood furniture, moldings, cabinets, doors, floors and other wood surfaces in your home.

This stain pen contains real Minwax® Wood Finish™ stain, the number one consumer choice of wood stain. Minwax® Wood Finish™ Stain Markers are also ideal for small hobby and wood craft projects and to add decorative touches to large projects.

COURTESY: Bruce Johnson
Minwax
www.minwax.com



Entertaining With Ease - Stress Free!

You don't have a lot of room for guests. **Tried and True Solution:** Make extra seating with folding chairs and table. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Putting extra furniture in the room makes it seem even smaller than it is. Just entertain buffet style. Serve a menu of casual finger food. Or just invite people over for a dessert buffet. And use lighting to transform the room. Decorate with candlelight. Or set small spotlights on the floor, directing the light up, on the walls.

Oven capacity insufficient to cook for a crowd. **Tried and True Solution:** Use chafing dishes or hot plates to warm the food; or keep heated items warm in an insulated unit. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Add extra oven racks. You can buy Jobar's three-tiered slim oven rack that will slip in beside a roasting pan to hold small casserole dishes, and you can also buy a wide three-tiered oven insert that will hold a trio of cookie sheets to bake three batches at a time or warm large quantities of hors d'oeuvres, such as mini-pizzas. www.whateverworks.com

Table too small to hold all the buffet items. **Tried and True Solution:** Consider using your kitchen for part of the buffet. Don't put dishes and flatware on the main table so there will be room for the serving dishes. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** You can find three-tier buffet servers online or at retailers like J.C. Penney and Target. Some look very elegant on the table and really solve the space problem. You might even consider buying a second. You can position the multi-level trays at different angles to allow access from any side.

No budget for major table decorations. **Tried and True Solution:** Use pillar candles of different sizes on mirrors, or heap baskets with items like pinecones and leaves or ornaments. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** The Candle Carver is a tool that carves a shallow depression in fruits and vegetables, the perfect size

make it into a candleholder, and surround it with flowers for a centerpiece, or use it as a place-setting decoration. www.candlecarvercompany.com

You don't have enough china for all your guests.

Tried and True Solution: Put out paper plates or plastic dishware. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** I like serving food on a sturdy plate, so I check out the discount departments or stores for bargain-price dishes. Sometimes you can find a quantity of them for a dollar or less. Snap them up to use for entertaining over and over again. Add some inexpensive cloth napkins, a table runner (less expensive than tablecloths or placemats), some candles and ribbons (around the napkins or on the wine glass stems), and you can set a beautiful table for very little cost.

Your entertainment food budget is small and your time is limited.

Tried and True Solution: Have a potluck party, where all the guests bring a covered dish. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Split the cost of the meal and divide up the effort of preparation by holding a progressive dinner. Three or four couples participate, and the whole party goes to a different house for each course: appetizers, salad, main entree, and dessert. What fun!

You don't know what to serve.

Tried and True Solution: Pasta. Who doesn't like pasta? Answer: the folks on diets, the people with wheat issues, and the people who won't eat a sauce if it has meat or fish in it. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Go online and look for recipes. You can search by ingredient. Or try a soup party. Make one for the vegetarians, one with fish, one with meat or chicken, and you've satisfied everyone's dining issues. They can all be made ahead, they're easy to reheat, and you can just add store-bought bread and cheese.

No time to clean the house to perfection.

Tried and True Solution: Knock yourself out and feel guilty you haven't done the job. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Focus JUST on the places your guests will visit: lavatory, and living room. Wipe counters in the bathroom, dustbust the hairs from the floor, swipe the toilet, and make sure you've got clean towels, soap, and toilet paper. Hide anything else behind the shower curtain. In the living room, vacuum the high-traffic area, gather up any junk in a laundry basket and hide it behind the shower curtain. Turn the lights low and put on soft music.

Flies swarming when you eat outdoors. **Tried and True Solution:** Keep the food in containers with plastic lids or cover with plastic wrap or foil. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Cover the whole table with a giant nylon "food umbrella," 17" x 49" x 27". It pops open and closed with the press of a button, stores compactly. I love this because it makes guests feel better about eating at your outdoor and even indoor buffets. www.shop.com

Shaping burgers for a crowd.

