

Deep Muscle Relaxation

This technique involves tensing specific muscle groups and then relaxing them. For each muscle group, a method is described for creating tension and achieving relaxation. Begin by assuming the position for relaxation (eyes closed, sitting in a chair or lying on the floor in a quiet and passive attitude).

Now do each of the following twice in a row:

MUSCLE	TENSING METHOD
Forehead	Wrinkle your forehead. Try to make your eyebrows touch your hairline for five seconds. Relax.
Eyes and nose	Close your eyes as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.
Lips, cheeks & jaw	Draw the corners of your mouth back and grimace for five seconds. Relax. Feel the warmth and calmness in your face.
Hands	Extend your arms in front of you. Clench your fists tightly for five seconds. Relax. Feel the warmth and calmness in your hands.
Forearms	Extend your arms out against an invisible wall and push outwards with your hands for five seconds. Relax.
Upper Arms	Bend your elbows. Tense your biceps for five seconds. Relax. Feel the tension leave your arms.
Shoulders	Shrug your shoulders up to your ears for five seconds. Relax.
Back	Arch your back off the floor for five seconds. Relax. Feel the anxiety and tension disappearing.
Stomach	Tighten your stomach muscles for five seconds. Relax.
Hips & Buttocks	Tighten your hip and buttock muscles for five seconds. Relax.
Thighs	Tighten your thigh muscles by pressing your legs together as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.
Feet	Flex your ankles upwards as far as you can for five seconds. Relax.
Toes	Curl your toes as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.

Relaxation Exercise

Excessive tension and stress together with the negative thoughts that accompany these feelings make it difficult to cope with life's challenges as they arise. The ability to relax at the first sign of tension enables you to feel in control of your emotions. Once emotions are under control and the immediate tension and anxiety are reduced, you will perform better in your day without the distraction and unpleasantness of tension.

Relaxation is a skill that has to be learned. Most people will feel a positive effect while engaging in their first sessions of relaxation. However, like physical exercise, the extensive beneficial effects of relaxation usually occur within two to three weeks of consistent practice.

Practice relaxation 1 to 2 times per day for approximately 20 minutes. Choose a place and time where you will be comfortable and unlikely to be interrupted. Steady your breathing, taking slow, regular breaths breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Once you have settled into a regular and comfortable breathing pattern, commence your relaxation exercise.

Daily Record of Relaxation

Please record the time taken to relax and your level of relaxation *before* and *after* your relaxation session.

DAY	TIME TAKEN TO RELAX (AM)	DEGREE OF RELAXATION 1-100		TIME TAKEN TO RELAX (PM)	DEGREE OF RELAXATION 1-100	
		BEFORE	AFTER		BEFORE	AFTER
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Your EAP is there to help

Remember the EAP offers support through confidential face-to-face and telephone counselling and appointments can be made by phoning your EAP provider, Davidson Trahaire Corpsych (DTC), on **1300 360 364**.

