

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- PMR is a series of tension and relaxation exercises designed to help you become more aware of signs of tension and learn how to relax.
 - You will be asked to tense and relax different muscle groups in a sequence. If a specific muscle group is too painful, skip the tension part of the exercise and just relax that area.
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- Close your eyes for a few moments (or pick a spot to look at on the floor) and focus on how your body feels. Move your focus to different parts of your body and see if you can notice any tension in any particular part. How about where you have the most pain? Can you detect any tension there? You may feel more pain when you focus on it. That's natural. You may not feel any tension at first. That's natural as well. Just let what is "be" without judging the exercise or yourself.
 - If you notice tension in any part of your body, compare that sensation to body parts that don't feel so tense. Now just let the tension go. Let it drift away. It might help to imagine the tense body part feeling more and more like the parts of your body that do not feel tense.
 - Now curl the toes of your left foot toward the bottom of your foot or the floor. Hold this tense position and feel the tightness in your ankle and sole of your foot (2 seconds). Now, relax your foot by moving your toes away from the bottom of your foot or the floor. Let your toes relax. Let all the tension drain from your toes. Feel the warm comfortable sensations of relaxation that you have been able to produce. Notice how they differ from the tight sensations of tensing your muscles. Again, tense the muscles of your left foot (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds).
 - Now, curl the toes of your right foot toward the bottom of your foot or the floor. Hold this tense position and feel the tightness in your ankle and sole of your foot (2 seconds). Now, relax your right foot. Notice how this sensation differs from tension. Again, tense the muscles of your right foot (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds).
 - Now, tense the muscles of your left thigh by pressing hard against your other leg (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Let all the tension go and notice the difference between tension and relaxation. Again, tense the muscles of your left thigh (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
 - Now, tense the muscles of your right thigh by pressing hard against your other leg (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Let all the tension go and notice the difference between tension and relaxation. Again, tense the muscles of your right thigh (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).

- Tighten the muscles of your buttocks by pulling them toward each other (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your buttocks (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds).
- Tighten the muscles of your stomach as if you were trying to protect yourself from being punched (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again tense your stomach muscles (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds).
- Pull your shoulder blades toward each other (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again tense your back muscles (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds).
- Hunch your shoulders toward your ears (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your shoulders (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Press the upper part of your right arm against your right side (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your right arm (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Press the upper part of your left arm against your left side (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your left arm (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Make a tight fist with your right hand (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your right hand (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Make a tight fist with your left hand (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your left hand (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Push the back of your head hard against floor or chair or tighten your neck muscles (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your neck muscles (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Clench your teeth together, push your tongue against the roof of your mouth and smile to expose as many teeth as you can (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your mouth (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Squint your eyes tightly shut, and wrinkle your nose (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense your face muscles (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- Raise your eyebrows as high as you can to wrinkle your forehead (2 seconds), and relax (5 seconds). Again, tense the muscles of your forehead (2 seconds) and relax (5 seconds).
- If you notice any tension left in a particular part of the body, compare those sensations to parts of the body that feel relaxed. Let the tense body part drift into the same feeling as the relaxed body part. Continue to relax for a few more minutes but do not allow yourself to become drowsy. Then, return your attention to the room and open your eyes

