

CONTROLLED BREATHING

The 4-7-8 (or Relaxing Breath) Exercise

This exercise is simple, takes very little time, requires no equipment and can be done anywhere.

- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **four**.
- Hold your breath for a count of **seven**.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **eight**.
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION

- Lie on your back and close your eyes.
- Feel your feet. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and sink into the bed. Start with your toes and progress to your ankles.
- Feel your knees. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your upper legs and thighs. Feel their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your abdomen and chest. Sense your breathing. Consciously will them to relax. Deepen your breathing slightly and feel your abdomen and chest sink into the bed.
- Feel your buttocks. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your hands. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your upper arms. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your shoulders. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your neck. Sense its weight. Consciously relax it and feel it sink into the bed.

- Feel your head and skull. Sense its weight. Consciously relax it and feel it sink into the bed.
- Feel your mouth and jaw. Consciously relax them. Pay particular attention to your jaw muscles and unclench them if you need to. Feel your mouth and jaw relax and sink into the bed.
- Feel your eyes. Sense if there is tension in your eyes. Sense if you are forcibly closing your eyelids. Consciously relax your eyelids and feel the tension slide off the eyes.
- Feel your face and cheeks. Consciously relax them and feel the tension slide off into the bed.
- Mentally scan your body. If you find any place that is still tense, then consciously relax that place and let it sink into the bed.