



The Tuesday Program

Utilising *Relaxation Techniques*

Your task is to:

1. Practice a guided imagery relaxation a minimum of five times this week. Below is the script from this week's video:

Take a deep breath in and out, and picture yourself at the beach, sitting or lying in a comfortable position. This might be directly on the sand, on a towel, on a fold-out chair, or on a bench. What is most important is that the place you are sitting or lying, and the way you are sitting or lying, is comfortable for you.

Now you should tap into all your senses; sights, sounds, touch, taste, and smells. What kind of day is it? With sight, see if you can mentally picture the sky, the ocean, and the sand. Create a detailed picture in your mind of this place by the ocean. What does the water look like? Take notice of the particular shades of blues and greens of the ocean, the strength of the waves rolling in, and the changing shapes of the waves as they approach the shore, the foam of the water as it glides over the sand. *Now take a deep breath in and out*. With sounds, what can you hear around you? Imagine listening to the wind against the sand, the waves as they approach the shore, wash over the sand, then roll back out again. Can you hear others around or is it dead quiet? *Now take a deep breath in and out*. With touch, imagine the feel on the towel you're sitting on. Imagine picking up some sand and letting it fall slowly through your fingers. *Now take a deep breath in and out*. With taste, can you taste anything in particular that's related to being at the beach? *Now take a deep breath in and out*. With smell, can you smell the ocean, the salt, or your sunscreen? *Now take a deep breath in and out*. What else can you sense? Can you sense the temperature or the feeling of the sea breeze against your face, and anything else you are experiencing in this place? *Now take a deep breath in and out*.

Spend a few moments enjoying this place by the ocean in your mind's eye, and continue to take *deep breaths in and out*. Take note of all the details you see in your vision of this place. Take the time to visualise this place in as much detail as possible. Aim to have a very clear and detailed picture of this place by the ocean in your mind.

2. If guided imagery is not your thing, investigate other empirically supported techniques for aiding relaxation, such as meditation, yoga, exercise, biofeedback, deep breathing, or





progressive muscle relaxation. The aim is to regularly practice at least one relaxation technique.

More information on Relaxation:

Books

- Davis, M., Eshelman, E. R., & McKay, M. (2008). *The relaxation and stress reduction workbook* (6th ed.). Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Schafer, W. (2000). *Stress management for wellness* (4th ed). New York: Harcourt. College Publishers.
- Lehrer, P. M., Woolfolk, R. L., & Sime, W. E. (2007). *Principles and practice of stress management* (3rd ed.). New York: Guilford.

Websites

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relaxation_technique
- <http://www.mindtools.com/stress/RelaxationTechniques>

Research Articles

- Utay, J., & Miller, M. (2006). Guided imagery as an effective therapeutic technique: A brief review of its history and efficacy research. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 33(1), 40-43.

