

## Learning relaxation skills

With practise you can learn skills in deep breathing and deep relaxation which will help to ease feelings of tension. A good place to start is by learning the deep breathing exercise for relaxation. Once you have got the hang of this you may want to try out some of the other deep relaxation exercises. Do read through the general guidelines before you have a go at these.

### General Guidelines for Relaxation.

- Choose a time of day when you will not be disturbed.
- Make sure that the room is as quiet as possible (you may want to turn off your phone).
- Lie or sit in a comfortable position on the bed or in a chair with your legs uncrossed and your arms lying comfortably by your side or in your lap.
- Loosen any tight clothing.
- You should practise the relaxation routine at least once a day, more often if you wish.
- Try to get into the habit of practicing around the same time each day.
- It is best not to practise straight after a heavy meal.
- How soon relaxation exercises work varies. Some people get immediate benefit, whilst others find they need to practise for a week or even longer.
- It's often good not to 'try too hard' at relaxation: Don't try to 'force it'.
- Most people find that their mind wanders when they first start practicing – don't worry about this. If your thoughts wander, gently bring your concentration back to the exercise.
- During deep relaxation you may experience feelings of floating or tingling. You may 'drift off' or forget what you have heard. This is normal and nothing to worry about.
- Remember, learning to relax is a skill and takes time and regular practise.

**DO NOT LISTEN TO RELAXATION RECORDINGS WHILST DRIVING OR OPERATING MACHINERY.**

**IF THE EXERCISES CAUSE AN INCREASE IN YOUR DISTRESS OR WORRYING THOUGHTS DO NOT CONTINUE WITHOUT CONSULTING A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL**