

[illegible]

## In a hurry — keep the exercises short

You have been practicing Autogenics in a variety of times. Don't forget that when limited time is available — for example, between household chores, waiting to see someone, or between changing and going out for an evening, you can still do the exercise in a few minutes or less.

You might say, for example:

- "My right arm is heavy" - once
- "My arms are heavy and warm" - three times
- "My body breathes me" - three times
- Special formula - three times
- "My neck and shoulders are heavy" - one or two times.

You will by now be experiencing the onset of pleasant, relaxed feelings almost as soon as you begin to practice, so you may be able to summon the response with only a very few phrases. It is important to keep practicing frequently on a regular basis.

## Integration

We asked you earlier to start using the cue phrase "My neck and shoulders are heavy" at various times of day. We would now like you to start using this more specifically — in situations that make you tense, or in which you habitually suffer from severe stress reactions. In the space provided please do the following:

Make a list of ten situations which occur regularly in your life and in which you find it difficult to relax. Start with the easiest, and end with the most difficult. If you can't think of ten different situations, just list as many as you know about. You may find it easier to draw up the list with help from your clinician. When you have made the list, start practicing with the cue phrase whenever any one of your first three situations occur. When you can relax in the first situation, you should begin practicing with the second, third, and fourth; then the third, fourth, and fifth. Continue until you have mastered every situation on your list. A sample list is included here.

## INTEGRATING RELAXATION

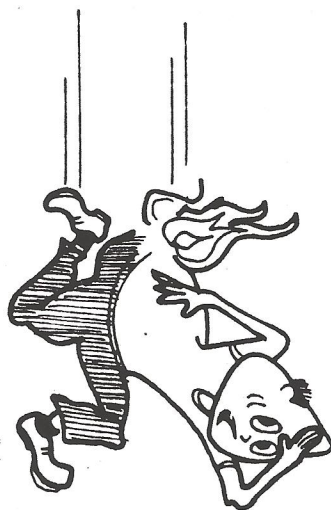
Relaxation Progress Chart

SITUATIONS	QUICK RELAXATION ACHIEVED							
	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8
1 Warm bath	✓							
2 Dinner and family	✓							
3 Driving in light traffic		✓						
4 At work - regular day			✓					
5 Dinner Party			✓					
6 Meeting new people				✓				
7 Difficult customer					✓			
8 Children fighting					✓			

SITUATIONS	QUICK RELAXATION ACHIEVED							
	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								

Practice using the cue phrase for two weeks, then talk over the whole matter with your clinician. It is sometimes a very difficult part of the technique to master, because, naturally enough, most of our attention is on the factor which is causing us stress.

Of course, some situations causing stress call for immediate action — fight or flight — and that is why nature equipped us with a stress mechanism. So, if the house is burning down, don't sit there saying your autogenic phrases.



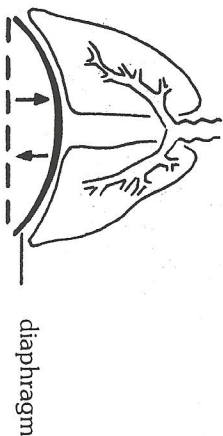


## Enhancing the quick relaxation

You have been doing quick relaxation in a variety of situations by taking a deep breath in and saying "my neck and shoulders are heavy". The response can become deeper and brought on more quickly by using a "full breath" plus your cue phrase. This will be described in more detail below.

Breathing involves different groups of muscles of the trunk. Some are located in the chest wall, a few even extend from the shoulders up into the neck. A large muscle devoted primarily to breathing is the *diaphragm*, located between the chest cavity and the abdomen. Relaxed breathing is done primarily by the *diaphragm*.

The lungs are shaped something like this:



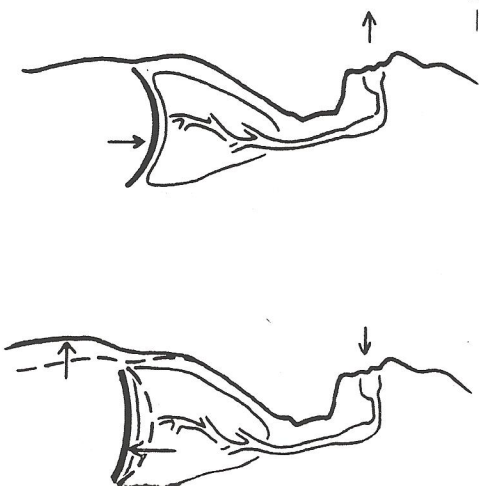
As you can see, the greatest volume is in the lower part of the lung next to the diaphragm. Using the diaphragm therefore moves a large volume of air and allows for slow rhythmic breathing. At rest, a rate of 6-10 breaths per minute usually would be adequate.

Most of us, however, do not breathe *primarily* with the diaphragm, but *primarily* with the chest. We wrongly try to keep "our tummies tucked in" and immobile. This chest breathing causes us to take in smaller amounts of air with each breath and the breathing rate is closer to 10-16 per minute at rest.

Breathing in a slow easy manner with the diaphragm will help induce relaxation. The heartbeat slows as a response to relaxed *diaphragmatic* breathing.

To practice relaxed breathing start by breathing in as if you were filling your abdomen. Then let the chest become full as you continue to breathe in. When you are close to a maximum breath in, relax and let the air flow out gently and evenly.

As you can see —



the stomach has to go out as the diaphragm comes down. Contrary to popular ideas on posture — we should have an abdominal wall which protrudes gently as we breathe in.

If you have difficulty doing this breathing, practice by putting your hand on the abdomen. Your hand should move out as you breathe in. After you are good at getting the abdomen to move, then try to get both the abdomen and the chest moving. By starting with the abdomen, the chest will fill out naturally as you continue breathing in. Practice in front of a mirror after a shower or bath.

Now to do the Quick Relaxation, take a full breath in and as you breathe out say to yourself "my neck and shoulders are heavy".

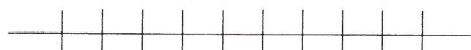
Some people habitually chest breathe and may require repeated practice sessions before being able to breathe properly with their diaphragms. You are encouraged to practice until you can do it evenly and spontaneously when doing the Quick Relaxation.

Please fill out the following checklist when you have mastered Session Four as a measure of your progress and understanding. It will be useful in discussion with your clinician.

- ☐ I can increase or decrease the time of doing my exercise to suit the time and place.
- ☐ I understand the special formulas.
- ☐ I understand the use of the formula "My neck and shoulders are heavy" in the integration process.
- ☐ I understand the importance of practicing "My neck and shoulders are heavy" in progressively more difficult situations.

BODY:      Very Relaxed                                      Very Tense

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



MIND:           Very Calm   Racing

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