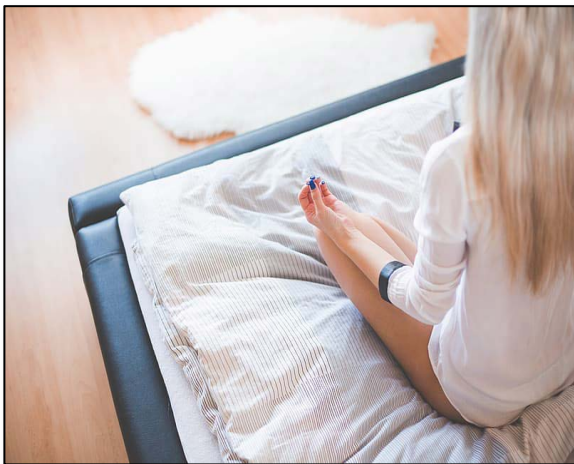


15 - 20  
Minute  
Activity  
For  
Everyone

## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Everyone experiences different levels of stress. Whether it be a sudden change to our daily routine, facing a fear or meeting a deadline, stress is almost solely caused by external factors. Though we rarely have control over these external stress factors, we can decide how we react to them, as well as take action to support ourselves in moving through our stressors. As we all know, stress can physically effect our bodies, leaving our muscles tense and uncomfortable. Here is a relaxation technique for you and your family to calm your bodies and restore your muscles to a relaxed state, increasing body awareness.

One of our bodies main reactions to stress is to tense our muscles, sending extra blood and oxygen to them in case we need to use them. Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a mind and body technique that involves slowly tensing and then relaxing each muscle group in your body. This technique aims to relax your tense muscles and increase your awareness and identification of the sensations associated with muscle tension.



### Reflection Questions:

- Was this technique effective for you?
- Were your muscles more tense than you originally thought?
- How did this technique make you feel?
- Which areas of your body felt the most relaxed and which felt the most tense?
- What impacts can using this technique have on your daily life?

### Activity:

- Start by sitting cross legged or laying down on your back in a quiet room, free from interruptions.
- Begin taking slow deep breaths, each consecutive breath should be longer than the previous one.
- Next, tighten the muscles in your face and head, wrinkling your forehead and nose muscles, while also clenching your jaw. Hold for 5 seconds and then release.
- Now, focus on your neck and shoulders, hunch your shoulders and squeeze your neck for 5 seconds, then release.
- Move to your arms, clench tight fists with bent arms squeezing your biceps. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.
- Next, focus on your stomach. Flex and tighten all the muscles in your stomach for 5 seconds, then release.
- Now, focus on your back. Flex and tighten all the muscles in your back for 5 seconds, then release.
- Move to your legs, flex your feet and tighten all your leg muscles. Hold for 5 seconds, then release.
- Once you have completed all these steps, repeat them again. If you are feeling any area's that are still tense, tighten and release them again.

### Materials Needed:

- Quiet space free from interruptions.