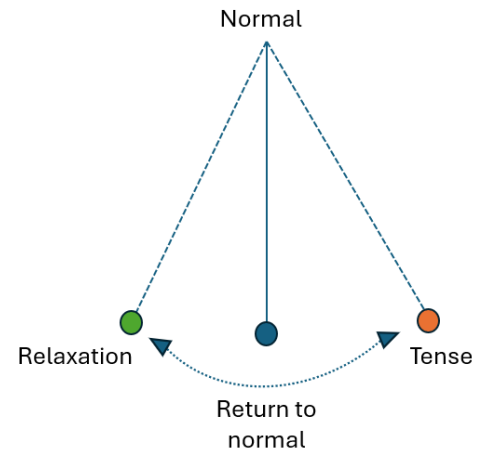


Progressive Muscle Relaxation

The exercises should be pain free and when doing them if you feel any discomfort step back a little.

The technique of PMR was described by Edmund Jacobson in the 1930's based on his premise that mental calmness is a natural result of physical relaxation.

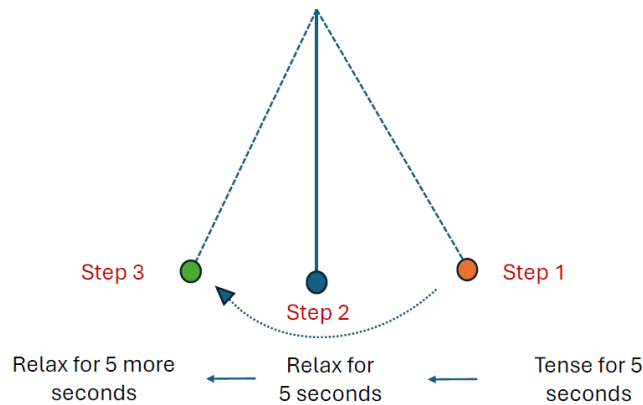
Tensing and tightening one muscle group at a time followed by a relaxation phase will release tension. Like a pendulum pulled 45 degrees in one direction it goes 45 degrees in the opposite so that the more you tense your muscle the more you get the opposite experience of relaxation.



What is it useful for?

PMR has many benefits but most commonly used as a way to help with Stress management, Anxiety relief, Insomnia, Headaches, Phobias, Digestion issues and to help with Blood pressure issues.

The process is easy a simple combination of tensing for a few seconds and then doubling the relaxation period, the most difficult part of PMR is finding a quiet space to do it and then practice, practice and a bit more practice. The more we engage with the exercises the greater the benefit we will receive, just like learning any new skill.



What is happening?

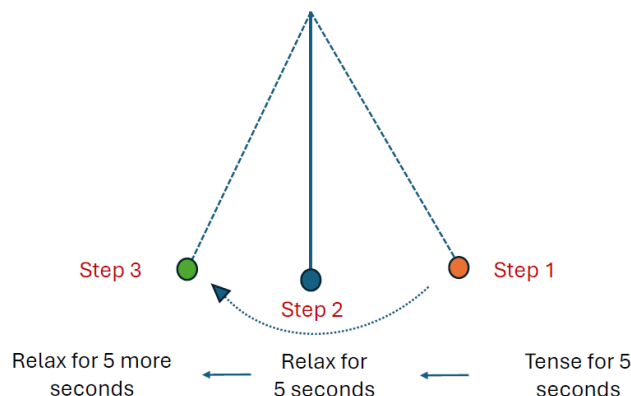
When we feel stressed or tense, we release Adrenalin, Cortisol and Norepinephrine to fight the threat, run away from the threat or to freeze and hope the threat passes.

Progressive muscle relaxation uses these chemicals so that less of them "hang around" in our system. As a result, we return balance and can deal with the threat more logically and less emotionally.

If someone is just getting started with PMR, they may find it helpful to:

- Set aside a regular time each day for PMR, such as before sleep
- Choose a quiet, calm space in which to practice
- Use audio or video tutorials to guide the process
- Listen to relaxing music
- Practice consistently to establish a routine

Your Toolkit



1. Lower arms and hands: Hold both arms out over your lap and make a fist with both hand.
2. Upper arms: Bring both arms to your shoulders and flex your biceps.
3. Calves: Extend your legs in front of you and point your toes towards your knees.
4. Lower legs: Extend your legs in front of you and point your toes away from your knees.
5. Thighs: Extend your legs in front of you and press your thighs together tightly
6. Stomach: Draw your stomach in tightly, try to touch the small of your back to the back of the chair
7. Chest: Take a deep breath and hold it in, if comfortable try to touch your elbows together behind your back.
8. Shoulders: Draw your shoulders up to your ears.
9. Neck: Touch your chest with your chin.
10. Lips: Press your lips tightly together without clamping down with your jaw or biting your teeth.
11. Eyes: Close your eyes somewhat tightly and scrunch up your nose.
12. Jaw: Open your mouth as wide as possible.
13. Lower forehead: Pout and lower your eyebrows.
14. Upper forehead: Wrinkle your brow and raise your eyebrows