

Relaxation: a few ideas to try

Aims: to calm the mind, promote positive thinking, become more focussed, get oxygen into your system, promote good health, relieve tiredness.

Step 1: warm up

- Head rolls: roll your head to the right and then to the left
- Chewing a toffee: imagine you are eating a toffee, exercise all the muscles around your mouth as you chew the toffee.
- Self massage: squeeze you ear lobes gently
 Shrug your shoulders up and down
 Massage one shoulder with the opposite hand
 Rub your hands together fast and then hold them over your eyes, thus bringing rest to your eyes.

Step 2: breathing exercises

- Birthday candles: imagine your fingers are candles on a birthday cake, blow them out one at a time. take in a deep breath and blow out the little candles with short sharp breaths, one for each candle. See if you notice the muscles just above your tummy moving as you do this.
- Balloon blowing: imagine you are blowing up a balloon. Take in a deep breath and steadily, slowly blow up your balloon. See the balloon getting bigger and bigger and then imagine it floating into the air. Feel yourself becoming very quiet and peaceful.
- Enormous sighs: take in a deep breath and then let out a big sigh as you let the air out. See how noisy you can make your sighs.

Step 3: relax your body

- Starting with your feet and moving up to your head, concentrate on each part of your body in turn. Squeeze and tense each muscle, hold for a few seconds and then let the tension go, wriggle and relax, go saggy and keep checking that the parts of your body relaxed so far stay relaxed. Finally, take in a deep breath, hold it one-two, then let it go. Repeat. Feel yourself peaceful and comfortable, all tension drained away.

Step 4: positive affirmation.

- Decide what you can tell yourself, e.g. "I am confident", "I am brilliant". "I'm fine," " it will be ok." "
- Walk around the room, head held high and every time you pass another person tell them the positive statement you decided on.
- Sit down and stay *calm* and *confident!*