

# Basic Relaxation Meditation

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Date / Time

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts?    Heart?    Body?    None of the Above

## PURPOSE/EFFECTS

Stress is an extremely unhealthy condition. It causes the body to release the chemical cortisol, which has been shown to reduce brain and organ function, among many other dangerous effects. Modern society inadvertently encourages a state of almost continuous stress in people.

This is a meditation that encourages physical and mental relaxation, which can greatly reduce the effects of stress on the body and mind.

## METHOD

### *Summary*

Concentrate on one small area of the body and relax it. Do this with each area of the body. Once you have covered the entire body, repeat the process.

### *Long Version*

- Take a reposed, seated posture. Your back should be straight and your body as relaxed as possible.
- Now bring your attention to one small area of your body; for example, your left foot. Feel with your body any tension there may be in the foot. Say [in your mind] the word, “relax,” and allow the foot to relax. Don’t force it. Simply allow it to let go as best it can.
- Next move on to another body part, for example, the right foot. Repeat the process of saying the word, “relax”, and allowing the body part to relax.
- Work with each part of the body in turn. Do this very slowly, gently, and with great openness. Do not force yourself to relax, or induce any strain. Do not get upset if a certain area will not relax all the way. Simply accept that it has relaxed as best it can, and move on.
- Also, do not attempt to move around, adjusting or massaging the body parts in an attempt to relax them. This is a motionless meditation, in which the stress in the body is just let go of, rather than manipulated away.

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- Remember to really feel into each body part, noticing how it actually feels, and paying particular attention to any bit of it that feels like it “wants” to let go of tension.
- Once you have covered the entire body, you can either repeat the process as many times as you wish, or consider yourself done for now.

## HISTORY

This is a basic version of several standard Indian meditation practices for letting go of physical tension.

It can be considered to be a seated, simple variation on Indian yoga nidra practice. Here is a full version of [yoga nidra](#)

## CAUTIONS

This technique can make you very sleepy. It may be better not to operate machinery immediately after doing this meditation. Do not do it while driving.

## NOTES

This meditation also be done lying down or before going to bed. It is a very good way to fall asleep.

Notice that this meditation is slightly different than a progressive relaxation technique. See that here.

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*thank you for your mindfulness practice*

May I continue to look deeply into  
my mind, my heart and body.

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May I see things and meet things  
**AS THEY ARE**

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and may this clear and sustained knowing free me  
**FOR THE SAKE OF  
ALL BEINGS.**

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