Tried and True Solution: Roll the meat into a ball, and then press the hamburger down. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** A non-stick aluminum press lets you make dozens of uniformly sized patties in no time, exactly the thickness you like (up to 1 1/2" inches). www.taylorgifts.com

Barbecue grill needs sanitizing. Cleaning the grill is one of the sloppiest jobs I can think of. Most of them are too big to fit easily in the sink. And you could use a whole roll of paper towels cleaning off the residue. **Tried and True Solution:** You don't even have to touch the grill to get it ready for use. Just leave it in place over burning hot coals for ten minutes. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Spray Nine BBQ Grill Cleaner not only gets rid of the grease, fat and burned-on food, it also has a hospital-grade disinfectant that kills e-coli, salmonella and other germs. www.spraynine.com

Can't see when you're cooking after dark.

Tried and True Solution: Have the barbecue chef wear a miner's cap. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Pegasus Associates' Clamp-On Barbecue light fits snugly to the side of the grill and lights it up with a 20-watt halogen bulb. Even after the sun has long gone down, the barbecue chef can turn out burgers done exactly to each guest's taste.

Menu planning and timing is so tricky.

Tried and True Solution: Serve sandwiches, cold cuts, and other items that can be cooked in advance. **Stressbuster Shortcut:** Rely on your crock-pot. One-pot dishes make menu planning easy, slow cooking means you don't have to watch the pot, and you don't have to worry that the food will be overcooked if guests are late.

COURTESY: Laura Dellutri
Healthy Housekeeper Inc.
www.lauradellutri.com

TERRELL DESIGNS

Roman Shade Artisans

How to Make a Four Diamond Pieced Roman Shade

The Four Diamond is a commonly used quilt-border block. It is also one of my top requests for pieced Roman shade designs because it is simple yet elegant and really dresses up a room without detracting from the furnishings.



What you need to make a Four Diamond Pieced Roman shade:

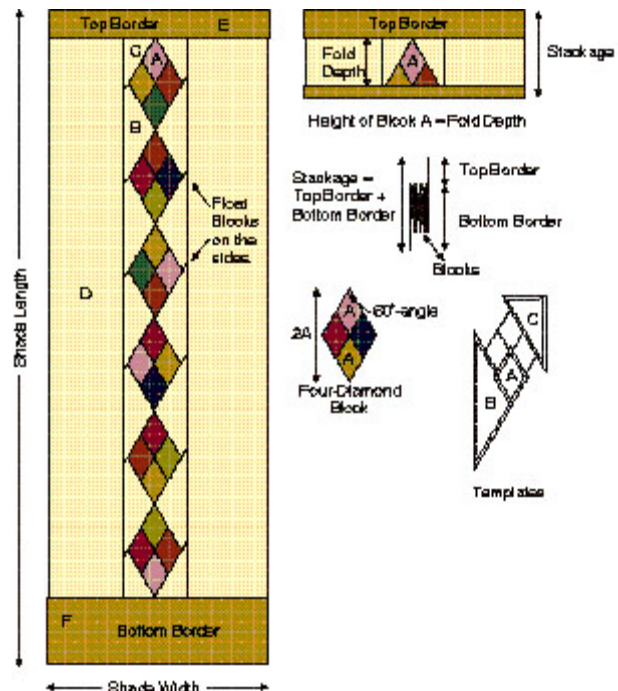
Finished Width and Length of your shade and the folding specifics, which can be obtained by using the Folding and Hardware Calculator on www.TerrellDesigns.com. The calculator will also tell you the number of lift lines for your shade.

