

SLOW DOWN! RELAX!



Benefits of Relaxation:

- Reduce anxiety
- Reduce symptoms of depression
- Helpful in managing chronic insomnia
- Reduce muscle tension
- Decrease the incidence of stress-related disorders
- Increase a sense of well-being

What does relaxation look like for you? Does it mean glaring in front of the TV? TV watching can have little impact on reducing stress levels. However, activating the body's natural relaxation response effectively combats stress. Here you will find some useful relaxation techniques that can activate your body's natural response to relax.

Resources:

[youtube.com/watch?v=9SZ1kdBwNXo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SZ1kdBwNXo)

psychology.tools/relaxation.html

[portlandpsychotherapyclinic.com/counseling/mindfulness
and_acceptance_exercises](https://portlandpsychotherapyclinic.com/counseling/mindfulness-and-acceptance-exercises)

<http://www.yogajournal.com/pose/single-nostril-breath/>

- Marsha M. Linehan. (2015). DBT Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, 2nd Ed. The Guilford Press.
- Steven C. Hayes, Kirk D. Strosahl, and Kelly G. Wilson (2011). Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The Process and Practice of Mindful Change. Guilford Press, 2nd Ed.
- William, J.M.G. (2010). Mindfulness and psychological process. Emotion, 10, 1-7.
- nccih.nih.gov/health/stress/relaxation.htm
- apa.org/helpcenter/stress-body.aspx



RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Deep breathing meditation:

•A simple technique that can be practiced anywhere (i.e. work, car, home)

- 1) Sit comfortably with your back straight or lay on the floor
- 2) Put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- 3) Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise and the hand on your chest should move very little.
- 4) Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your hand on your chest should move very little.
- 5) Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- 6) Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls.
- 7) Count slowly as you exhale.

Other Techniques:

Exercise, massage, dance, music, artwork, walking, etc.

Progressive muscle relaxation:

- 1) Sit comfortably in a quiet room.
- 2) Tense a group of muscles i.e. muscles in right arm.
- 3) Hold for 15 seconds, then release it while breathing out.
- 4) After a short rest, repeat steps with another set of muscles.

Visualization and imagery:

- 1) Induce a relaxed state.
- 2) Develop a pleasant scene as a visual image that enhances state of relaxation (i.e. a beach, forest, desert, or favorite childhood memory).



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