

## Stress Management: Relaxation Training — Video Transcript

### Demonstration 1: Eight-year-old boy taught how to do Progressive Muscle Relaxation

T: So today we're going to talk about what to do when you feel nervous. Do you know what it means to "feel nervous?" [Patient nods] Okay, tell me how your body feels when you feel nervous.

PT: When I speak in front of large crowds, I feel like I'm about to throw up and I have butterflies in my stomach.

T: Oh, wow, so when you're about to speak in front of a large crowd, you feel nervous [Patient nods], and so, the way that feels to you is you feel sick to your stomach, you said you feel butterflies in your stomach. Yeah, you know what? A lot of people feel like that when they have to speak in front of other people, and when they feel nervous. Some people say that when they feel nervous, they also feel tense all over their body. Everybody feels nervous sometimes, and it can be really uncomfortable, as you said, like when you have to go speak in front of a crowd. So, what we're going to talk about today is what to do when you feel nervous, and you feel sick to your stomach, and you feel uncomfortable. Okay? [Patient nods]

We're going to be doing some exercises that actually help relax your body and help you feel more calm. So, what I'd like for you to do is get comfortable in your chair, if you can, in your couch there, okay? Actually, I'm going to have you put your feet in front of you, if that's okay, put your ... there you go! And if you can, have your hands relaxed to your side, and you can lean back a little bit if you want. And, it's going to be important to do exactly what I say. It may seem silly sometimes, what I'm going to ask you to do, but it's really important to do what I say because these are the types of exercises that we know have helped other kids feel relaxed when they get nervous, okay? And, I'm also going to ask that you really pay close attention to how your muscles feel — how your muscles feel when they're tense, and how your muscles feel when they're relaxed. Okay? [Patient nods]. All right! I'm also going to ask that you close your eyes when we do this. Now, I'm going to be doing the exercises along with you, but I'm not going to have my eyes closed because I'm going to be reading this piece of paper in front of me that tells us about the exercises we're going to be doing. Okay? All right. You ready to get started? [Patient nods]. All right. So, I'm going to have you close your eyes, all right?

Now, the first thing I want you to do to ... [Therapist begins relaxation script provided]

#### Physical Relaxation Script with Imagery

*Note — this is not a verbatim transcript of what the therapist on the video says, exactly; however, the script is the basis for her relaxation induction. She adapts the script as appropriate for her client, inserting praise and other directions when necessary. All therapists should adapt the script similarly, so that their clients experience the relaxation exercise as unique to them, rather than as being read from a page.*

Now we are going to begin to tense and relax the muscles of your body ... Pretend you have a whole lemon in your left hand ... Now squeeze it hard ... Try to squeeze all the juice out ... Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze ... Now, drop the lemon ... Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed ... Take another lemon, and squeeze it ... Try to squeeze this one harder than you did the first one ... that's right ... Really hard ... Now, drop your lemon and relax ... See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed ... Once again, take a lemon in your left hand and squeeze all the juice out ... Don't leave a single drop ... Squeeze hard ... Good ... Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand.

Now pretend you have a whole lemon in your right hand ... Now squeeze it hard ... Try to squeeze all the juice out ... Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze ... Now, drop the lemon ... Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed ... Take another lemon, and squeeze it ... Try to squeeze this one harder than you did the first one ... That's right ... Really hard ... Now drop your lemon and relax ... See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed ... Once again, take a lemon in your right hand and squeeze all the juice out ... Don't leave a single drop ... Squeeze hard ... Good ... Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand.

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat ... You want to stretch ... Stretch your arms in front of you ... Raise them up high over your head ... Way back ... Feel the pull in your shoulders ... Stretch higher ... Now, just let your arms drop back by your side ... Okay kitten, stretch again ... Stretch your arms out in front of you ... raise them over your head ... Pull them back, way back ... Pull

hard ... Now let them drop quickly ... Good ... Notice how your shoulders feel more relaxed ... This time let's have a big stretch ... Try to touch the ceiling ... Stretch your arms way out in front of you ... Raise them way up high over your head ... Push them way, way back ... Notice the tension and pull in your arms and shoulders ... Hold tight now ... Great ... Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed ... It feels good and warm and lazy.

Now pretend you are a turtle ... You're sitting out on a rock by a nice peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun ... It feels nice and warm and safe here ... Uh-oh! ... You sense danger! ... Pull your head into your house ... Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders ... Hold in tight ... It isn't easy to be a turtle in a shell ... The danger is past now ... You can come out into the warm sunshine and once again you can relax and feel the warm sunshine ... Watch out now! ... More danger ... Hurry. Pull your head back into your house and hold it tight ... You have to be closed in tight to protect yourself ... Okay ... You can relax now ... Bring your head out and let your shoulders relax ... Notice how much better it feels to be relaxed than to be all tight ... One more time now ... Danger! ... Pull your head in ... Push your shoulders way up to your ears and hold tight ... Don't let even a tiny piece of your head show outside your shell ... Hold it ... Feel the tenseness in your neck and shoulders ... Okay ... You can come out now ... It's safe again ... Relax and feel comfortable in your safety ... There's no more danger ... Nothing to worry about ... Nothing to be afraid of ... You feel good.

You have a giant jawbreaker bubble gum in your mouth ... It's very hard to chew ... Bite down on it ... Hard! ... Let your neck muscles help you ... Now relax ... Just let your jaw hang loose ... Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop ... Okay, let's tackle that jawbreaker again now ... Bite down ... Hard! ... Try to squeeze it out between your teeth ... That's good ... You're really tearing that gum up ... Now relax again ... Just let your jaw drop off your face ... It feels so good just to let go and not have to fight that bubble gum ... Okay, one more time ... We're really going to tear it up this time ... Bite down ... Hard as you can ... Harder ... Oh. You're really working hard ... Good ... Now relax ... Try to relax your whole body ... You've beaten the bubble gum ... Let yourself go as loose as you can.

