

## **Relaxation Technique Directions**

Record these directions for yourself by reading them slowly. Use the tape daily to practice the relaxation response:

Settle back as comfortably as you can and close your eyes. Let yourself relax to the best of your ability. Now, as you relax like that, clench your right fist. Just clench your fist tighter and tighter and study the tension as you do so. Keep it clenched and feel the tension in your right fist, hand, and forearm. Now relax. Let the fingers of your right hand become loose, and observe the contrast in your feelings. Now, let yourself go and try to become more relaxed all over. Once more, clench your right fist really tight - hold it, and notice the tension again. Now let go, relax; your fingers straighten out and you notice the difference once more. Repeat that with your left fist. Clench your left fist while the rest of your body relaxes; clench that fist tighter and feel the tension. Now relax. Again, enjoy the contrast. Repeat that once more. Clench the left fist, tight and tense. Now do the opposite of tension: relax and feel the difference. Continue relaxing like that for a while. Clench both fists tighter and tighter, both fists tense, forearms tense. Study the sensations. Relax; straighten out your fingers and feel the relaxation. Continue relaxing your hands and forearms more and more.

Now bend your elbows and tense your biceps, tense them harder and study the tension feelings. All right. Straighten out your arms, let them relax and feel that difference again. Let the relaxation develop. Once more, tense your biceps; hold the tension and observe it carefully. Straighten the arms and relax; relax to the best of your ability. Each time, pay close attention to your feelings when you tense up and when you relax. Now straighten your arms. Straighten them so that you feel the most tension in the triceps muscles along the backs of your arms; stretch your arms and feel that tension. Now relax. Get your arms back into a comfortable position. Let the relaxation proceed on its own. The arms should feel comfortably heavy as you allow them to relax. Straighten the arms once more so that you feel the tension in the triceps muscles; straighten them. Feel that tension - relax. Now concentrate on pure relaxation in the arms without any tension. Get your arms comfortable and let them relax further and further. Continue relaxing your arms even further. Even when your arms seem fully relaxed, try to go that extra bit further; try to achieve deeper and deeper levels of relaxation.

Let all your muscles go loose and heavy. Just settle back quietly and comfortably. Wrinkle up your forehead now; wrinkle it tighter. Now, stop wrinkling your forehead; relax and smooth it out. Picture the entire forehead and scalp becoming smoother as the relaxation increased. Now, frown and crease your brows and study the tension. Let go of the tension again. Smooth out the forehead once more. Now, close your eyes tighter and tighter. Feel the tension. Relax your eyes. Keep your eyes closed, gently and comfortably, and notice the relaxation. Now clench your jaws, bite your teeth together; study the tension throughout the jaws. Relax your jaws now. Let your lips part slightly. Appreciate the relaxation. Now press your tongue hard against the roof of your mouth. Look for the tension. All right. Let your tongue return to a comfortable and relaxed position. Now purse your lips. Press your lips together tighter and tighter. Relax the lips. Note the contrast between tension and relaxation. Feel the relaxation all over your face, all over your

forehead and scalp, eyes, jaws, lips, tongue and throat. The relaxation progresses further and further.

Now attend to your neck muscles. Press your head back as far as it can go and feel the tension in the neck now roll it to the left. Straighten your head and bring it forward. Press your chin against your chest. Let your head return to a comfortable position and study the relaxation. Let the relaxation develop. Shrug your shoulders. Hold the tension. Drop your shoulders and feel the relaxation. Neck and shoulders relaxed. Shrug your shoulders again and move them around. Bring your shoulders up and forward and back. Feel the tension in your shoulders and in your upper back. Drop your shoulders once more and relax. Let the relaxation spread deep into the shoulders, right into your back muscles; relax your neck and throat, and your jaws and other facial areas as the pure relaxation takes over and grows deeper, deeper, ever deeper.

