

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

1 Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a helpful way to feel calmer when you're anxious, angry, stressed, or tense.

It's a way to relax and unwind, while clearing your head so you can think better.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is very useful because it's something you can do anywhere, and it's not easy for others to notice you are doing it.

You can also do it for a short time, or take longer if you feel like it.

This technique works best when you're in a quiet place, by yourself - and you can even do it in bed at night to help you fall asleep.

2 With your back nice and straight, settle into a comfortable standing or seating position.

3 Now gently shut your eyes.

4 Begin with three deep, calming breaths through your nose.

Feel the air flowing in, and out. In, and out. In...and out again.

5 First, bring your attention to your feet.

Feel your toes relax...

Your heels... the ball of each foot... the side of each foot... just relaxing.

They may feel like they're becoming lighter, looser, even softer or weightless.

Relax into it!

6 Slowly, calmly, bring your mind up your body.

Feel your ankles unwind and relax.

Then upwards, to your calves, with each body part relaxing as you think of it.

7 Take all the time you like, and move upward, thinking about and letting go of tension in your: ■ *Ankles*

- *Calves*
- *Knees*
- *Upper legs (front and back)*
- *Backside*
- *Stomach*
- *Lower back*
- *Center back*
- *Spinal cord*
- *Upper Back*
- *Chest and torso*
- *Shoulders*
- *Upper arms (front and back)*
- *Elbows*
- *Lower arms (front and back)*
- *Wrists*
- *Hands and fingers*
- *Neck*
- *Lips and Tongue*
- *Eyes, and*
- *Temples*

8 If you have time, why not repeat the whole thing, moving downward from the top of your head to the tips of your toes?

9 Progressive Muscle Relaxation works best if you practice it regularly, and in a calm, peaceful, good mood.

This helps you create a habit, and then it's even easier to use when you do become angry, stressed out, or nervous.

10 It's often tougher to deal properly with challenges when we're already upset. When we stop to relax and feel better first, making good decisions is easier.

This is where Progressive Muscle Relaxation can be super useful