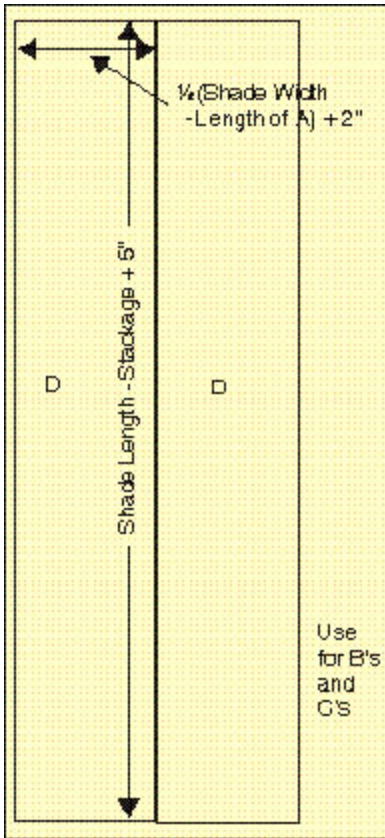
Shade Fabrics:

- 6 to 8 fat quarters quilting cotton in each focus color. In the shades pictured I used two focus colors: sage green and nutmeg orange.
- Enough background fabric (see layout below)
- Border fabric (see layout below)
- Drapery lining fabric cut 1" wider and 7.5" longer than your finished shade dimensions.

Shade Hardware and Supplies:

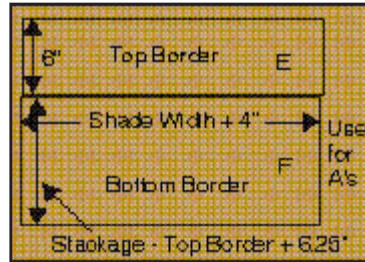
- A 1"x2" board cut 1/4" shorter than your finished shade width
- Muslin cut 5.5" wide and 4" longer than your board
- Plastic battens, one for each fold, cut 1/2" narrower than your finished shade width
- Simple pulleys, one for each lift line
- Lift rings, lift cord, weight rod (cut 1-1/4" shorter than the finished shade width), cord cleat and cord drop, glue to attach battens to shade
- Hook and loop fastener (Velcro) the width of your window. The loop portion should be the sew-on variety. The hook portion will be stapled to the board.
- Thread, both a neutral color such as white or gray, and a color that matches your front fabric



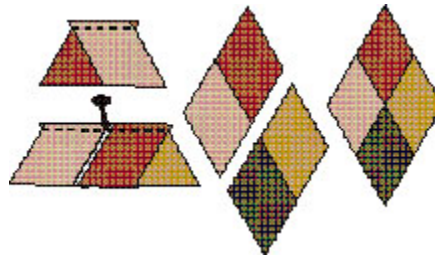


Step 1. Determine the block size by sketching a pleasing number, with a Top Border of 3" and a Bottom Border that is at least the size of Block A.

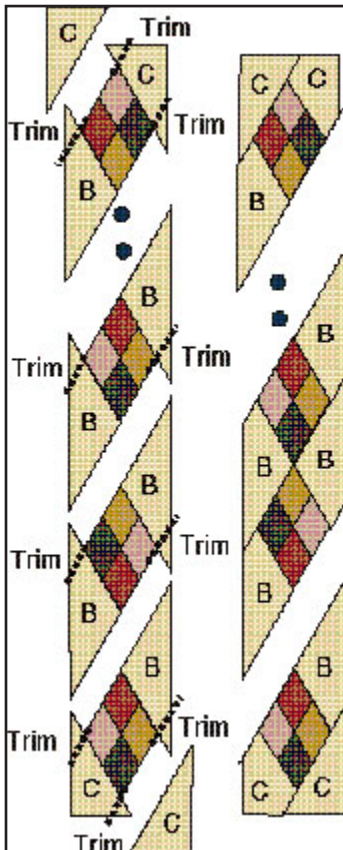
Step 2. Using graph paper and a 60-degree template, draw the template for Block A, Block B (setting triangle) and Block C (corner triangle). Note that both the setting triangles and the corner triangles are oversized. Cut out the templates and tape them to heavy cardboard.



Step 3. Cut two side panels D, top border E and bottom border F. Using the template, cut at least 8 to 10 Block A's from each of your block fabrics and from the remaining border fabric. Cut out the appropriate number of Blocks B and Blocks C using the remaining background fabric.



Step 4. Arrange your Block A's in a pleasing pattern and sew them together. Assemble the center column of blocks using Blocks B and C.



Step 5. Square the center column being sure that you leave 1/2" past the diamond points. Add the two side background panels and then the top and bottom borders. You have completed the front of your Four Diamond shade.

