



Relax, Relate, Release: Muscle Relaxation Techniques

Prolonged stress can have adverse effects on health and general well-being. Learning to reduce pent-up stress and tension can improve your outlook and help you to respond to new situations more positively. Progressive muscle relaxation can help. Give it a try:

1. Lie down in a quiet, comfortable area. Close your eyes and breathe slow, deep breaths.
2. Starting at your feet, contract and relax the muscles of your body. Start by moving up your body to the top of your head, and then reverse directions back down to your feet.
3. While relaxing each muscle group, visualize the tension escaping your body.
4. When you are finished, take a few moments to enjoy the feeling of a tension-free body. Continue taking slow, deep breaths until you are ready to resume your day.
5. You can do a mini version of this exercise at stress-filled times throughout the day if you begin to feel tension in your muscles.

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