

# The most powerful relaxation technique in the world

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Anxiety Disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., with 40 million (18.1%) of the adult U.S. population affected. (Anxiety disorders assoc of America)

75% of the general population experiences at least "some stress" every two weeks. (National Health Interview Survey)

Stress contributes to heart disease, high blood pressure, strokes, and other illnesses in many individuals.

Stress affects the immune system, contributes to the development of alcoholism, obesity, suicide, drug addiction, cigarette addiction, and other harmful behaviors. (<http://www.depressionperception.com/stress>)

Considering how much stress and anxiety can affect us, often without us not even realizing, it makes sense to participate in a daily stress reducing regime. However, many individuals simply do not know how to relax properly or don't take the time out to listen to their body's many cries for stress reduction. This e-book contains one of the most powerful if not the most powerful relaxation technique known. When used properly for approximately thirty minutes twice a day it has the capacity to switch off the stress producing areas of the brain and allow the practitioner the deepest most relaxing feeling they will ever have. The physiology of the brains stress producing areas will be explained shortly but firstly I will just mention relaxation techniques to date so that I can illustrate the difference between the traditional relaxation techniques taught and this new one.

The relaxation technique that has been traditionally taught is a simple practice that once learned takes 10 to 20 minutes a day. The technique was developed by

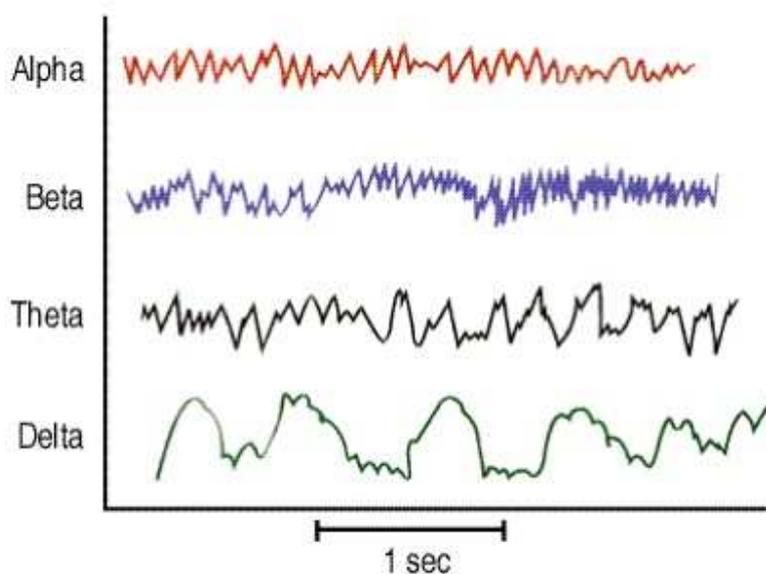
Herbert Benson, M.D. at Harvard Medical School, tested extensively and written up in his book entitled, of all things, "The Relaxation Response".

The relaxation response is a physical state of deep rest that changes the physical and emotional responses to stress (e.g., decreases in heart rate, blood pressure, rate of breathing, and muscle tension).

The other technique usually taught within classical cognitive-behavioural treatment is where a person is shown how to clench and tense all the various muscles in the body one by one and then relax them.

