



Physical Relaxation Exercise

Go ahead and lie down and close your eyes. Now take a deep breath in, and count 1...2...3. Hold the air momentarily...now exhale 1...2...3. Feel the tension leaving your body. Take another deep breath. In 1...2...3 and out 1...2...3. One more time, take another deep breath. Feel your stomach rise. In 1...2...3, out 1...2...3. Feel the tension leaving your body.

Now breathe normally, you are beginning to relax. Let go of all the tension in your body. Can you sense the muscles of your head, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, abdomen, and legs? Let them begin to relax. Feel yourself sinking lower, and lower. Breathe in slowly again, letting go the tension in these muscles. In 1...2...3, out 1...2...3. Notice your own rhythms, your own breathing slowing down as your body begins to ease into a state of relaxation.

Notice your feet, can you feel your toes?
Begin to rotate your ankles, and flex them forward, and relax.
Remember to breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3. Release that tension. Just let it melt away.
Breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3.
Feel your thighs. Release this tension. Breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3.
Now, release your buttocks. The lower part of your body is becoming relaxed.
Breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3.

Now, relax your stomach muscles. Breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3.
Relax the muscles in your chest. Let it sink lower and lower.
Relax your hands. Feel the tension draining out every time you exhale.
Breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3.
Now, relax your forearms. Try to relax your biceps and shoulders. Now, relax your neck.
Feel the muscles in your jaw begin to relax. Let it hang open and try to relax your face.
Relax the muscles in your forehead. Now relax your eyes.

You may feel the sensation of floating, or feeling heavy. These are both normal. Remember to keep your breathing regular. In 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3. Next you will tense individual muscles, hold the tension, then relax it quickly and completely while lying still. Do not release the tension gradually. Focus your attention on how your muscle feels when it is tensed and then suddenly relaxed.

Let's begin with the left foot.
Tense the muscles in your left foot by pointing your toes, and curling them.
Notice the tension in your foot. Keep the muscles tight and feel the tension. Hold it, and relax.
You should feel the tension leaving your foot. Now, tense the muscles in your right foot by pointing the toes and curling them. Notice the tension in your foot. Keep the muscles tight and feel the tension. Hold it, and relax. You should feel the tension leaving your foot.

Let's move up the leg to the left calf.
You can tense the calf muscle by pulling the toes of your left foot upward toward your head.
Notice the tension in your calf.
Hold it. Keep the muscles tightened and feel the tension. Now relax, feel your calf relaxing.
Let's move up the leg to the right calf. You can tense the calf muscle by pulling the toes of your right foot upward toward your head. Notice the tension in your calf. Hold it.
Keep the muscles tightened and feel the tension.
Now relax, feel your calf relaxing.



Physical Relaxation Exercise *continued*

Now let's move to the muscles of the left thigh.

Stiffen the left leg and feel the tension in the muscle on the top of the thigh compared with the tension on the back of the thigh. Keep the muscles tightened.

Now relax. The muscles in your entire leg are suddenly relaxing.

Now let's move to the muscles of the right thigh.

Stiffen the right leg and feel the tension in the muscles on the top of the thigh compared to the tension on the back of the thigh. Keep those muscles tight. Now relax.

The muscles in your entire leg are suddenly relaxing.

Your lower body should feel very relaxed. You may experience a tingling sensation; this is normal.

Next, tighten your stomach muscles. Now tighter. Notice the tension, and hold it.

Then relax, remembering to breathe in 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3.

Feel the tension leaving your abdominal muscles.

Let's move to the muscles of the chest, shoulders, and upper back. We will tighten and relax several muscles here at the same time, while holding your breath. Ready?

Take a deep breath, and hold it. Now pull the shoulder blades together by pulling your shoulders back, trying to make them touch. Hold it, breathe out, and relax.

Now, tense the muscles in your right hand, and right forearm by making a tight fist.

Squeeze the fist tighter. Notice the tension.

Now relax. Feel the tension flowing out of your hand, and arm. Good.

Now let's move up the arm to your right bicep.

Tense your right bicep by bending your right elbow toward you in a curling motion. You should be able to feel the tension in your bicep without feeling any tension in your hand or lower arm. Hold the tension. Now relax. Feel the tension flowing out of your bicep. Good.

Now let's do the left hand, and left arm.

Tense the muscles in your left hand, and left forearm by making a tight fist. Now squeeze tighter. Notice the tension. And now, relax. Feel the tension flowing out of your hand and arm. Good.

Now let's move up the arm to the left bicep.

Tense your left bicep by bending your elbow toward you in a curling motion. You should be able to feel the tension in your bicep without feeling any tension in your hand or lower arm.

Hold the tension, and now relax. Feel the tension flowing out of your bicep. Good.

We are now going to relax the muscles of your face.

Focus your attention on your forehead. Lift your eyebrows as high as you can.

Hold the tension, 1...2...3, and relax. Feel the tension rushing out of your mouth as you breathe.

Focus your attention on your eyes and cheeks. Now squint your eyes very tightly and at the same time, wrinkle up your nose. Hold the tension, 1...2...3...4...5, and relax.

Next, focus your attention on your jaw and mouth. Carefully clench your teeth together and pull the corners of your mouth back. Hold the tension, 1...2...3...4...5, and relax. Good.



Physical Relaxation Exercise *continued*

Now we are going to move to the neck muscles.

Tighten the muscles in your neck by carefully pulling your chin down towards your chest. Hold it, hold the tension. Now relax. There may be some shaking in your neck muscles. That's OK. Continue to relax.

You have just completed the progressive muscle relaxation technique.

You may want to remain where you are, and continue feeling the deep relaxation you have just created. You can deepen your relaxation by continuing to focus on your breathing. In 1...2...3, and out 1...2...3. With each breath, feel your body becoming more and more relaxed.

Breathe deeply and relax.