



## Dealing with physical tension

- Finding and dedicating time to relax is essential. Give relaxation some of your time, not just what's left over.
- Incorporate relaxing activities into your lifestyle. Do not rush tasks or try too hard to resolve issues.
- Adopt a relaxation routine, but do not expect to learn without practice.
- Relaxation routines are available (audio recordings) which help to relieve muscle tension and teach appropriate breathing exercises.
- Try not to worry about tension symptoms, such as aches, stiffness, increased heart rate, perspiration, stomach churning, etc.
- Keep fit and try adhering to a physical exercise regime. Regular brisk walks or swimming can help relieve tension.

## Dealing with worry

- Accept that worrying is normal and on occasion it may be useful.
- Write down your concerns and decide which ones are more important using a rating system (i.e. marks out of ten).
- Work out a plan of action for each problem.
- Share your worries with friends, relatives or your GP, as they may provide helpful advice.
- Mentally repeating a comforting phrase may help block out worrying thoughts. Similarly, reading, crosswords, hobbies and interests may all help keep your mind active and positive.
- Enjoy quiet moments (e.g. sit and listen to relaxing music). Allow your mind to wander and try to picture yourself in pleasant situations.

## Dealing with difficult situations

- Build your confidence by accepting and confronting circumstances that make you feel more anxious. Adopt a step-by-step approach to help face things and places which make you feel tense. Regular practice will help you overcome these issues.
- Write a plan and decide how you are going to deal with difficult situations.
- For further encouragement, reward yourself and share with others when you overcome difficult situations.
- As you face difficult situations your confidence will grow and your anxiety symptoms should become less troublesome.
- Everyone has good and bad days. Expect more good days as time goes on.
- Try to put together a programme incorporating all the elements presented in 'The Good Relaxation Guide' that meets the needs of your particular situation. Remember that expert guidance and advice is available if you need further help.

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