



UNIVERSITY of
BRADFORD

Counselling Service

5 Minute Relaxation

*Information
and self-help*

Five Minute Relaxation sitting in a chair.

It is better to have a chair with arms, but ideally you will be able to learn to relax anywhere you find yourself. Use a cushion in the small of your back if it helps. Make sure you are warm. Make sure you won't be disturbed for 5 minutes.

Sit upright and well back in the chair so that your thighs and back are supported, and rest your hands on your lap, or lightly on top of your thighs. You can take off your shoes, and rest your feet on the ground. If they don't touch the floor, find something to rest them on. Close your eyes, if you like.

Begin by breathing out then breathe in easily, just as much as you need. Now breathe out slowly, with a slight sigh, like a balloon slowly deflating. Do this once more, slowly...breathe in...breathe out, feel the tension begin to drain away. Then go back to your ordinary breathing, even, quiet, and steady.

Now direct your thoughts to each part of your body in to the muscles and joints. Think first about your left foot. Your foot feels heavy on the floor. Let both your feet, your toes and ankles start to relax.

Now think about your legs. Let your legs feel completely relaxed and heavy on the chair. Think about your back and your spine. Let the tension drain away from your back, and from your spine. Follow your breathing, and each time you breathe out, relax your back and spine a little more.

Let your abdominal muscles become soft and loose. There's no need to hold your stomach in tight, it rises and falls as you breathe quietly. No tension in your chest. Now think about the fingers of your left hand - they are curved, limp and quite still; now the fingers of your right hand... your arms - feel the heaviness in your arms - up to your shoulders. Let your shoulders relax and drop easily...and then let them drop even further than you thought they could. Think about your neck. Feel the tension melt away from your neck and shoulders. Each time you breathe out relax your neck a little more.

Now, before you move on, just check to see if all these parts of your body are still relaxed - your feet, legs, back and spine, tummy, hands, arms, neck and shoulders. Keep your breathing gentle and easy. Every time you breathe out, relax a little more, and let all the tensions ease away from your body. No tensions - just enjoy this feeling of relaxation.

Now, think about your face. Let the expression come off your face. Smooth out your brow and let your forehead feel wide and relaxed. Let your eyebrows drop gently. There's no tension around your eyes...your eyelids slightly closed, your eyes are still. Let your jaw unwind...teeth slightly apart as your jaw unwinds more and more.

Now, think about your tongue, and throat. Let your tongue drop down to the bottom of your mouth and relax completely. And your lips...lips lightly together, no pressure between them. Let all the muscles in your face unwind and let go - there's no tension in your face - just let it relax more and more.

Feel the relief of letting go...

Now feel the all-over sensation of letting go, of quiet and of rest. Stay like this for a few moments, feeling the breath coming in and out of the body...in...and out....let your body become looser, heavier, each time you breathe out.

Continue for a little longer, and enjoy this time for relaxation.

Finally...

Coming back - slowly, wriggle your fingers a little, and your feet. When you are ready, open your eyes and sit quiet for a while. Stretch, if you want to, or yawn, and slowly start to move again.

On-line resources/self-help:

www.bradford.ac.uk/counselling for an extensive range of information and self-help material or to book an appointment.

The Counselling Service runs regular Mindfulness sessions for staff and students. Check our website for further details.

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