

Exercise sheet

COMBINED RELAXATION

JACOBSON AND SCHULTZ



Make yourself comfortable, placing your feet on the floor if you are seated or on the mattress if you are lying down, resting your hands on the armrests, your thighs or the mattress.

And you can close your eyes if that's comfortable for you.

- Breathe in, inflating the belly... Exhale and feel your belly deflate... (You can place a hand on your belly to help you feel it). Inhale... Exhale... Continue this slow abdominal breathing for a few moments. Visualise the path of the air as it enters your nostrils, travels down your windpipe, fills your lungs and goes down to your belly, and the path of the air in reverse, coming out, a little warmer.
- Now focus on your right hand. Clench your right fist... hard... very hard... Feel the tension in your fist and forearm... Then release completely... And notice the difference between that tense state and the relaxed state that you now feel in your right hand.
- Bend your right arm in on itself and contract your upper arm. Focus on this feeling of tension. Then release completely, noting carefully, once again, the difference between the tense state and the relaxed state...
- Now close your left fist and clench it hard... very hard... Again, focus on the feeling of tension in the fist and forearm. Then release completely, once again noting the difference between the tense state and the relaxed state.
- Now bend your left arm. Contract it hard... very hard... Focus on the tension, then release it completely.
- Now focus on your feet and, keeping both heels firmly on the ground, raise your toes and pull them towards the ceiling. Pull hard, so that you can feel the tension in the soles of your feet, your ankles and your calves. Then release completely, and again, notice the difference between the tense state and the relaxed state that you now feel in your feet.
- Now press your knees together. Squeeze hard and feel the tension in the knees and thighs. Then release completely.

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- Now tighten your gluteal muscles. And release completely. Pull in your tummy... then inflate it... and harden it... Then release completely. Notice, as before, the difference between the states of tension and relaxation.
- Throw your shoulders back and arch your back. Feel the tension in all the muscles in the back. From the bottom to the top of the back. Then release completely. And feel all your back muscles completely relax.
- Now shrug your shoulders up to your ears, as if you wanted them to reach your head. Then release completely. Let your shoulders drop, completely relaxed. Now try to touch your chest with your chin. Feel a pull on the back of the neck. Then release and let your head rest against whatever you are sitting or lying on.
- Now turn your head to the right, pulling to the right. Then to the left, pulling to the left. And come back to the centre. Note the difference between the states of tension and relaxation.
- Now crease your forehead by raising your eyebrows. Release. Contract the muscles in your eyebrows as if you were frowning and squeeze your eyes tightly shut. Release. Wrinkle your nose. Release. Press your lips together. Release. Clench your jaw. Release.
- Now take a deep breath. Hold the breath. And very gradually, exhale, feeling all the tension leave your body with this exhale. Begin a second time.
- Now, focus on your right hand again. You can feel that it is completely relaxed. Your fingers are completely relaxed, the palm of your hand and your whole hand are heavy, pleasantly heavy. Then this feeling of relaxation and pleasant heaviness gradually moves up your arm. Your wrist becomes completely relaxed and pleasantly heavy... then your forearm... then your upper arm... Your entire right arm is now completely relaxed and pleasantly heavy. As if it were made of lead, and you feel it sink down deeply onto whatever it is resting on.
- Now focus on your left hand. It is also heavy... pleasantly heavy... completely relaxed... Your left wrist becomes heavy too, as well as your forearm... then your upper arm... Your entire left arm is now completely relaxed and pleasantly heavy... very heavy...
- Both of your arms are now completely relaxed and pleasantly heavy...

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- Your feet sink into the ground. They too are completely relaxed and pleasantly heavy. And this feeling of heaviness and pleasant relaxation gradually moves up your legs. First your ankles become completely relaxed and pleasantly heavy... then your calves... your knees... your thighs... your pelvis... The whole lower part of your body is now completely relaxed... so relaxed that it becomes heavy, pleasantly heavy...
- Your belly is relaxed... and your chest... your shoulders fall heavily... Your whole back is completely relaxed... All the muscles in your back are relaxed, from the bottom to the top of the back... Your whole upper body is pleasantly heavy, very heavy...
Your neck and the back of your neck are relaxed...
- And your head is pleasantly heavy... Your forehead is smooth... Your eyelids are heavy... Your eyebrows are relaxed... Your nose is relaxed... as are your cheeks and your lips... Your jaw is heavy... Your entire face is completely relaxed and smooth.
Your whole body is now completely relaxed and heavy.
- Focus again on your breathing and feel that with each exhalation your body becomes even heavier, even more relaxed...
- And as your body continues to relax more with each exhalation, allow images of a place where you feel good to appear before your eyes... and stay there for as long as you like...