Step 6. Follow the complete online directions at www.TerrellDesigns.com to complete your shade.

Courtesy: Terrell Sundermann
Terrell Designs
www.TerrellDesigns.com

Tips for Avoiding Computer Eye Strain

The majority of people today in offices spend a great deal of their time in front of the computer screen. All this computer use leaves a lot of people experiencing what the American Optometric Association refers to as "computer vision syndrome." The good news is that there are preventative measures that can be taken to help keep the problems to a minimum.



Computer vision syndrome has a range of symptoms that include headaches, blurred and double vision, inability to focus, eyestrain, neck and shoulder pain, and watery or dry eyes. It can be caused from spending a prolonged period of time putting strain on the eye. Here are some tips for helping to prevent computer vision syndrome.

- **Vitamins and minerals.** Considering that the eyes have one of the highest energy requirements in the body, it is important that they get proper amounts of vitamins and minerals. Dr. Kondrot recommends that people use Vision Saver Formula, manufactured by Nutritional Research, which offers key antioxidants and ingredients that will help improve the health of the eye and reduce eyestrain.

- **Homeopathy.** Speak with a practitioner to find a level of therapy that will work for your individual circumstances. One of the most common homeopathic remedies to treat eye strain is Ruta Graveolens. This remedy can greatly reduce the symptoms of eye strain during prolonged computer use.



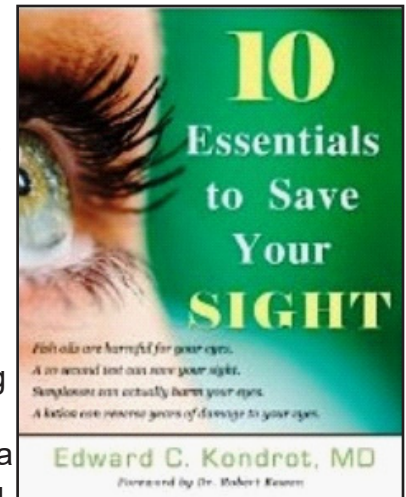
- **Blinking.** To help keep the eyes from becoming dry, try to blink often. This will help to keep the eye surface moist and prevent it from drying out. Try opening and closing your eyes in a slower motion, giving your eye more time to become moistened.

- **Palming.** Close your eyes and gently rest the heels of your hands on your cheekbones, covering your eyes with your palms. Imagine and visualize blackness. At the same time, feel your breathing. Breathe deeply, slowly, and evenly, through your nose. The slower you breathe, the better.

- **Increase the light.** Not having a light on when you are using the computer (or television) can put more of a strain on your eyes. Be sure to put a light on, to help reduce the strain.

- **Check the position.** The position of your computer can add to your eye strain. It is important that it is positioned a good distance away - around 20 - 28 inches from the eye, and that there are no glares on it. Reposition your computer to provide maximum eye comfort.

- **Take breaks.** Even while on the job, it is important to give your eyes a break when using the computer. Ideally, aim for a 15-minute computer break every two hours, and look away from the computer screen at least every 20 minutes.



COURTESY: Dr. Edward Kondrot, MD
Healing the Eye & Wellness Center
www.healingtheeye.com

Mindfulness of Body Practice

This practice offers space to experience sensations fully, openly and with awareness.

1. Find a place where you can sit comfortably, settling into an upright posture - perhaps on a chair with a firm seat, with the spine self-supporting, hands on thighs. Let the body be upright, but without straining or stiffening. You can close the eyes, or have them open, perhaps letting the gaze fall downwards. Notice how this posture feels right now.
2. Open up awareness and notice sensations in the whole body. Be aware of contact - texture and temperature in parts of you touching the floor, chair, clothes, other body regions, the air around - as well as internal sensations, such as tightening, relaxing, pressure, fatigue, heat, cold, aching, and so on.
3. As best you can bring interest to pleasant and unpleasant sensations, allowing them to be felt fully. Be aware of preferences - liking some sensations and not liking others - and notice when and how you're getting caught up in or resisting them. Be curious about any changes in location, intensity or quality of sensation.
4. When you see the mind wander into thinking, gently let go of thoughts and come back to feeling. When you notice the mind wandering elsewhere (e.g. to sounds), acknowledge this also, bringing it back, as best you can, with kindness.
5. If the mind feels very scattered, or sensations are particularly intense, you could come back to mindfulness of breathing for a time, using the breath as an anchor for attention once more. Open up to the whole body again as you feel ready. Perhaps imagine that you're breathing into and out from the entire body.
6. After you've practiced, experiment with staying present to body sensations as you move into whatever comes next in your day.

