

Relaxation 101



Objectives

- The Buy-in
- Relaxation techniques
- Step by step
- Deep breathing

The Buy-In

- Relaxation provides partial or full relief for:
 - ▣ Hypertension
 - ▣ Asthma – allergies
 - ▣ Headaches and stomach aches
 - ▣ Ulcers
 - ▣ PMS
- Calms us down during stressful times
- Improves mental clarity and physical health
- Helps us say and do the “right thing”
- Improves sleep

Relaxation Techniques

- Deep breathing
- Mindfulness
- Visualization & guided imagery
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Meditation
- Yoga

Starting Off with Relaxation Techniques



- Try 10-20 minutes a day
- Do not do it when you are sleepy
- Pick a technique that works for you
- Find a quiet, comfortable place
- Wear comfortable, loose clothing

Deep Breathing

- Sit comfortably with your back straight
- Place one hand on your chest, one on your stomach
- Breathe in through your nose – the hand on your stomach should rise, your chest should not
- Exhale – the hand on your stomach moves in, your other hand should not move
- Repeat

“Practicing regular, mindful breathing can be calming and energizing and can even help with stress-related health problems ranging from panic attacks to digestive disorders.”

- Andrew Weil, M.D.

Are You a Shallow Breather?

- Most people are shallow breathers
- Try this test: put your palms on your lower abdomen and blow out all the air, now take a deep breath – if your abdomen expands you are on the right track, keep breathing to expand your rib cage
- If you pull in your stomach and pump up your chest you are a shallow breather and are taking in less air

Meditation

- Any kind of deliberate focus
- You can say or think a 'mantra' or phrase or use a sound like a bell or humming, to help block out distractions
- Long-term effects: lowers the risk of heart disease, helps in quitting addictions, and can change your attitude in a positive way
- Short-term effects: relieve physical tension, improve athletic performance, and lead to more comfortable breathing
- Enhances the immune system
- Relaxes the nervous system



Mindfulness

- Experience the present with all of your senses
- Focus on one sense at a time
- Keep being present – No self-judging
- Enjoy the freedom from judging the situation

Visualization and Guided Imagery

- Close your eyes
- Breathe deeply
- Pick a favorite place: beach, mountains or look at a photo
- Make it fun and imagine in 3-D: think of the smells and taste of this place; imagine feeling a breeze or the warm sun
- Guided imagery is when you listen to a tape or recording of someone who takes you through a series of events to imagine
- Your mind and imagination can overpower stressful situations and offer a fresh perspective

Yoga



- Not just about relaxation
- Teaches you to focus on your breath and body working together
- Increases flexibility and strength
- Can help clear negative emotions
- Can teach the mind and muscles to switch out of the body's fight or flight state more efficiently
 - ▣ Leads to less discomfort in the body
 - ▣ Reduces your risk for disease

Types of Yoga

- Hatha yoga refers to the physical postures we associate with yoga
- Meditative movement is great for those who have a hard time sitting still to relax
- If you are new to yoga or working through injuries, find a teacher to learn proper alignment
- Some modern names for yoga styles include: Hatha, Vinyasa, Iyengar, Anusara, Ashtanga, Yin, Restorative
- Do yoga throughout the day by incorporating deep breathing while stretching

Resources

Apps:

- Headspace
- Calm
- Breathe2Relax

Websites:

- Mindful.org

Evaluation Survey QR Code

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and brown overalls, stands in a workshop or factory setting. The background is blurred, showing industrial equipment and bright light from a window.

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THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!

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