

[illegible]

Session Three is concerned with breathing. It is more subtle and somewhat more complex than Sessions One or Two, although with the same underlying pattern: thought — mild command — bodily change.

The first thing to note is that we do not want you to become unduly conscious of your breathing. Don't sit there and ask yourself, "Now, is my breathing fast, slow, deep, or shallow?" Don't actually *think* about your breathing at all, or try to control it. Just be passively aware of what is taking place in your body, and allow your breathing to take care of itself.

The phrase to be used is, “My body breathes <sup>me</sup> ~~my~~”. We would like you to repeat this phrase several times. Please insert it into the exercise after you have repeated “my arms and legs are warm”, before you finish the exercise with “my neck and shoulders are heavy”.

## ALL THE PHRASES

For reference, here is the complete list of phrases that you will be using in Session Three.

My right arm is heavy  
My left arm is heavy  
Both arms are heavy  
My right leg is heavy  
My left leg is heavy  
Both legs are heavy  
My arms and legs are heavy  
My right arm is warm  
My left arm is warm  
Both arms are warm  
My right leg is warm  
My left leg is warm  
Both legs are warm  
My arms and legs are warm  
(Repeat each of the above one or more times)  
My body breathes me  
(Repeat one or more times)  
My neck and shoulders are heavy  
(Repeat once or twice)

## The steps

Follow the same sequence of steps as in the previous sessions. Namely:

1. Time, place, posture.
2. Record your state.
3. Deep breath, close your eyes.
4. Repeat "heavy" phrases one or more times.
5. Repeat "warm" phrases one or more times.
6. Repeat "My body breathes me", one or more times.
7. Say "My neck and shoulders are heavy".
8. Make fists, flex your arms; breathe in, relax, breathe out, open eyes.
9. Record progress of at least one of your sessions a day.

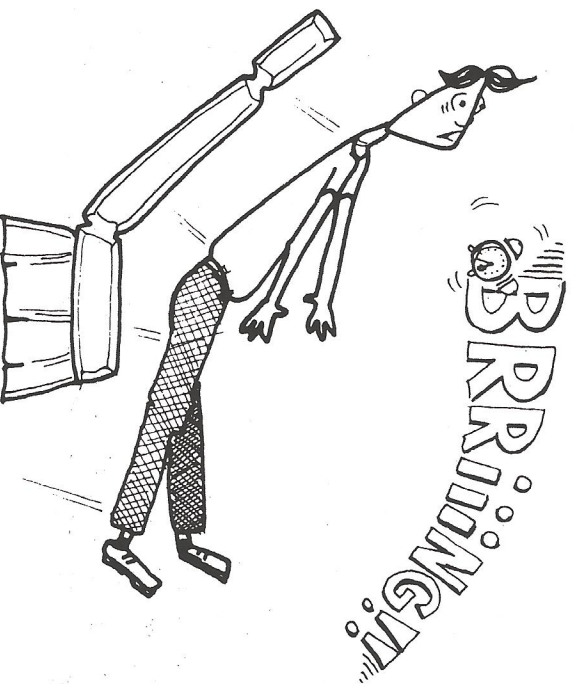
## Prolonging the exercise

On some occasions when you are practicing autogenics you may find yourself perfectly content sitting or lying where you are, and would like to carry on doing the exercise for fifteen minutes or so. Or, you may feel that you need a good rest in the course of the day, but have only 15 minutes to spare.

If you wish to prolong your sessions, or need a good but short rest, we suggest that you try the following:

1. Do the complete Session Three exercise until you get to "My neck and shoulders are heavy".

2. Instead of finishing, start to focus your attention gently and passively on the pauses that occur regularly between each breath.
3. Continue to breathe in the passive, relaxed manner, i.e. without concentrating on your breathing, and keep your attention on the repeated pauses between your inhalations and exhalations.
4. Keep this up for 5 to 15 minutes.
5. To time yourself, set a clock or watch at eye level. When you think 15 minutes has passed, open your eyes. If the time isn't up, just close your eyes and return your attention to the pauses between your breaths. Do not set an alarm, or get up to look at a clock, as this can destroy the purpose of the exercise.
6. Remember to end with "my neck and shoulders are heavy".



## Practicing three ways

We have now covered three different approaches to the use of autogenic phrases. The regular session, covering heaviness, warmth and breathing. The quick relaxation method, using the "cue" phrase "My neck and shoulders are heavy", and now the prolonged session, in which you focus on the pauses in your breathing for 15-20 minutes.

In the course of the next two weeks we would like you to practice each type of exercise every day. Our recommended schedule is:

Quick exercise - 3 to 5 times or more

Regular exercise - 1 to 2 times

Prolonged exercise - once daily

We realize that this is a fairly large commitment of time and effort, but please try to carry out the whole program. We think you will find that the end results are worth it.

## Checklist

When you have practiced the three-way program of autogenics for two or three days, or before your next visit to your clinician, please fill out the following checklist as a measure of your progress and understanding. It will be useful in discussion with your clinician.

- |   | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I understand breathing as it relates to stress.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I understand how self-directing phrases can help normalize my breathing pattern.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I understand and use the regular exercise including the phrase "My body breathes me".            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I understand how to prolong the exercise by passively focusing on the pauses between my breaths. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. I use the quick relaxation method several times a day. ☐ ☐

6. I am recording my results. ☐ ☐

## Visit to clinician

As in previous sessions, discuss your progress and any problems with your clinician, and do not read the next section until you have done so.

