

Muscle Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- Two step technique: tension and relaxation
- Pay attention to the feeling of relaxation when releasing the contracted muscle
- Practice daily, bedtime is often ideal
- Takes as little as 10 minutes per day to practice
- Younger child: parent reads the script, can use fewer body parts
- Can then utilize in other stressful situations

Relaxation Script Grades K-4 (Ollendick, 1978)

To begin the relaxation session, have the children sit comfortable in their chair and close their eyes. Soft, slow music can be playing in the background. When reading the script, speak in a soft, even tone. Pause between sentences.

- **Hands and Arms**

Pretend you have a whole lemon in your left hand. Now squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon. Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed. Take another lemon and squeeze it. Try to squeeze. Try to squeeze it harder than you did the first one. That's right. Real hard. Now drop your lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Once again, take a lemon in your left hand and squeeze all the juice out. Don't leave a single drop. Squeeze hard. Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand. *(repeat this process with the right hand and arm.)*

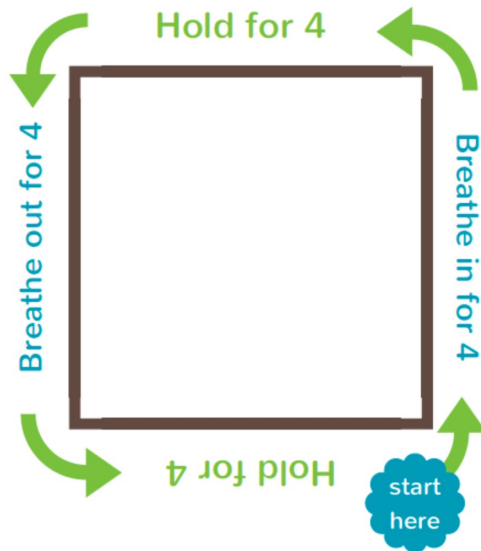
- **Arms and Shoulders**

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Place them up high over your head, way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, kittens, let's stretch again. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them over your head. Put them back, way back. Pull hard. Now let them drop quickly. This time let's have a great big stretch. Try to touch the ceiling. Stretch your arms way out in front of you. Raise them way up high over your head. Push them way, way back. Notice the tension and pull in your arms and shoulders. Hold tight now. Great. Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Muscle Relaxation: Script Conclusion

- Stay as relaxed as you can.
- Let your whole body go limp and feel all your muscles relaxed.
- As you go through the day, remember how good it feels to be relaxed.
- Sometimes you have to make yourself tighter before you can be relaxed, just as we did in these exercises.
- Practice these exercises every night to get more relaxed.
- When you are a really good relaxer, you can help yourself relax at school.
- You've done a good job. You're going to be a super relaxer.

Square Breathing



Sleep Hygiene

- Wind down period before bed
- Consistent bedtime schedule
- Physical activity during the day
- Limit caffeine and alcohol
- Create restful environment
- Nothing but sleep on the bed
- No napping
- No screens in the room
- Manage stress before bed
- If unable to sleep:
 - *Change position*
 - *Read for 20 minutes*
 - *Muscle relaxation*
 - *Can do short trial of melatonin*

Thinking through negative thoughts

What thought might be more helpful?

INSTEAD OF.....	TRY THINKING....
I'm not good at this	What am I missing?
I give up	I'll use a different strategy
It's good enough	Is this really my best work?
I can't make this any better	I can always improve
This is too hard	This may take some time
I made a mistake	Mistakes help me to learn
I just can't do this	I am going to train my brain
I'll never be that smart	I will learn how to do this
Plan A didn't work	There's always Plan B
My friend can do it	I will learn from them