

## **Energy Management Relaxation Technique Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**

PMR involves tensing and relaxing specific muscles, until all major muscle groups are completely relaxed. These tension-relaxation cycles develop your awareness of the difference between tension and lack of tension. With skill, you can detect tension in a specific muscle or area of the body, like the neck, and then relax that muscle. Following is a sample PMR activity.

Begin with your feet, press your heels into the ground as you tighten all the muscles in both feet. Hold for as tightly as possible for one... two... three... four... five... six... seven... eight... nine... ten... and release... Try to feel the difference between being tight and being relaxed... just let your feet relax.... Tighten your feet again for one... two... three... four... five... six... seven... eight... nine... ten... and then release... Feel your muscles relax as the blood rushes back into the muscles. Tighten your feet again for one... two... three... four... five... six... seven... eight... nine... ten... and release... feeling completely relaxed [note: as you progress, or to save time you can go through this routine tensing and releasing each body part only once]

- Next move to your calves... [repeat three times as above]
- Next tighten your hamstrings... [repeat three times as above]
- Now go to your quadriceps and buttocks... [repeat three times as above]
- Tighten every muscle in your lower body... [repeat three times as above]
- Do the same with your lower back... [repeat three times as above]
- Now move to your stomach... [repeat three times as above]
- Next clench your hands into fists... [repeat three times as above]
- Now do the same with your upper arms... [repeat three times as above]
- Next tighten your chest muscles... [repeat three times as above]
- Tighten all the muscles of your upper body... [repeat three times as above]
- Next move to your neck muscles... [repeat three times as above]
- Now tighten your jaw muscles... [repeat three times as above]
- Now tighten your facial muscles... [repeat three times as above]
- Lastly tighten every muscle of your body at the same time... make your body like a bar of iron... [repeat three times as above]

Now scan your muscle groups from head to toe for those that may still be uncomfortable and repeat the tightening there.... In this perfect state of relaxation you are unwilling to move a single muscle in your body.... All you feel is peaceful, quiet and relaxed.... Realize that this feeling becomes more readily available to you as you practice becoming more aware of your body. When you want to get up count backward from four to one. You will feel relaxed and refreshed (Adapted from Nideffer (1985).