



Changing Behaviours - Reducing Costs

Relax-Well®

Program Objective

- *Learning the importance of relaxation for health and well-being.*
- *Advantages of relaxation.*
- *Understanding the mind and the different brain frequencies.*
- *The use of affirmations and visualisations in relaxation.*

Why Relaxation?

Relaxation is an integral part of total wellbeing, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

To a great extent the chronic tension and restlessness of both body and mind are simply a result of habit. We are used to moving and tensing, to planning and worrying. Gradually, the habit of restlessness becomes so deeply entrenched that it feels abnormal to allow the body to relax and for the mind to be quiet.

Relaxation is the most natural activity in the world, yet it is a forgotten art. Few people today could claim to be completely relaxed for most of their waking hours. It says something about the degree of stress in our lives, the amount of hidden tension in our bodies that we need to **re-learn** and practise the art of relaxation in order to safeguard our well-being.

For relaxation to be effective, we need to banish tension from both our body and our mind. Ideally speaking, a good night's sleep should perform this function. But, there is no guarantee that it will.

Many people do not realize how "un-relaxed" they really are. If you have started to ignore the build-up of strain and tension in your limbs, joints and muscles, and fail to defuse these physical stresses when they begin to affect your mind and body, you will gradually begin to store that tension in various parts of your body. Allowing hidden tension to increase and take hold in your body will inevitably affect the way that you feel and how you function.

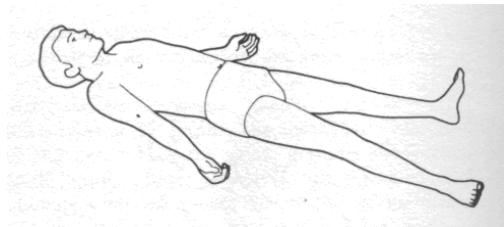
Advantages of Relaxation

There are two immediate advantages of learning to relax:

Firstly, as you begin to practise relaxation techniques, you will become aware at once of the areas of your body that are most prone to stiffness and pain. This can help keep you on guard for factors that may exacerbate the strain: - your posture, the shoes and clothes you wear, and the way you use your body in general. In simple terms – it gives you *body awareness*.

Secondly, you will simply feel much *better almost immediately*. Five minutes spent loosening your face, neck and shoulder muscles may banish a headache and leave you feeling calm and refreshed, while twenty minutes of deep relaxation can rest and revive both mind and body as much as three hours of sleep.

When we are truly relaxed, very definite and measurable changes take place in the body. These changes distinguish relaxation from the opposite states of tension or arousal. The *two branches of the autonomic nervous system* trigger some of the most significant changes.



The *sympathetic* branch of the nervous system slows down. This controls body temperature, digestion, heart rate, respiratory rate, blood flow and pressure and muscular tension.

Conversely, the opposite, *parasympathetic*, branch of the nervous system comes into play. This lowers oxygen consumption and reduces the following bodily functions: carbon dioxide elimination, heart and respiratory rates, blood pressure. It also reduces muscle tone and activates the internal organs to work more efficiently.

Activity

Your wellness journey starts here. Listen to one of the tracks on the enclosed Relaxation mp3. Make it a habit to practice relaxation once a day for seven (7) days. Note the difference in your body, your emotions and your mind.



(Relax mp3: No. 1 or 2).

Understanding the Mind

Understanding the mind and learning techniques to enhance the mind is an important aspect towards your own wellness. Without the ability to organize the mind, we become disorganised and our life laborious.

Mind enhancement is learning to use lower brain frequencies with awareness and apply this energy to make stronger impressions on brain cells. Since more information can be recalled when it has been strongly impressed, we see the memory is enhanced. We might say that mind enhancement begins with the regulation of *brain wave frequencies*.

Brain Frequencies

Our brain activities can be measured medically through an EEG test (*EEG = Electroencephalogram - a recording of the electrical activity and stages of the brain*).

In the normal waking state (day-to-day activity), the brain wave frequencies are between *14 to 21 cycles* per second and that is known as the **Beta** state. This is related to the physical world and the five senses i.e. sight, sound, smell, taste and touch.

The **Alfa** level, where the brain frequencies are between *7 and 14 cycles* per second, is the state we are aiming for in mind enhancement and wellbeing. It is at this level where ESP may be experienced and time and space is of no consequence. It is also known as the level of the spiritual world.

From about *4 to 7 cycles* per second are known as the **Theta** state and this level is used for painless surgery, dentistry, childbirth etc.

