

TAKE TIME TO RELAX

Teacher introduction: When you relax, you loosen up. You become less tense; you are at ease. When you relax, your stress begins to melt away. What one person does to relax may not help another person at all. Some sing, some jog, some take a nap. Here are some activities that might help you to relax. (The teacher can lead the students through the exercises, but needs to allow enough class time for the students to return to a normal state before dismissing.)

ACTIVITY 1

1. Sit in a comfortable chair with your eyes closed
2. Make a tight fist with your right hand. Then relax your hand.
3. Let your whole arm relax and go limp.
4. Make a tight fist with your left hand. Then relax your hand.
5. Let your whole arm relax and go limp.
6. Next, with your arms hanging limp at your sides,
raise your eyebrows,
crinkle or tighten your forehead,
and tighten the muscles of your scalp.
Relax all these muscles.
Tighten them again.
Relax them.
7. Work your way down your body.
Tighten and relax the muscles in your eyes, your nose,
your jaw, your neck, your shoulders, your chest,
your stomach, your thighs, your calves, your ankles,
and finally your toes.
8. When you finish, each part of your body should be relaxed
and seem heavy.
Sit quietly for a few minutes.
Then open your eyes.

ACTIVITY 2:

1. Close your eyes.
2. Relax all your muscles, starting at your feet and go up to your face.
Keep all your muscles relaxed.
3. Breathe through your nose.
Mentally count each breath as you inhale.
Breathe easily and naturally.
Keep on counting silently.
Try not to think about anything except your breathing and counting.

TAKE TIME TO RELAX - CONT'D

4. Continue for ten to fifteen minutes.
You may open your eyes to check the time, but don't use an alarm clock.
When you finish, sit quietly for a few minutes with your eyes closed.
Then open your eyes slowly.
Do not stand up for a few minutes.

NOTE: DO NOT DO THIS ACTIVITY IMMEDIATELY AFTER A MEAL.
WAIT SEVERAL HOURS FOR MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS.

ACTIVITY 3:

1. Take a mind vacation by sitting in a chair with both feet on the floor.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Think of your favorite place--in the mountains, in a forest, on an ocean, by a stream, on the desert, at the beach.
4. Relax there. Feel the breeze blow. Smell the fresh air. Hear the natural sounds.
5. Stay on your mind vacation at least 15 minutes.
Then slowly return to reality.

