Let Go THE STRESS

RELAXATION RESPONSE

The following is a simple, brief activity that can be used to allow the physical changes of a stress reaction to subside and return to a non-stress state.

1. Sit (or lie) in a comfortable position in a quiet environment with eyes closed.
2. Begin with your feet and relax each muscle group moving up to the head—calf, thigh, waist, stomach, arms, chest, neck, face, and forehead.
3. Breathe in through your nose gently pushing your stomach out.
4. Breathe out through your mouth and let your stomach relax.
5. Continue for 10-20 minutes. Open your eyes as need to check time, but do not set a time.
6. When finished, open your eyes but remain seated for a couple of minutes.

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION

The following is a physical activity that can be used for releasing muscle tension triggered as a response to stress.

1. Lie flat on a soft surface or floor with your eyes closed and knees bent.
2. Beginning with your right foot, press foot firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds; repeat with the left foot.
3. Straighten legs out and press back of lower right leg firmly to the floor for five seconds, relax for five seconds; repeat with left leg.
4. Press each of the following areas firmly to the floor for 5 seconds, relax for five seconds (one at a time):
   - Back of thighs and buttocks
   - Lower back and shoulder blades
   - Arms
   - Back of head
5. Breathe normally as you press and relax.

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