

your lower arms. Feel the tension in your arms, shoulders and into your back. Relax. Repeat.

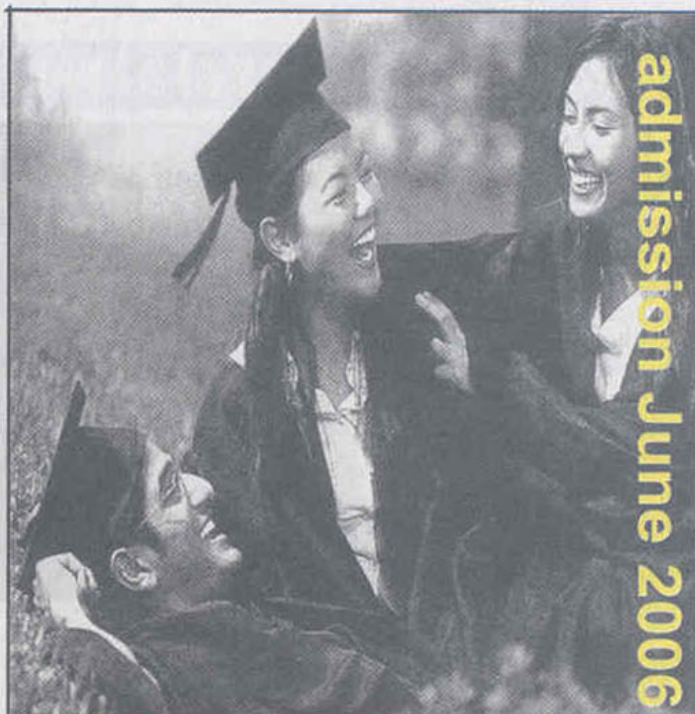
- Hands and lower arms. Make a tight fist and pull up your wrists. Feel the tension in your hands, knuckles and lower arms. Relax. Repeat.
- Chest, shoulders and upper back. Pull your shoulders back as if you're trying to make your shoulder blades touch. Relax. Repeat.
- Stomach. Pull your stomach in toward your spine, tightening your abdominal muscles. Relax. Repeat.
- Upper legs. Squeeze your knees together and lift your legs up off the chair or from wherever you're relaxing. Feel the tension in your thighs. Relax. Repeat.
- Lower legs. Raise your feet toward the ceiling while flexing them toward your body. Feel the tension in your calves. Relax. Repeat.
- Feet. Turn your feet inward and curl your toes up and out. Relax. Repeat.

Perform progressive muscle relaxation at least once or twice each day to get the maximum benefit. Each session should last about 10 minutes.

Autogenic relaxation Autogenic means something that comes from within you. During this type of relaxation, you repeat words or suggestions in your mind to help you relax and reduce the tension in your muscles. Find a peaceful place where you'll be free of interruptions. Then follow these steps:

1. Choose a focus word, phrase, or image you find relaxing. Examples of words or phrases include "peace" or "I am peaceful". This is called a mantra.
2. Sit quietly in a comfortable position.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Relax your muscles, starting at your head, working down your body to your feet.
5. Breathe slowly and naturally, focusing on your word, phrase or image.
6. Continue for 10 to 20 minutes. If your mind wanders, that's OK. Gently return your focus to your breathing and the word, phrase or image you selected.
7. After time is up, sit quietly for a few minutes with your eyes closed. Open your eyes and sit in silence for a few more minutes.

Combine movement with meditation Yoga is a specific system of exercises for reaching physical and mental control and well-being. Tai chi is a slow, dance-like martial art that focuses on concentration, stretching, balance and grace. Yoga and Tai chi can help you relax. They also help you maintain muscle and joint flexibility. ■



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