

Progressive Muscle Relaxation for Stress Management

What: When you are experiencing anxiety or stress, one of the ways your body responds is through muscle tension. Progressive muscle relaxation is a method that helps to relieve this tension. In progressive muscle relaxation, you tense a group of muscles as you breathe in, and relax them as you breathe out, working through all muscle groups. This method is a skill you will become better at through regular practice which you can then use to relieve stress anywhere, at anytime.

How: Choose a quiet place where you can lie down undisturbed. Eventually, you'll be able to do all or part of this exercise sitting up at your workplace.

- 1 Relax your entire body, allowing it to feel heavy and sink into the ground or chair. Take a few slow deep breaths.
- 2 Contract the muscles of your feet as you inhale. Hold the contraction briefly, then relax as you breath out. Imagine the tension leaving your body as you breath out.
- 3 Move up your body contracting the muscles in your leg, buttocks, abdomen, and so on.
- 4 Now lie still for 5 minutes and experience the relaxed muscles.

Example: YouTube Video Title and Link: Progressive Muscle Relaxation Training @ <https://youtu.be/ihO02wUzgkc>

Why: Not only is muscle relaxation a great way to feel calm, it also trains your body to recognize and reduce muscle tension such as neck and shoulder tension commonly related to work stress.

