

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG WITHDRAWAL: PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre Inc.

breathing – this will happen naturally as you become relaxed. Try to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Continue this process until any symptoms of anxiety, stress, tension or anger are gone. Monitor your slow breathing relaxation practice during the week using the relaxation practice log.

Source: Lee, N., Johns, L., Jenkinson, R., Johnston, J., Connolly, K., Hall, K., et al. (2007). *Clinical Treatment Guidelines for Alcohol and Drug Clinicians. No 14: Methamphetamine dependence and treatment*. Fitzroy, Victoria: Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre Inc.

Available at www.turningpoint.org.au/library/cg_14.pdf

Relaxation practice 2 – progressive muscle relaxation

Step 1, Learn to relax: Close your eyes. Remember to ‘relax’ as you move your body into a relaxed position. Make sure you are in a comfortable position with your eyes closed.

Step 2, Hands and arms: Imagine that you are squeezing a lemon with your left hand. Squeeze it really hard so all the juice runs out. Hold it for five seconds really tight. Now, RELAX. Notice what it feels like as your hand relaxes. Do the same thing with your right hand.

Step 3, Arms and shoulders: Imagine that you are like a cat stretching after lying in the sun. Stretch your arms high above your head. Reach as far as you can. Hold it for a few seconds. Now RELAX. Notice what your arms feel like when they are completely relaxed.

Step 4, Shoulders and neck: Imagine you are a turtle and you see someone coming. Try to push your head back down into your shell so that you can hide. Push your head down. Hold it for five seconds. Now RELAX. Let the tightness in your neck go completely.

Step 5, Jaw: Imagine you have a nut in your mouth and you are trying to crush it with your teeth. Bite down on it and try to break it. Hold it for five seconds. Now RELAX. Notice how good it feels to let your jaw relax completely.

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Step 6: Face and nose: Imagine a fly has landed right on the tip of your nose but you can't use your hand to shoo it away. Wrinkle your nose up to try and get rid of the fly. Now RELAX. Notice how good it feels to have a relaxed face. Now the fly has come back and it has landed on your forehead. Wrinkle your forehead up as much as you can to try and get the fly to go away. Now RELAX. Notice how good your forehead feels when it is not wrinkled and tense.

Step 7, Stomach: Imagine someone is about to jump on your stomach. Try and make your stomach as hard as you can so that someone standing on it won't hurt. Hold it for five seconds. Now RELAX. Notice how much better your stomach feels when it is completely relaxed and floppy. Now imagine that you have to squeeze through a narrow gap in the fence. Suck in your stomach and make it really skinny so that you can fit through. Now RELAX. Let your stomach go completely relaxed.

Step 8, Legs and feet: Imagine that you are walking at the beach down where the sand is wet and squishy. Squish your toes down as far as you can in the sand. Keep squishing for five seconds. Now RELAX. Notice how different your legs and feet feel.

Monitor your progressive muscle relaxation practice during the week using the Relaxation practice log.

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Relaxation practice 3 – mindful walking

Mindful walking is a way of stepping out of 'automatic pilot' and can help you to practise paying attention to the present.

Step 1: Stand at one end of your walk, keeping your feet pointed forward and eyes straight ahead.

Step 2: Start slowly at first and, as best you can, pay attention to the way your feet and legs feel when you take each step forward.