Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation promotes deep relaxation, making it effective for stress relief, anxiety reduction, and improving sleep. It can be practiced while in bed before drifting off to sleep.

*Avoid Over-Tensing: Do not strain muscles too hard—mild tension is enough.*

**Steps**

1. Prepare Your Space

* Find a quiet, comfortable place where you won’t be interrupted.
* Sit or lie down in a relaxed position, with your arms resting by your sides.
* Dim the lights or play soft music if it helps you unwind.

1. Settle and Center Yourself

* Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
* Breathe in deeply through your nose, hold for a few seconds, and exhale slowly through your mouth.
* Allow your body to relax naturally before you begin.

1. Progressive Muscle Tension & Release

* Work through each muscle group, tensing for 5-10 seconds and then releasing completely for 15-20 seconds before moving to the next.
* Feet & Legs
  + Feet: Curl your toes downward, tightening the muscles in your feet. Hold, then relax.
  + Calves: Point your toes upward to tense your calf muscles. Hold, then relax.
  + Thighs: Squeeze your thighs together or press your heels down. Hold, then relax.
* Core & Back
  + Abdomen: Tighten your stomach muscles as if bracing for impact. Hold, then relax.
  + Lower Back: Arch your lower back slightly. Hold, then relax.
* Chest & Shoulders
  + Chest: Take a deep breath, expand your chest, and hold. Exhale and relax.
  + Shoulders: Shrug your shoulders up toward your ears. Hold, then release.
* Arms & Hands
  + Hands: Make fists, squeezing tightly. Hold, then relax.
  + Arms: Tighten your biceps by pressing your arms against your body. Hold, then relax.
* Neck & Face
  + Neck: Gently tilt your head back, tensing your neck. Hold, then relax.
  + Face: Scrunch your face by squeezing your eyes shut and clenching your jaw. Hold, then relax.

1. Full-Body Relaxation

* Once all muscle groups are relaxed, scan your body for any remaining tension.
* Imagine a wave of relaxation flowing from head to toe.
* Rest in this relaxed state for a few minutes, allowing your body to absorb the sensation of deep calm.

**Tips for Best Results**

* Use Guided Audio – Listening to a recording can help deepen the experience.
* Adjust Intensity – If a muscle group feels painful, tense it gently.
* Breathe Deeply – Slow breathing enhances relaxation and promotes mindfulness.