BASIC RELAXATION SKILLS

SKILLS THAT TARGET BOTH MIND & BODY

Breathing
Focusing on deep, gentle, diaphragmatic breathing in a steady rhythm. The quickest way to activate the Relaxation Response.

SKILLS THAT TARGET THE BODY

Body Scan
Mentally scanning over the body to find tension or discomfort and passively releasing it

Autogenics
Mentally repeating phrases such as “My arms are heavy and warm,” or “My jaw is loose and slack” while focusing on the particular part of the body

Progressive Muscle Relaxation
Tensing and relaxing different muscles or muscles groups throughout the body.

SKILLS THAT TARGET THE MIND

Meditation
Passively and uncritically focusing the mind on one thing at a time such as the breath observing thoughts rather than judging, rejecting, or dwelling on them.

Visualization
Taking a mental trip to the beach, mountains or other peaceful relaxing scene where the mind and body can relax or imagining a strong box to lock away worries in.

Self-hypnosis
Thinking or listening to phrases that promote positive change in thoughts or behaviors while in a state of deep relaxation, in which the mind is more open to change.

Performance Rehearsal
Visualizing an upcoming performance or other stressful situation in order to perform, act, or feel in a desired way.

Thought Stopping
Using a strong mental cue like “Stop” or “Not now” to stop the flow of thoughts and focus on breathing instead.

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