Here comes a pesky old fly ... He has landed on your nose ... Try to get him off without using your hands ... That's right wrinkle up your nose ... Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can ... Scrunch your nose up real hard ... Good ... You've chased him away ... Now you can relax your nose ... OOPS! ... Here he comes back again ... Shoo him off ... Wrinkle it up hard ... Hold it just as tight as you can ... Okay, he flew away ... You can relax your face ... Notice that when you scrunch up your nose, that your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help too ... And that they get tight too ... So, when you relax your nose, your whole face relaxes too, and that feels good ... Uh-oh! This time that old fly has come back, but this time he's on your forehead ... Make lots of wrinkles ... Try to catch him between all those wrinkles ... Hold it tight now ... Okay, you

can let go ... He's gone for good ... Now you can just relax ... Let your face go smooth, no wrinkles anywhere ... Your face feels nice and smooth and relaxed.

Hey, here comes a cute baby elephant ... But he's not watching where he's going ... He doesn't see you lying there on the grass, and he's about to step on your stomach ... Don't move ... You don't have time to get out of the way ... Just get ready for him ... Make your stomach very hard ... Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight ... Hold it ...

It looks like he's going the other way ... You can relax now ... Let your stomach go soft ... Let it be as relaxed as you can ... That feels so much better ... Oops, he's coming this way again ... Get ready ... Tighten up your stomach ... Real hard ... If he steps on you and when your stomach is hard, it won't hurt ... Make your stomach into a rock ... Okay, he's moving away again ... You can relax now ... Kind of settle down, get comfortable and relax ... Notice the difference between a tight stomach and a relaxed one ... That's how we want it to feel ... Nice and loose and relaxed ... You won't believe this ... But this time he's really coming your way, and no turning round ... He's headed straight for you ... Tighten up ... Tighten up ... Here he comes ... This is really it ... You've got to hold on tight ... He's stepping on you ... He's stepped over you ... Now he's gone for good ... You can relax completely ... You're safe ... everything is okay and you can feel nice and relaxed.

This time imagine that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence and the boards have splinters on them ... You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through ... Suck your stomach in ... Try to squeeze it up against your backbone ... Try to be as skinny as you can ... You've got to get through ... Now relax ... You don't have to be skinny now ... Just relax

and feel your stomach being warm and loose ... Okay, lets try to get through that fence now ... Squeeze up your stomach ... Make it touch your backbone ... Get it real small and tight ... Get as skinny as you can ... Hold it tight now ... You've got to squeeze through ... You've got to get through that skinny little fence with no splinters ... You can relax now ... Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs ... You can feel really good now ... You've done fine.

Now pretend you are standing bare foot in a big, fat mud puddle ... Squish your toes down deep into the mud ... Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle ... You'll probably need your legs to help you push ... Push down, spread your toes apart ... and feel the mud squish up between your toes ... Now step out of the puddle ... Relax your feet ... Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is ... It feels good to be relaxed ... Back into the mud puddle ... Squish your toes down ... Let your muscles help you push your feet down ... Push your feet ... Hard ... Try to squeeze that mud puddle dry ... Okay ... Come back out now ... Relax your feet ... Relax your legs ... Relax your toes ... It feels so good to be relaxed ... No tenseness anywhere ... You feel kind of warm and tingly.

\*In a moment, I will count backwards from four to one ... When I reach one I want you to open your eyes and lie still for a while before you begin to move around again ... You will feel pleasantly relaxed and refreshed ... Four: begin to feel more awake ... Three: get ready to start moving again ... Two: you are now aware of your surroundings ... One: open your eyes feeling relaxed, alert and awake.

*\*Note: The therapist does not use the concluding paragraph above in the demonstration video; instead, she provides more direction regarding home practice of the relaxation skills using the text below. We include the text of the paragraph above for informational purposes.*

Therapist: I want you to stay as relaxed as you can. Let your whole body go limp and feel all the muscles relax. In a few moments, I will ask you to open your eyes, and that will be the end of our session. As you go through the day, remember how good it feels to be relaxed. Sometimes you may have to make yourself tighter before you can be relaxed, just as we did in the exercises. Practice these exercises every day to get more and more relaxed. A good time to practice is at night, after you've gone to bed and the lights are out, and you won't be disturbed. It will help you sleep. Then, when you're really good and relaxed, you can help yourself relax at school. Just remember the elephant, the jawbreaker, or lemon. Like we talked about earlier, you said you also feel nervous when you speak before a crowd. Before you go up, you can practice some of these exercises without anybody seeing -- if you just do the lemon next to your side. You did a really great job today, and I'm really proud of you. When you're ready, you can open your eyes.

You did a great job! How do you feel?

Child: Relaxed.

Therapist: You feel relaxed!? That's good! I'm glad to hear that. That's how you're supposed to feel. Are these things that you think you can practice at home?

Child: [Nods]

Therapist: All right, what I'm going to have you do next is, I'm going to have you teach Mom how to do them, okay? And then you and Mom can practice them together at home. All right -- thanks a lot!

Script (Physical Relaxation Script with Imagery) is the product of:

Dept. of Clinical Psychology  
Manchester Children's Hospital Trust 1998

[Close Window](#) | [Print Transcript](#)