Activity sheet

# Activity: Progressive muscle relaxation (Adapted from Castle and Buckler, 2021: 356‒7, Table 17.1)

Instructions for progressive muscle relaxation

|  |
| --- |
| Follow each step, by tensing and relaxing each muscle group in turn. You should pay attention to the difference between tense and relaxed muscles. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Step | Instruction |
| 1 | Make yourself comfortable in a quiet environment. Remove or loosen any restrictive clothing. Breathe in deeply, hold and exhale. Do this two more times. You should begin to feel more relaxed. |
| 2 | If you hear any noises, do not ignore them, but focus on inhaling and exhaling slowly. |
| 3 | Begin by tensing the muscles of your lower left leg and foot by pointing your toes. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your calf and foot. Repeat this procedure once more. Do this for the left leg and then twice for the right leg and foot. |
| 4 | Move on to tensing the left thigh and buttocks. Tense the left thigh muscle and buttocks by pushing down into the floor. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your left thigh and buttocks. Repeat this procedure once more. Do this for the left leg and then twice for right thigh and buttocks. |
| 5 | Next, tense and relax the left forearm. Do this by bending at the elbow. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your left bicep. Repeat this procedure once more. Do this for the left bicep and then twice for the right bicep. |
| 6 | Next, tense and relax the left bicep. Do this by making a fist. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your left forearm. Repeat this procedure once more. Do this for the left forearm and then twice for the right forearm. |
| 7 | Move on to tensing and relaxing the muscles in your back. Do this by arching your back. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your back muscles. Repeat this procedure once more.  Next, tense and relax the muscles in your stomach and chest. Do this by inhaling, holding and releasing. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your stomach and chest. Repeat this procedure once more. |
| 8 | Next, tense and relax the muscles in your neck and shoulders. Do this by shrugging your shoulders. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your neck and shoulder muscles. Repeat this procedure once more. |
| 9 | Move on to tensing and relaxing the muscles in your face and forehead. Do this by clenching your jaw and frowning. Hold this tension for five seconds and then relax. You can feel the difference between tension and relaxation in your facial muscles. Repeat this procedure once more. |
| 10 | Mentally scan your whole body for any tension. If there is any, release it by tension and relaxation. |
| 11 | Finally, focus on the relaxed feelings your muscles are now giving you. You are calm and relaxed. |
| 12 | Before getting up, it is important to return to a greater degree of conscious awareness. Count slowly, from 1 to 7, exhaling on every count. As you get closer to 7, you will feel more and more alert. |
| 13 | You should now feel completely relaxed and rejuvenated |