



Headache Wellness Center

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BIOFEEDBACK

Biofeedback is the process of giving you information about physical states of your body to help you learn to monitor your body's response to stress. A biofeedback instrument, such as a computer, gives you continuous information about a specific area of your body, such as heart rate or respiratory rate. With this information, you can observe and change your body's response to stress thus learn to relax.

Biofeedback techniques begin with teaching your body to relax through diaphragmatic breathing and muscle relaxation. In addition to that, research through The Institute of HeartMath has demonstrated that when people experience positive feelings like love and appreciation, the heart can pull other biological systems into balance with it. In this state our physiological systems operate with increased efficiency.

Other Benefits of Relaxation:

1. A decrease in heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, and oxygen consumption allows for less wear and tear on the body, boosts the immune system, and increases the quality of life.
2. An increase in alpha brain waves (slowed down rate from normal activity) allows for increased clarity, focus, and problem-solving.
3. These benefits allow for relaxation of all muscles releasing any tightness which has contributed to your headache.

Technique:

1. Close your eyes and relax. Begin to breathe deeply from the diaphragm, in through the nose and out through the mouth, four seconds in and four seconds out.
2. Shift your attention away from the mind or breathing pattern and focus your attention in the area around your heart where you have experienced the feelings of love, care or appreciation. Pretend you are breathing slowly through the heart.
3. Remember the feeling of love or appreciation you have for someone now or in the past. Or, focus on something positive in your life.
4. Gently send that feeling of love or appreciation to yourself or others.
5. If mind thoughts come in, bring your focus gently back to the heart and radiate energy from the heart. If the energy feels too intense or blocked, feel a softness in the heart and relax.

Relaxation Podcasts by Dawn C. Buse PhD

Dawn C. Buse, PhD, is a licensed clinical psychologist and Director of Psychology at the Montefiore Headache Center in New York City. She has many years of experience in helping patients with biobehavioral techniques.

To receive the most benefit from these exercises, be sure to find a quiet place where you can relax and be free from distraction.

This is a complimentary recording designed to provide you with tips and tools to help you relax and ease stress and tension. It is not designed to diagnose or treat any health condition. Please be sure you are not engaged in any activity, such as driving or operating machinery or equipment, while you listen to this recording.

Session one is an introduction to biobehavioral techniques and an explanation of the importance of the relaxation response.

Session two focuses on diaphragmatic breathing, a type of relaxing breathing from the diaphragm, and on progressive relaxation, a head-to-toe calming of each muscle group.

Session three reviews diaphragmatic breathing and then focuses on guided imagery, a technique that helps transport you to a mindset of calmness and tranquility.

Listen to these podcasts by clicking on the links below.

http://www.medfusion.net/templates/groups/196/492/session_1_intro.mp3

http://www.medfusion.net/templates/groups/196/492/session_2_breathing.mp3

http://www.medfusion.net/templates/groups/196/492/session_3_beach.mp3