

GENERALIZED RELAXATION AND IMAGERY

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Read slowly, with pauses, to allow imagery to develop.

Begin by resting back, very comfortably, and closing your eyes whenever you are ready.

Adjust your body in any way you need to increase your comfort right now.

Rest your hands in your lap, on your thighs or on the arms of your chair. As you settle back comfortably, this can be an opportunity to really know how nice it is to be relaxed.

As you rest back, you can begin to notice the feelings and sensations your body right now. For instance, you might notice how your feet are touching the floor or your shoes. How your back is supported by the chair. The sensations of your hands wherever they are resting.

As you continue listening to me, breathing easily and comfortably, bring your attention to your breathing. Notice how the sensations are different when you breathe in and when you breathe out.

[Slow.] Now take a mental scan through your body.

Notice the places of tension.

And the places of comfort.

Imagine your tensions flowing out of you with each breath you exhale. If any unnecessary thoughts or worries begin to enter your mind, direct them out with each exhale.

Imagine those troubling thoughts as a current of air. And as you exhale, they flow right out of you.

Continue to notice any areas of tension, perhaps in your stomach, low back, your jaw or forehead.

Let those tensions be seen as the color red, so as you are noticing tensions your body, you can also notice that color red.

And imagine relaxation to be the color blue.

You might notice some areas of your body that feel relaxed at this moment, and you can consider them filled with the soothing color of blue.

Now, bring your attention to your breathing.

Imagine for a few moments that with each inhalation you bring in the relaxing color of blue, and with each exhalation you let go of some of that red.

Inhaling that cool, soft, light blue. Exhaling some of that red tension. Inhaling blue, exhaling red.

And more and more relaxed.

More and more feeling that loosening of the muscles as you exhale red. More and more at ease--quiet mind, loose muscles--with nothing to do and nothing to worry about.

Just keeping yourself present, here.

With those gentle, easy breaths.

Inhaling blue, exhaling red.

Inhaling relaxation, exhaling tension.

[Pause.]

Now, again, take a mental scan through your body, looking for areas of tension.

Give the tension you are experiencing a symbol. Perhaps a twisted rope, a harsh color, a rock. Any symbol for your tension that comes to mind.

Now give the idea of relaxation a symbol. The warm sun, an harmonious vibration, a soothing color, a peaceful forest or a warm bath. Any image that you choose. Something just right for you.

In a moment I'm going to ask you to let these two symbols Interact In such a way that the tension is removed.

For instance, you might see your tension as a hard block of ice. And relaxation as the sun. And let that sun radiate

warmth. And that ice slowly melt into relaxation. Or perhaps that tension in your stomach as a knotted rope. And relaxation slowly loosening and untying that knot. Go ahead and let your two symbols interact now, in a way that softens that tension and brings you more and more relaxation.

[Pause.]

Begin focusing your attention on your toes.

Think about how they feel.

Think about the walking you have done today, and about how your feet and toes can now rest.

Imagine a relaxing warmth flowing into your feet, letting any tension and pressure in your feet begin draining out, flowing right out of your toes.

Perhaps even picturing in your mind's eye how it would look if all those muscles and tissues become loose and deeply relaxed. Visualize that warmth entering your calves, and the flow of tension running down from your calves, into your feet, and out your toes.

Feel the tension draining out of you.

Notice the relaxing warmth absorbing into you body, like honey oozing into the sand.

Move your awareness up your legs, and continue to breathe gently and easily.

Imagine your legs as large rags that are wet and limp.

Feel your legs get heavy and relaxed.

Continue this relaxation process, moving up through your buttocks. Let your buttocks go completely loose and limp.

Allow the warmth and relaxation to spread to the thighs, on down the legs,

down to the ankles,

and down through the feet to the tips of the toes.

Let that tension flow right out the toes.

Feel the heaviness in your stomach and low back

as the muscles let go of the tension.

Let that relaxing, sinking feeling spread throughout your abdomen.

Let this same warm relaxation enter your chest and upper back, loosening the muscles, more and more, as that tension continues to flow down through your abdomen, into your legs, and out your toes. And let that warm loose relaxation spread from your chest

and upper back

down through your abdominal region,

through your thighs

and calves,

your feet,

right on down to your toes.

Let that relaxation radiate into your scalp,

to the back of your head,

to your ears... temples ... cheeks... nose.

To your mouth and chin.

As you feel the tension leaving your face,

relax your jaw muscles.

Let your jaw open slightly as you let go more and more.

Allow any tension to gather and flow down your arms.

Let it drain from your head and face and, like melting wax,

flow down to your arms and hands and out of your fingers.

Your arms and hands becoming loose, warm, relaxed.

Roll your head from side to side and feel the tensions

loosening up and flowing down and out.

Take a deep breath,

and as you exhale,

feel the tension draining out of your arms and hands like

warm butter. Let go of that last bit of tension and stress from your shoulders and let it drain out your fingers.

[Pause.]

[STEADIER PACE] Now relax your whole body.

Allow that warmth and comfort to begin to flow into the top of your head and your scalp.

Down across your forehead... onto your face... your eyes...
your cheeks... and jaw.
And now allow that warmth and comfort to flow down your
neck. Loosening your muscles.
Across your shoulders and down your arms,
through your elbows, wrists and palms, into your fingers.
Warming, loosening, quieting.
Now flowing across your chest and back...
That warm soothing comfort
moving through your abdominal region and low back
into your pelvis
and down into your thighs.
Warming, loosening.
That comfort flowing down your legs... across your knees...
into your calves. Your ankles... feet... toes.
Your whole body now loose as wet spaghetti.
Just like a limp rag doll,
being warmed by the sun through all of your body.
Your whole body now awash with comfort
and the white light of health and well-being.
Take a deep, satisfying breath and go back over your entire
body and search for any remaining tension.
Carefully imagine stress and tension leaving the muscles of
those areas. Any place you think might be trapping some
residual tension. Focus on it and allow it to feel warm
and heavy.
And what does this relaxation feel like to you?
Perhaps it's a special color, running throughout the body...
A pleasant soft green. Or a deep midnight blue. Or a warm
pink, like the early-morning
sunrise.
Or some other color just right for you.
Maybe your relaxing feels like a warm glow, like coals
radiating heat.
Or the shimmering sand in the desert sun.

And really know now that these feelings are your feelings.
And you can return to them again whenever you choose to.
And the next time you listen to this, you can become even more comfortable, even more relaxed than today.
But for now, you can begin returning to this room. [Pause.]
Slowly and gradually.
With a little movement of your fingers and toes to help orient your body. [Pause.]
And letting a little light in your eyes. [Pause.]
And now opening your eyes, feeling alert and refreshed.