

Relax.....and just let go.....

*“Relaxation is the opposite of Stress –
the two cannot simultaneously exist.”*

Jacobson

The end of year is approaching quickly, and as we come up towards Christmas, many of you will be finding that things are intensifying and becoming busier. Usually there are increased demands at work, more social activities, things to organise for Christmas, and of course all the usual pressures and stresses of living, paying mortgages, and so forth.

Also for many of you, you may be feeling the fatigue of the year building up and your energy may not be at its peak. You may be feeling a little short on time, and so you begin to let go of the things important to your health, such as letting go of your exercise, not getting to your yoga as often, eating more poorly, and getting less rest.

It is exactly the time when you can least afford to let go of these things.

If nothing else, it is important to try to maintain some balance to your lifestyle, by getting enough relaxation.

Relaxation is a process, different to sleep, where you take your body and mind into a special state commonly called the ‘relaxation response’. It is a state of altered awareness, where the body and mind can heal and recover. It restores balance, by countering the stress response.

Relaxation has many benefits including:

- Letting go of muscle tension, anxiety and worry
- Cultivating an attitude of harmony and peace
- Developing a sense of quiet acceptance
- Restoring balance to the mind and body
- Aiding the healing process
- Calming the mind
- Improving sleep
- Reducing pain
- Relieving Stress

There are many types of relaxation, but the 3 main types are:

- Physical Relaxation – to relax the body, such as body awareness relaxation
- Mental Relaxation –to relax the mind, such as mental imagery
- Meditation – to discover yourself

Some of you may find relaxation is not easy – you find it difficult to just sit or lie still. Your mind continues to stay busy and you feel deep inside that you are wasting time.

Remember no time is ever wasted – relaxation will give you more energy, focus and creativity to complete your tasks easier, and perhaps more efficiently.

The faster you go and the more tired you become, then the greater your errors tend to be.

Not being able to relax is simply a problem of attitude of mind, and by following the simple principles below and practising regularly, you will find your relaxation improves and becomes a part of your life you won’t like to miss.

Principles of Relaxation:

- Acceptance, Acceptance, Acceptance – whatever happens is OK, don't try too hard
- Observe and ALLOW the body and mind to let go – nothing bad can happen
- If you are feeling agitated, do some exercise or physical yoga first to release the stress hormones causing agitation.
- Breathe – slowly and gently.....
- Massage your forehead
- Think good posture – spine aligned with neutral curves
- Use support to make your self comfortable
- Which ever method you choose, relaxation is great to do on a regular basis, preferably daily. Give yourself 5 to 20 minutes for your relaxation practice.
- Relaxation is a very individual thing so you need to find a technique which works best for you. Sometimes you need a tool kit of techniques, as some days, one technique may work better than another.
- Enjoy your relaxation.....

A simple relaxation to try NOW!

There are many types of relaxation - the simplest is Breathing Relaxation.
Just taking 3 slow deep breaths can make you feel much more relaxed.....
Try it right now.....

Awareness Relaxation

Lie down and simply attend to each area of your body and allow the muscles to “let go....” If it is difficult to relax, first tense the muscle, then “let it go...” Take 3 to 15 minutes to relax:

- Toes, feet, calves & legs
- Knees and thighs
- Hips and buttocks
- Lower back
- Belly and waist
- Upper back
- Chest
- Shoulders
- Down the arms to the finger tips
- Neck and throat
- Facial muscles
- Forehead
- Whole Body – then attend to the “belly” breathing