How Meditation Helps With Difficult Emotions

How are you feeling? Meditation gives us a chance to entertain that question at a deeper level. In *Getting Started*:

Emotions, *Mindful* shares authoritative practices to learn how to tame raw, difficult emotions and foster feelings that are positive, powerful, and beneficial. For a sneak peek, here are some meditative practices for working more creatively with fear.



It's hard to imagine life without fear. Its raw power can save lives. It can also paralyze us and invade every part of our life. Taming it and directing it is one of life's greatest challenges.

Fear is primal. And essential for survival. It's highly energetic, and even exhilarating. Lots of people love horror movies, and kids (young and old) get a huge kick out of scaring each other. But fear is no joke. It can be a highly aroused state that overtakes us in response to a perceived threat, causing us to either fight, flee, freeze, or faint. It can be a deeply unpleasant feeling.

As with all emotion, the practice of meditation can stabilize us enough in the midst of fear to help us see more clearly - to distinguish a false threat from a real threat that needs to be acted upon. The type of fear meditation can have the most effect on is the fear (and fears) that we continually generate in our own minds, the product of our rich imagination and our desire to control everything, rather than be tossed around in the risky and stormy world.



As our fear rises, we can start yammering in our heads to reinforce the size and shape of the threat: "They're not going to like me... they'll think I'm stupid...I'll never get another job...I'll lose my mind.. and all my friends... and my apartment..." By now, our

The good news: This is all natural. The very intense energy of fear, when we're able to let it dissipate, can become a powerful driving force. It's nothing other than the energy of life.

Practice

NAME THE FEAR: Being able to recognize that fear is present can be hugely important in not allowing it to control you. As you **NOTICE** your heart pumping more, your chest tightening, your back stiffening, let an imaginary alarm bell go off in your head. Take 3 or 10 or 20 deep breaths, however many you need to **SLOW** your body down. Place your hand on your heart if that will help.

Acknowledge to yourself, "I'm scared. I'm afraid."
NAME THE FEAR so you automatically create a bit of distance between yourself and the intensity of the emotional reaction. Say a few phrases of **WELL-WISHING** toward yourself and for others:

- May (I/others) see the source of our fear.
- May (I/others) be safe and free from fear.
- May (I/others) be happy and at ease.

Practice

LEAN IN TO FEAR: Whenever you feel the energy of fear, **DON'T AVOID** the feeling. Sit with it. As fearful thoughts of dread and worry continue to arise, approach them with **FRIENDLINESS**. Don't treat them as a threat. Be kind toward yourself for being afraid. See what happens when you hold your ground and let the fear rise in your mind. You may **FIND CONFIDENCE** within.

COURTESY: Michelle Ontiveros
Clinical Mental Health Counselor
M82ontiveros@gmail.com

Home, Hearth & Health Guests

Laura Dellutri

Healthy Housekeeper, Inc.

11730 W. 135th #6

Overland Park, KS 66221

913-208-5209

dellutril@aol.com

www.lauradellutri.com

Bruce Johnson

c/o Minwax

10 Mountainview Rd., Suite A

Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458

973-841-1736

<http://www.minwax.com>

askminwax@sherwin.com

Dr. Edward Kondrot

Healing the Eye and Wellness Center

31242 Amberiea Rd.

Dade City, FL 33523

800-430-9328

info@healingtheeye.com

www.healingtheeye.com

Michelle Ontiveros

1400 Fairway Terrace, Apt. 27

Clovis, NM 88101

505-974-9488

M82ontiveros@gmail.com

Terrell Sundermann (ret.)

Terrell Designs

85 Crestone Way

Castle Rock, CO 80108

303-639-9876

terrellsun@gmail.com

www.terrelldesigns.com