

The Relaxation Response Technique

1. Sit quietly in a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Deeply relax all of your muscles, starting at your toes and continuing up to the top of your head.
4. Breathe through your nose. Become aware of your breathing. As you exhale, say any soothing word or sound, silently to yourself. Breathe easily and naturally.
5. Continue this for 10 to 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes with your eyes closed and later with your eyes opened. Do not stand up for a few minutes.
6. Do not worry about whether or not you are successful in achieving a deep level of relaxation. Maintain a positive attitude and let relaxation occur at its own pace. When distracting thoughts occur, try to ignore them and return to practicing the breathing technique.



With practice, the relaxation response should come with little effort. Practice the technique at least once or twice a day, but not within two hours after any meal, since the digestive processes can interfere with the technique.

Source: *The Relaxation Response* by Dr. Herbert Benson