

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Guide

Preparation:

- Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit or lie down where you won't be disturbed.
- Wear comfortable clothing that doesn't restrict your movement.
- Take a few moments to breathe deeply and settle your mind.

1. Breathing Deeply:

- Begin by taking a few deep breaths. Inhale slowly through your nose, allowing your stomach to rise, and exhale slowly through your mouth. Repeat this three times.

2. Tensing the Muscles:

- You will tense each muscle group vigorously, but not to the point of strain, and maintain this tension for about 5 seconds.

3. Relaxing the Muscles:

- After about 5 seconds, quickly release the tension in the muscle group. Notice the feeling of relaxation. Take 15 to 20 seconds to relax and breathe deeply before moving on to the next muscle group.

Muscle Groups to Tense and Relax:

1. Hands:

- Tense: Clench your fists.

- Relax: Release and spread your fingers.

2. Arms:

- Tense: Extend your arms straight out in front of you. Clench your fists and tense your arms.

- Relax: Softly drop your arms to your sides.

3. Shoulders:

- Tense: Raise your shoulders up towards your ears.

- Relax: Let your shoulders drop back down.

4. Neck:

- Tense: Gently tilt your head back as if looking at the ceiling.

- Relax: Return your head to a neutral position.

5. Jaw:

- Tense: Clench your jaw tightly.

- Relax: Open your mouth slightly and relax your jaw.

6. Face:

- Tense: Squeeze your eyes shut and scrunch your face.

- Relax: Relax your facial muscles and keep your eyes gently closed.

7. Chest:

- Tense: Take a deep breath in, hold it, and tense the muscles in your chest.

- Relax: Exhale and release the tension.

8. Stomach:

- Tense: Pull your stomach in towards your spine.

- Relax: Let your abdomen expand and relax.

9. Lower Back:

- Tense: Arch your back slightly while sitting or lying down.

- Relax: Let your back return to a natural, comfortable position.

10. Legs:

- Tense: Extend your legs and point your toes away from you.

- Relax: Softly let your legs fall and relax.

11. Feet:

- Tense: Curl your toes downwards.

- Relax: Release and relax your toes.

- After completing the muscle groups, take a moment to lie still and focus on the feeling of relaxation throughout your body.

- Notice any areas that still hold tension and repeat the tension-relaxation process for those areas.

- When you're ready, gently open your eyes and bring movement back to your body with some gentle stretches.