

Progressive Relaxation (Cool Down)



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Make yourself comfortable, either lying down or sitting. To do muscle relaxation, we will concentrate on various muscle groups. Try to tighten each muscle individually. Then, try to relax that muscle as you breathe out.

Start by taking a big breath, in through your nose, and out through your lips. Try to fill your lungs up with air. As you breathe in, your belly should rise. As you breathe out, your belly will fall. Keep breathing like this for the next few minutes.

As you do your deep breathing, concentrate on the different muscles listed below. For each muscle group, try to tighten up the muscles as you breathe in. Hold for a few seconds, then as you breathe out, let those muscles relax. Take a few big breaths between each muscle group.

- To begin with, as you take a big breath in, try to close your eyes as tightly as possible and wrinkle up your forehead. Hold it. Then as you breathe out, let those muscles relax.
- On your next big breath in, press your lips together and tighten your jaw muscles. Then, let all that muscle tension flow out as you breathe out.
- On your next big breath in, shrug your shoulders as high as you can. Hold it. Then, as you breathe out, let your shoulders sag down.
- On your next big breath in, clench your fists as tightly as you can. Hold it. As you breathe out, let all the tension flow out through your fingertips.
- Next, bend your elbows as much as possible and tighten your arm muscles. Then let your arms go completely limp as you breathe out.
- As you take the next big breath, curl your toes as tightly as possible. Hold it. Let all the muscle tightness flow out as you breathe out.
- Next, press your knees together as tightly as possible, and push your feet into the floor. Hold it. Then relax all those muscles and let your legs go limp.
- Now, squeeze your buttocks together as tightly as you can. Tense all the muscles in your hips and pelvis. Then relax those muscles and let your bottom sink into the floor.
- If there are any other muscles that are tense or sore, concentrate on them. Take a deep breath. Tighten those muscles. Hold it. Then let them relax completely.
- As you lay quietly, concentrate on your heart. See if you can sense your heart beating. Concentrate on how fast it is beating, and see if you can slow it down by thinking about it.
- Rest for a couple of minutes, then slowly get up. You should feel quite relaxed. **Enjoy!**