

MUSCLE RELAXATION SCRIPT

This script is designed to be read out loud by the leader of this exercise. If you are planning to practice alone, read through the script ahead of time to become familiar with the content and process. The reading of the script will be difficult during the practice of Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), but exact adherence to the script is not necessary. Once you are familiar with the exercise, feel free to modify it to fit your specific needs and comforts.

PREPARATION

Here is how to prepare:

- Find a quiet, comfortable spot to practice.
- Sit up or lie down while you practice.
- Have a blanket or sheet handy. Often when people are relaxed, they find they are cooler and need a light blanket.
- Take a few minutes to think about your breathing. (You can keep your eyes open or closed.) Try to do stomach breathing. Fill your stomach as you breathe in and then breathe out. Begin to slow your breathing down. Try to focus only on your breathing.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Steps to follow for progressive muscle relaxation:

- Take in a deep breath. Hold that breath for a count of 4, let it out, and begin to relax. Do this about 4 times. As you breathe in, think about good, soothing energy flowing in. As you breathe out, breathe out your stress and bad thoughts.
- Allow your mind to focus on one body part at a time. Move from the top of your head all the way down to your toes.
- Relax your head and your scalp. Repeat this 2 or 3 times.
- Move down to your eyes. Relax your eyes and the muscles around your eyes. Squeeze your eyes tight for 4 counts, then relax. Notice the difference in your eyes and face when your eyes are squeezed and tense, and when they are relaxed.
- Focus on your mouth. Relax your mouth. Allow it to go limp.... Move down your neck, and relax your neck muscles.... Relax your shoulders....
- When you get to your arms, you may relax them one at a time or both at the same time. You may even choose to relax each finger, one at a time.
- Move all the way down to your toes using this skill.

EXTRA TIPS

Tips that may help body areas that are tense or painful:

- As you move down your body, you may want to tighten and then relax certain body parts. This helps to show how different your body feels when it is tense and when it is relaxed. You can tense and then relax your eyes, hands, toes, mouth, and shoulders. You should get more relaxed as you move down your body. If you feel relaxed, you may not feel like doing this part past your mouth or shoulders.
- Warm often feels good. Think about any part of your body being warmed by the sun. For example, if your right arm has pain, you can focus on this arm. Think about warm rays of sun on your arm.