

Quick relaxation techniques

Science.
Compassion.
Action.

Different relaxation techniques appeal to different people. Please try out each technique and rate it out of 10, then choose the one(s) that suit you best.

Whole body tension		Score out of 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tense everything in your whole body, stay with that tension. Hold it for up to 10 seconds. Be sure to stop if you experience any pain. Slowly release the tension and very gradually feel it leave your body. Repeat three times. 		
Imagine air as a cloud		Score out of 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open your imagination and focus on your breathing. As your breathing becomes calm and regular, imagine that the air comes to you as a cloud. It fills you and goes out. You may imagine the cloud to be a particular colour. 		
Pick a spot		Score out of 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With your head level and body relaxed, pick a spot to focus on (eyes open point). When ready, count five breaths backward. With each breath allow your eyes to close gradually. Concentrate on each breath. When you get to one, your eyes will be closed. Focus on the feelings of relaxation. 		
Counting ten breaths back		Score out of 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow yourself to feel passive and indifferent, counting each breath slowly from 10 to one. With each count, allow yourself to feel heavier and more relaxed. With each exhale, allow the tension to leave your body. 		
Transformations: pick one that works or make up your own		Score out of 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you think of images like... Tightly twisted ropes Feel of cold, harsh wind Hard, cold wax Tense, red muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imagine... The twisted ropes untwisting The cold wind becoming warm and soft The wax softens and melts The red muscles soften or lighten to pink 	
Affirmations: pick one that works or make up your own		Score out of 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you think of images like... Let the tension flow away... I am calm and relaxed and ready for anything... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This discomfort will pass, let it go... I have the power to handle this... Relax the jaw, lower the shoulders... 	



**Black Dog
Institute**



GP notes quick relaxation

Background notes for prescribers

Relaxation has been described as 'a state of consciousness characterised by feelings of peace and release from tension, anxiety and fear'. The term is usually taken to mean either lack of muscle tension or lack of inner 'mental tension'.

Early relaxation techniques often involved progressive muscle relaxation with attention to breathing, such as Jacobsen's progressive relaxation, first described in the late 1930s.

It is now recognised that there is a myriad of techniques to suit different personality types and problems. Some people also encounter problems with 'letting go' and can become panicky when they try and relax. This needs to be discussed and a different type of relaxation technique considered.

It is helpful to find out what happens to the individual when they are tense:

- How does he/she know they are tense?
- What happens first? What next?
- What helps? What doesn't?
- Have they had problems with previous attempts at relaxation?

It is also helpful to know the individual's style. Do they like to picture things? Read things? Listen to things? Do something?



For more information

Visit our website blackdoginstitute.org.au
Find us on social media @blackdoginst



This document may be freely downloaded and distributed on condition no change is made to the content. The information in this document is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Not to be used for commercial purposes and not to be hosted electronically outside of the Black Dog Institute website.



**Black Dog
Institute**