In deep sleep, these frequencies are the slowest; around *0,5 to 3,5 cycles* per second and is known as the **Delta** state.

Scale of Brain Rhythm (cycles per sec)

Physical World Sight Sound Smell Taste Touch ↑↓ Time ↔ Space	BETA 21	Outer Conscious Levels ACTION
Mental World No Time/Space ESP	14 ALPHA	Inner Conscious Levels
	7 Basic Plane	
Painless surgery etc	THETA	Inner Conscious Levels
Spiritual World (?)	4 DELTA	Subconscious

Effectiveness of Relaxation and Mind Enhancement

Excellent results have been found in the treatment of muscular tension, anxiety, insomnia, depression, fatigue, irritable bowel, muscle spasm, neck and back pain, high blood pressure and general stress, to mention only some of the physiological benefits.

Start by relaxing the body. Learning to relax at will has benefits that extend to every aspect of life. It is very helpful to practise and learn a few simple relaxation techniques. One of the most effective exercises is to lie on the floor and progressively tense and let go, stretch and release, each and every part of the body. (*Listen to a relaxation CD*).

Positive Affirmations

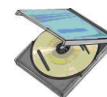
Examples of **positive statements** that you may include while in the Alpha state:

- *Every day in every way I am getting better, better and better.*
- *My life is blossoming in total perfection.*
- *I am relaxed and centred; I have plenty of time for everything.*
- *The more I give, the more I receive, and the happier I feel.*
- *I give thanks now for my life of health, wealth, happiness and perfect self-expression.*

Activity

Relaxation and Experiencing Alpha Level:

- *Relaxing the body (Relax mp3)*
- *To relax the mind and enter the Alpha level, we count down from 10 to 1*

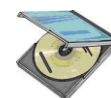


(Audio CD: No. 1).

Activity

Slumberland Technique:

This is a technique that you can use to obtain normal, natural sleep, anytime, anywhere, without the use of drugs. Learn how to sleep well.

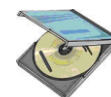


(Audio CD: No. 2)

Activity

Mental Alarm Clock Technique:

This technique may be used to practice awakening without the use of an alarm clock. This helps towards mind development.



(Audio CD: No. 3)

Visualisation

Visualisation is another powerful tool for mind enhancement, to focus the mind and to achieve your goals. Visualisation bypasses the verbalizing areas of the brain and therefore helps enormously to focus and calm the mind. It is also taught to enable the person to learn to expand the mind as a form of mind control. It thus teaches you concentration - keeping your mind focused on what you are engaged in.

It is possible to significantly reduce stress with something enormously powerful: your own **imagination**. This practice of positive thinking in the treatment of physical symptoms was popularised by *Emil Coucé*, a French pharmacist, around the turn of the century.

He believed that the power of imagination far exceeds that of the will. It is hard, for example, to will yourself in a relaxed state, but you can imagine relaxation spreading through your body, and you can visualise yourself in a safe and beautiful retreat.

Coucé asserted that all of your thoughts become reality - *you are what you think you are*. For example, if you think sad thoughts, you feel unhappy. If you think anxious thoughts, you become tense. In order to overcome these feelings, you can refocus your mind on positive, healing images.

Carl Jung, the well-known psychologist, used a technique for healing, which he referred to as "*active imagination*". Jungian and Gestalt therapists have since devised several stress-reduction techniques using the intuitive, imaginative part of the mind.

The author of *Creative Visualisation and Living in the Light*, Shakti Gawain, states that '*Visualisation is a form of energy creating life and life's happenings*'.

Everything is energy and our minds create our world, much as a movie projector projects a "world" upon a blank screen.

Visualisation techniques are used extensively as a part of anti-stress and self-improvement. It is increasingly being used by doctors, dentist, athletes, pilots, artists and teachers, world-wide, to defuse stressful situations.

Effectiveness of Visualisation

Visualisation is effective in treating many stress-related and physical illnesses, including headaches, muscle spasms, chronic pain, and general or situation-specific anxiety.

Although not consciously aware of it, everyone visualises. You can harness your visualisations and consciously employ them for bettering yourself and your life. Visualisations or mental sense impressions that you create consciously, can train your body to relax and ignore stress.

