

Deep Breathing Relaxation Exercise

This is one of the simplest relaxation methods, based upon a meditative, deep-breathing technique. There are five things you need to do to prepare for this exercise.

GETTING READY:

1. Choose a quiet, comfortable environment where there are few distractions and you won't be disturbed.
2. Choose a time of day when you are least likely to be disturbed by others and you won't be worried about having to get somewhere right after your practice session.
3. Choose a word or phrase to repeat, either silently or aloud, while practicing your relaxation. This will help you to keep your mind from wandering during the practice session. The word "one" or "calm" are often recommended, but any simple, pleasing word will do.
4. Develop a passive "let it happen" attitude while practicing. Don't worry about how well you are performing or about distracting thoughts. Simply continue repeating your special word or phrase.
5. Select a comfortable position. This is important to prevent undue muscular tension. A comfortable sitting position in a soft chair is probably best, as lying down may result in your falling asleep.

Those are the preliminaries. The procedure itself is very simple there are five steps.

RELAXING

1. Sit quietly in a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Relax all your muscles as fully and deeply as possible.
4. Breathe easily and naturally through your nose. **BECOME AWARE OF YOUR BREATHING.** As you breathe out, say "one" or your special word or phrase either silently to yourself or aloud. For example, breathe in... then out, "one", in...out, "one", etc.
5. Continue for 10-20 minutes. Open your eyes to check the time, if you wish, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes, at first with your eyes closed and later, with your eyes open. Do not stand up for a few minutes.