Relax your entire body to the best of your ability. Feel that comfortable heaviness that accompanies relaxation. Breathe easily and freely in and out. Notice how the relaxation increase as you exhale. As you breathe out, just feel that relaxation. Now breathe right in and fill your lungs inhale deeply and hold your breathe. Study the tension. Now exhale, let the walls of your chest grow loose and push the air out automatically. Continue relaxing and breathe freely, gently. Feel the relaxation and enjoy it. With the rest of your body as relaxed as possible, fill your lungs again. Breathe in deeply and hold it again. That's fine, breathe out and appreciate the relief. Just breathe normally. Continue relaxing your chest and let the relaxation spread to your back, shoulders, neck and arms. Merely let go. Enjoy the relaxation.

Now let's pay attention to your abdominal muscles; your stomach area. Tighten your stomach muscles, make your abdomen hard. Notice the tension. And relax. Let the muscles loosen and notice the contrast. Once more, press and tighten your stomach muscles, make your abdomen hard. Notice the tension. And relax. Let the muscles loosen and notice the contrast. Once more, press and tighten your stomach muscles. Hold the tension and study it, relax. Notice the general wellbeing that comes with relaxing your stomach. Now draw your stomach in, pull the muscles in and feel the tension this way. Relax again, let your stomach out. Continue breathing normally and easily. Feel the gentle massaging action all over your chest and stomach. Now pull your stomach in again and hold the tension. Push out and tense like that; hold the tension. Once more, pull in and feel the tension.

Now relax your stomach fully. Let the tension dissolve as the relaxation grows deeper. Each time you breathe out, notice the rhythmic relaxation both in your lungs and in your stomach. Try and let go of all contractions anywhere in your body. Now direct your attention to your lower back. Arch your back, making your lower back quite hollow, and feel the tension along your spine. Settle down comfortably again, relaxing the lower back. Just arch your back and feel the tension as you do so. Try to keep the ready of your body as relaxed as possible. Try to localize the tension throughout your lower back area. Relax once more, relaxing further and further. Relax your lower back, relax your upper back. Spread the relaxation to your stomach, chest, shoulders, arms and facial area, these parts relaxing further, further, further, ever deeper.

Let go of all tensions and relax. Now flex your buttocks and thighs. Flex your thighs by pressing down your heels as hard as you can. Relax and note the difference. Straighten your knees and flex your thigh muscles again. Hold the tension. Relax your hips and thighs. Allow the relaxation to proceed on its own. Press your feet and toes downward, away from your face, so that your calf muscles become tense. Study the tension. Relax your feet and calves. This time, bend your feet toward your face so that you feel tension along your shins. Bring your toes right up. Relax again. Keep relaxing for a while.

Now let yourself relax further all over. Relax your feet, ankles, calves and shins, knees, thighs, buttocks and hips. Feel the heaviness of your lower body as you relax still further. Now spread the relaxation to your stomach, waist, and lower back. Let go more and more. Feel that relaxation all over. Let it proceed to your upper back, chest, shoulders and arms, right to the tips of your fingers. Keep relaxing more and more deeply. Make sure that no tension has crept into your throat; relax your neck and your jaws and all your facial muscles. Keep relaxing your whole body like that for a while. Let yourself relax all over.

Now you can become twice as relaxed as you are merely by taking in a deep breath and exhaling slowly. With your eyes closed you become less aware of objects and movements around you, thus preventing any surface tensions from developing. Breathe in deeply and feel yourself becoming heavier. Take in a long, deep breath and let it out very slowly. Feel how heavy and relaxed you have become.

In a state of perfect relaxation you should feel unwilling to move a single muscle in your body. Think about the effort that would be required to raise your right arm. As you think about raising your right arm, see if you can notice any tensions that might have crept into your shoulder and arm. You decide not to lift the arm but to continue relaxing. Observe the relief and the disappearance of tension.

Just carry on relaxing like that. When you wish to get up, count backward from four to one. You should then feel fine, refreshed, wide awake and calm.