Universal Laws

In order to understand how visualisation works, it is helpful to look at several related principles:

- *The universe is energy*: physically, we are all energy and everything within and around us is made up of energy. Thus, we are all one, even in a literal, physical sense. All forms of energy are interrelated and can affect one another.
- *Energy is magnetic*: One law of energy is this - energy of a certain quality or vibration tends to attract energy of a similar quality and vibration.
- *Form follows thought*: when we create something, we always create it first in a thought form. A thought or idea always precedes manifestation e.g. an artist first has an idea or inspiration, then creates a painting.
- *The law of manifestation and attraction*: this is the principle that whatever you put out into the universe, will be reflected back to you. "*As you sow, so shall you reap.*"

Using Visualisation

The process of change does not occur on superficial levels. It involves exploring, discovering and changing our deepest, most basic attitudes towards life. This is why learning to use visualisation can become a process of deep and meaningful growth.

There are three basic types of visualisation for change:

- **Receptive Visualisation:** Here you relax, empty your mind, sketch a vague scene, ask a question and wait for a response. Example, you might imagine that you are sitting on the beach, the cool air caressing your skin. You can hear the wind and smell the sea. You can ask, "Why can't I relax". The response might surface into your consciousness, "Because you are too involved in other people's problems", for example.
- **Programmed Visualisation:** You create an image, complete with sight, taste, sound, and smell. Imagine a goal that you want to attain or a healing that you want to accelerate. Programmed visualisation will improve your overall abilities.
- **Guided Visualisation:** Here again visualize your scene in detail, but omit crucial elements. Then wait for you subconscious, or your inner guide, to supply the missing pieces of the puzzle. For example, visualize a special place you like to visit, it might be a forest clearing. Construct the smells, tastes, sounds, touch, sights associated with this place. See yourself there and let your subconscious fill in the rest of the detail.

Rules for effective Visualisation

- *Loosen your clothing, lie down or sit up erect in a quiet place, and close your eyes softly.*
- *Relax your body and muscles as much as you can. Scan your body for specific tensions and relax there.*
- *Always form mental sense impressions/pictures. Involve all your senses: sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste.*
- *Use affirmations. Repeat short, positive statements that affirm your ability to relax right now. Use the present tense and avoid negatives such as "I am not tense", instead say "I am relaxing and letting go"*
- *Visualize three times a day. Visualisation practice is the easiest in the morning and night while lying in bed. After some practice, you will be able to visualize e.g. while waiting in the dentist's office, or before a meeting.*

Examples of Affirmations

- "I am brave, I am strong."
- "I can relax at will."
- "Peace is within me."
- "I am charming and magnetic."

Visualisation Exercises

Activity

Creating Your Special Place/Sanctuary

This is a very powerful and useful visualisation technique. In creating your own special place, you will be making a retreat for relaxation and guidance.



(Audio CD: No. 4)

Activity

The Mind Mirror

This is an inner technique that leads to self-improvement.



(Audio CD: No. 5)

Four basic steps for effective creative visualisation:

- **Set your goal:** Decide on something you would like to have, work towards, realise or create.
- **Create a clear idea of the picture:** This should be in the present tense as already existing the way you want it to be.
- **Focus on it often:** In this way it becomes an integrated part of your life and it becomes more of a reality for you.
- **Give it positive energy:** Also called affirmations - make strong positive statements to yourself.



Relax-Well Affirmations:

- I enjoy and take time for spontaneous activities.
- I value myself for who I *am*, not just for what I *do*.
- I avoid taking on unnecessary and unrealistic burdens and responsibilities.
- I make an effort to play and work cooperatively, not competitively.
- I am able to lighten up and avoid undue seriousness.
- I use relaxation practices to transform stressful or negative attitudes I have towards my work.
- I balance the challenges and stresses of my life with playful and nurturing attitudes and activities.
- I take time to nurture and strengthen myself physically, emotionally, and spiritually each day.
- I laugh freely and often.
- I approach difficult or challenging tasks from a playful point of view.

Conclusion

Learning how to **relax** is the first step towards living a stress-free life and restoring balance in your life. Make time for relaxation e.g. walking on the beach, working in the garden, play with your kids etc. **Relaxation is an integral part of total wellbeing, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.**

Resources

- Please visit our Web Portal (www.sangawellness.com) for resources relating to **Relaxing** e.g. books, CD's, websites and more information.

References

- Ananda Sanga Workbook: 2002
- Gawain, Shakti, *Creative Visualization*, Bantam Books, 1982.
- John W Travis & Regina Sara Ryan, *Wellness Workbook*, Ten Speed Press, 1981.