Muscle Relaxation

You can practise these exercises regularly and at the first signs of muscle tension.

1. Sit in a comfortable chair, with your feet flat on the floor, with your hands resting on your lap. Ensure that the room is quiet.

2. Close your eyes.

3. Commence slow breathing exercises.

4. After 3 minutes of slow breathing, commence this muscle relaxation exercise: tense each of the muscle groups for 10 seconds, then relax for 10 seconds, in the following order:

- Hands - clench your hands into fists, then relax
- Lower arms - bend your hands at the wrist, then relax
- Upper arms - bend your arms at the elbow then relax
- Shoulders - lift your shoulders up, then relax
- Neck - stretch your neck gently to the left, then forward, then to the right, then to the back in a slow rolling motion, then relax
- Forehead and scalp - raise your eyebrows, then relax
- Eyes - close your eyes tightly, then relax
• Jaw - clench your teeth, then relax
• Chest - breathe in deeply, then breathe out and relax
• Stomach - pull your tummy in, then relax
• Thighs - push your feet firmly into floor, then relax
• Calves - lift your toes off the ground, then relax
• Feet - gently curl your toes down, then relax

5. Continue slow breathing for five more minutes enjoying the feeling of relaxation.

6. Try combining these exercises with memories of relaxation situations (e.g. lying on a beach, doing a favourite activity).

A full session of relaxation takes about 15 to 20 minutes.

Relaxation works best when practised every day.

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