

RELAXATION

TO OVERCOME ANXIETY



We cannot always lie down to relax; it is very useful to have some know how on being able to relax during your normal working day.

SIGNS OF ANXIETY

Dry mouth, tight throat, palpitations, rapid breathing, clammy hands, tight muscles, feeling sick, immobility.

**REMEMBER, ADRENALIN IS USEFUL.....
IT IS AN EXCESS WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO ANXIETY**

SHORT TERM APPROACH

1. **Mouth and Throat.** Gently bite the sides of the tongue to produce saliva, or think of sucking a lemon! This produces a relaxation response. Swallow to relax the throat.
2. **To Slow the Heart down,** breathe in, breathe out slowly as you lower the shoulders down. Repeat 3 times.
3. **Keeping Shoulders down,** breathe in slowly to a count of 3 and out slowly for a count of 3. Then build up slowly to a count of in 4, out 4. Then in 4, hold 2, out 4, leave out 2. Keep the breath quiet.
4. **Tight Muscles.** Breathe in slowly, at the same time tightening fists and jaw, then breathe out and release really slowly. Repeat 2 times.
5. **Feeling Sick.** Breathe in and then half out and rapidly pull abdomen back several times, letting it relax after each pulling back. Breathe in again and repeat as above. This will help to direct the circulation back to the stomach.
6. **Mentally** "hum" a tune you really like, or think of a place where you have been calm and happy.

ALL THE ABOVE CAN BE DONE FAIRLY UNOBTRUSIVELY IN PUBLIC

BUT YOU WILL GAIN BY BECOMING COMFORTABLE WITH ONE OR TWO

PRACTICES FIRST

LONGER TERM APPROACH

1. Most importantly, learn "low breathing" which will automatically reduce the heartbeat. *(See the download on low breathing next month).*
2. Learn to lengthen the outward breath.
3. Think of your needs and consider as appropriate the following: -
 - a. Book in for a regular massage to relieve muscle tension.
 - b. Take up physical pursuit, ditto.
 - c. Try Yoga for an overall approach.
 - d. Hypnotherapy if an easily identified cause, e.g. plane travel.
 - e. "Biofeedback" can be used as an aid, e.g. a small sticker to show alteration in muscle tension, a watch to show pulse rate, a small machine which emits a sound to show changes in muscle tension.

Biofeedback means giving information about our constantly changing bodily systems. It is useful in showing us whether we are in frequent anxiety states and the most common source of any anxiety.
4. Consider whether joining a group activity is what is needed or whether more time on your own is preferred.
5. Alcohol in small amounts is used by many to give a feeling of relaxation. If it is used on a daily basis as a necessary relaxant, then it will have the opposite effect and produce increasing anxiety in its absence.
6. Tape yourself reading SHORT TERM APPROACH slowly, so that you can play back and practice.

SUMMARY

1. learn how to relax using the short term approach
2. learn how to do low breathing in order to reduce the heart rate
3. assess your social and lifestyle choices using the long term approach

Additional Resources

TAPES/CDs

Help for Neck and Shoulders
Relaxation

To Order see

www.yogapam.me.uk

BOOKS

The Relaxation Response,
H Benson, 2000

Kum Nye Relaxation,
Tulku Tarthang,

Total Relaxation in Five
Steps, Louis Proto, 1989

The Complete Relaxation