"relax and let go." Then, take a deep breath and, as you breathe out slowly, silently say, "relax and let go" again.

Exercise: Basic Progressive Relaxation Sequence

This sequence takes you from your head through your neck, shoulders, arms and hands, chest, back, stomach, hips, legs, and feet.

If you do make a tape of this exercise or the one that follows, allow enough time for each exercise (five to seven seconds to tense, twenty to thirty seconds to relax) on the tape so you do not rush yourself. Also, put in two repetitions for each exercise.

- Wrinkle your forehead.
- Squint your eyes tightly.
- Open your mouth wide.
- Push your tongue against the roof of your mouth.
- Clench your jaw tightly.
- Push your head back into a pillow.
- Bring your head forward to touch your chest.
- Roll your head to your right shoulder.
- Roll your head to your left shoulder.
- Shrug your shoulders up as if to touch your ears.
- Shrug your right shoulder up as if to touch your ear.
- Shrug your left shoulder up as if to touch your ear.
- Hold your arms out and make a fist with each hand.
- One side at a time, push your hands down into the surface where you are practicing.
- One side at a time, make a fist, bend your arm at the elbow, and tighten up your arm while holding the fist.
- Take a deep breath and hold.
- Tighten your chest muscles.
- Arch your back.
- Tighten your stomach area.
- Push your stomach area out.
- Pull your stomach area in.
- Tighten your hips.
- Push the heels of your feet into the surface where you are practicing.
- Tighten your leg muscles below the knee.
- Curl your toes under as if to touch the bottoms of your feet.
- Bring your toes up as if to touch your knees.

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