



The School Psychology Service Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Set aside 10-15 minutes each day to practise making yourself relaxed.

Remember these three things:

1. Find a quiet place where people won't bother you.
2. Don't try to do this relaxation exercise if you are in a hurry.
3. Don't try to do it straight after a meal, as it might not work quite as well if you are full up!

How to relax:

When you are ready to relax, sit down in a comfortable chair. Then go through each of the 16 muscle groups in turn. First, tense each muscle group for about *5 seconds* and really notice the feelings of tension. Next, let those muscles relax completely for about *10 seconds*. As you do this, focus your attention on the feelings of relaxation in the muscles and make sure they have become totally comfortable before you then move on to the next muscle group. Here are the 16 muscle groups and the best way for you to tense each one (for 5 seconds) before you then let the tension go (for 10 seconds):

1. Right hand and lower arm—make a tight fist. Then relax.
2. Right upper arm—pull your elbow against your hip bone. Then relax.
3. Left hand and lower arm—make a tight fist. Then relax.
4. Left upper arm—pull your elbow against your hip bone. Then relax.
5. Forehead—frown. Then relax.
6. Eyes—screw up your eyes tight. And when you relax, leave them closed. Then relax.
7. Jaw—clench your teeth and pull back the corners of your mouth. Then relax.
8. Neck—push your chin down and pull back your head at the same time. Then relax.
9. Shoulders and upper back—take a deep breath and hunch your shoulders. Then relax, letting your breathing become slow and regular as you do it.
10. Stomach—brace the muscles of your stomach. Then relax.
11. Right thigh—concentrate on tensing both the muscles at the top and the one underneath the thigh. Then relax.
12. Right calf—point your toes upwards. Then relax.
13. Right foot—curl your toes. Then relax.
14. Left thigh—concentrate on tensing both the muscles at the top and the ones underneath the thigh. Then relax.
15. Left calf—point your toes upwards. Then relax.
16. Left foot- curl your toes. Then relax.



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