

Simple Relaxation Techniques



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Why relaxation?

These are specific techniques that help people moderate stress/tension or anxiety that can sometimes reach problematic levels that prevent you from doing important work. An individual can use these techniques in a variety of situations and settings- at home or when outside. Relaxation is associated with improved health: decreased heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure and muscle tension. This is why it is important to have a knowledge of these techniques. Some of them are mentioned in this e-book.





Deep, regular breathing is a component of most relaxation training strategies. Usually when stressed, our breathing tends to become very shallow and this is why regularizing your breathing and taking deep breaths is important.

1. Paced Breathing

- Place your hand on the abdomen/stomach while breathing slowly.
- Breathing in this manner allows the individual to inhale more air than normal shallow breathing. You can breathe in, mentally counting to 4, hold your breath for another four counts and slowly release your breath for another 4 counts. Do this as many times as needed on a daily basis.
- Deep breathing has been shown to release stress and tension, build energy and endurance, help with pain management, and to enhance mental concentration and physical performance.
- It can easily be done during the day whenever a stressful situation emerges.

2. Guided Imagery

Close your eyes and let your worries drift away. Imagine your restful place. This could be any place that makes you calm. Eg: A beach, a forest, a hillside, a lake, a park, etc. Picture it as vividly as you can—everything you can see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. Visualization works best if you incorporate as many sensory details as possible, using at least three of your senses. When visualizing, choose imagery that come to you in the flow. Don't stress trying to imagine everything as perfect. Just try to transport yourself to that location and feel, smell and see everything as vividly as possible.

If you are thinking about a quiet lake, for example:

- Walk slowly around the lake and notice the colours.
- Spend some time exploring each of your senses.
- See the sun setting over the water.
- Hear the birds singing.
- Smell the trees/flowers.
- Feel the cool water on your bare feet.
- Smell the fresh, clean air.



Find a quiet, relaxed place. Beginners sometimes fall asleep while using this technique, so you might try sitting up.



Enjoy the feeling of deep relaxation that envelopes you as you slowly explore your restful place. When you are ready, gently open your eyes and come back to the present.

Don't worry if you sometimes zone out or lose track of where you are during a guided imagery session. This is normal. You may also experience feelings of stiffness or heaviness in your limbs, minor, involuntary muscle-movements, or even cough or yawn. Again, these are normal responses. Some people might feel a little anxious because deep relaxation gives you the feeling of floating. This is normal and it's okay if you feel this way.

***“Thanks for this detailed explanation of relaxation techniques! I feel much calmer after practicing this for just 5 to 10 minutes!”
- Pooja A.***



If you would like to try some really unique ways of de-stressing, especially those using technology, you can click here:

[Use your laptop or phone to unwind!](#)

Mindfulness Meditation

Similar to the grounding technique mentioned above, what you need to do in mindfulness meditation is try and fully experience the present. The important thing to note about mindfulness meditation is not to try and control your thoughts but just let them pass. We all know that thoughts come and thoughts go. Attempting to control them will only interfere with this natural process of coming and going. To practice mindfulness meditation, you'll need:

A quiet environment. Choose a secluded place in your home, office, or outdoors where you can relax without distractions or interruptions.

A comfortable position. Get comfortable, but avoid lying down as this may lead to you falling asleep. Sit up with your spine straight, either in a chair or on the floor. You can also try a cross-legged or lotus position.

A point of focus. You can meditate with your eyes closed or open so this point you focus on can be internal (eg: a feeling or imaginary scene) or external (eg. an object in your surroundings, or a meaningful word or phrase that you repeat throughout the meditation.)

An observant, noncritical attitude. Don't worry about distracting thoughts that go through your mind or about how well you're doing. If thoughts intrude during your relaxation session, don't fight them, just gently turn your attention back to your point of focus. And it is important to be uncritical. If an emotion of sadness or anger or an upsetting memory comes, don't criticize yourself for bringing up this thought. Just let the thought pass and keep your mind open to the stream of thoughts.

3. Grounding Techniques

Grounding is a technique that helps keep someone in the present. They help reorient a person to the here-and-now and in reality. Grounding skills can be helpful in managing overwhelming feelings or intense anxiety. They help someone to regain their mental focus from an often intensely emotional state.

The 54321 "game":

- Name 5 things you can see in the room with you
- Name 4 things you can feel ("chair on my back" or "feet on floor")
- Name 3 things you can hear right now ("fingers tapping on keyboard" or "tv")
- Name 2 things you can smell right now (or, 2 things you like the smell of)
- Name 1 good thing about yourself .

There is more than one way to practice mindfulness, but the goal of any mindfulness technique is to achieve a state of alert, focused relaxation by deliberately paying attention to thoughts and sensations without judgment. This allows the mind to refocus on the present moment. All mindfulness techniques are a form of meditation. This might take about 10-15 minutes. Following are the steps.

Basic mindfulness meditation – Sit quietly and focus on your natural breathing or on a word or "mantra" that you repeat silently. Allow thoughts to come and go without judgment and return to your focus on breath or mantra.

Body sensations – Notice subtle body sensations such as an itch or tingling without judgment and let them pass. Notice each part of your body in succession from head to toe.

Sensory – Notice sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and sensations of touch. Name them "sight," "sound," "smell," "taste," or "touch" without judgment and let them go.

Emotions – Allow emotions to be present without judgment. Practice a steady and relaxed naming of emotions: "joy," "anger," "frustration." Accept the presence of the emotions without judgment and let them go.

We hope that this book helps you to relax and manage your worries. You can always reach out to us at

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This book was compiled by Type a Thought (Typeathought.com)