



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This technique helps you understand what tense muscles feel like but also more importantly helps you consciously become more aware of how to relax your tense muscles, and to feel the difference.

In progressive muscle relaxation exercises, you tense up particular muscles and then relax them, and then you practise this technique consistently.

Practice Practice Practice!

Listen to your own breathing. Notice how the in breath balances the out breath. Notice how rhythmical your breathing is

(Pause)

Now I'm going to ask you to stretch various muscles in your body and then relax them.

Start with your feet. Curl your toes gently and then let them relax.

(Pause)

Tighten your thigh muscles and then let them relax.

Feel how heavy your legs are now.

(Pause)

Tighten your tummy muscles – now relax your tummy.

(Pause)

Make fists with your hands and feel the tension – now relax your hands so that your fingers are softly curled.

(Pause)

Pull your shoulders up towards your ears. Notice how that makes your breathing tight and uncomfortable. Relax your shoulders and breath freely again.

(Pause)

Now frown as angrily as you can, screwing up all your face muscles. Now let the tension go so that there is now expression at all on your face.

(Pause)

Take a moment to check that your whole body is relaxed. Your forehead is smooth and tall. Your jaw is relaxed – your mouth may be slightly open.

Your shoulders feel loose and easy, and your arms and hands are soft and relaxed. Your tummy is relaxed. Your legs and feet are heavy. You feel warm and peaceful.

(Pause)

While you are relaxed, take a moment to think about your baby. How warm and safe she or he is in the womb. How much you are looking forward to meeting your baby.

(Pause)

Now I am going to count from 5 down to 1. Use that time to stretch, yawn, open your eyes and sit up straight again. 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1