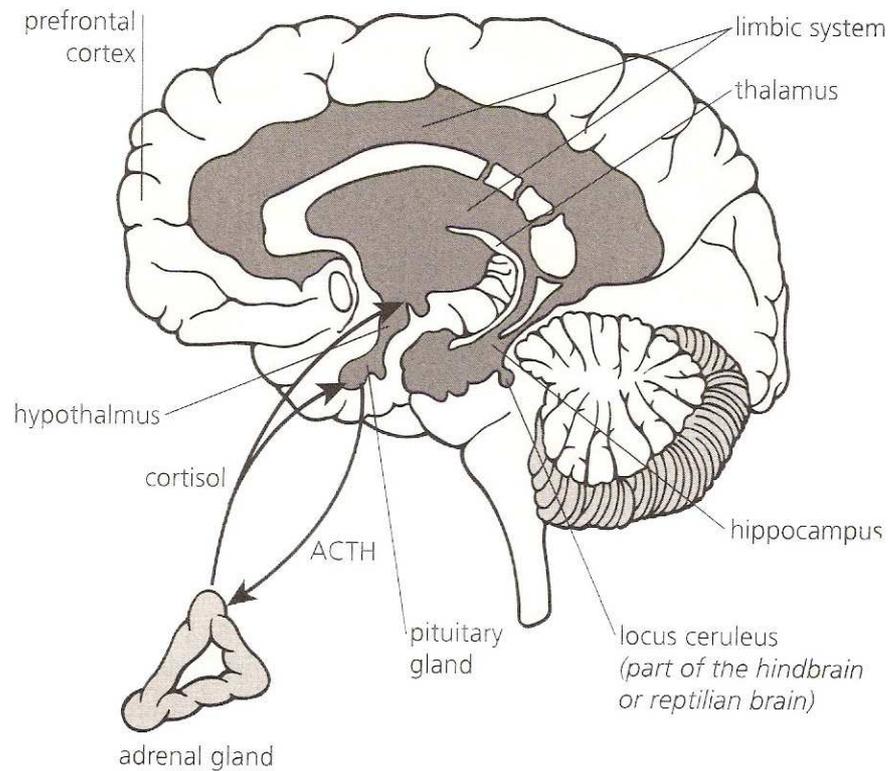
Now these techniques do help to relax you but the main criticism of them is that they only relax to an intermediate level. The techniques themselves do not target the actual areas in the brain that specifically cause stress to start. The standard techniques will allow you to reach an alpha brainwave level which is relaxing but only reduces the stressors and doesn't actually switch it off. To do that we need to go down one more level which involves a visualisation that is simple to do.

Before we get to the technique lets take a quick look at the four different types of brainwave we have. Take a quick look at the chart below first.



Above you can see that beta waves are the fastest brainwave which is what most of us are in during our daily, often hectic, lives when we process information like maths for instance, we predominantly utilize beta. The next level down is when we may be in a somewhat relaxed mode but not too deeply relaxed, maybe we are day dreaming slightly. Then we may enter the alpha brainwave which is slightly slower than beta but definitely more relaxing. Deeper alpha where it starts to get even slower is usually where the standard techniques of relaxation take us, which as I say is still valuable, but we would ideally like and need to go much deeper. Now delta waves are basically where you are asleep so obviously that is too deep. We need to be just above that in the slow theta type waves which usually most people have just as they are drifting off to sleep and don't have for too long. Theta brainwaves when prolonged often lead to creative insights and increased intuition but what is very important about this brain wave state is that stress production is turned off in the brain.

OK so far, so next let's take a quick look at how stress starts and manifest itself. Well in more primitive eras gone by men and women lived on their survival instincts which originated in a deep brain area known as the reptilian system which is part of our brain stem. This structure has evolved in such a way that it is now enclosed by the limbic system, and surrounding this, the neocortex. These three areas are intimately connected to each other. The 'fight or flight' mechanism that becomes ignited when our survival is under threat originates from the reptilian and limbic structures. Please look at the below diagram to locate the various glands and centres in and around these brain systems because you will need to be able to visualise where they are in your mind to perform the technique.



When a person becomes anxious the brain stress system major glands, the thalamus and the hypothalamus, are activated and extend the activation to cerebral destinations inside and outside the limbic system. This in turn affects mood, thought and then releases the stress chemical cortisol into the blood. This is because the pituitary gland, also a major player in the brain stress system activates cortisol release from the adrenal glands which sit on top of our kidneys. The adrenal glands are one of the structures outside the brain area affected by the thalamus and hypothalamus. So they are all connected and fire off to cause further stress in our bodies.

So I would like you to look at the various structures and glands in the brain and study them enough to be able to recall where they are. Another diagram coming up in a moment will also simplify this for you once you have done this step.

So let's start with how all this is done.

Firstly we do this in two simple stages. The first stage is to just basically relax and take ourselves down to alpha.

Below is a simple way of achieving this stage.

- Lie down on a bed or flat comfortable surface.
- Visualize your feet.
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your feet and your feet are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your feet taking any stress or tension with it (some people use warm sand instead of water)
- Visualize your ankles
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your ankles and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your ankles taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your calves
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your calves and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your calves taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your knees and thighs
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your knees and thighs and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your knees and thighs taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your lower body
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your lower body and lower

abdomen and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.

- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your lower body taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your chest and back
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your chest and back and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your chest and back taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your arms
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your arms and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your arms taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your neck
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your neck and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your neck taking any stress or tension with it
- Visualize your head
- Imagine that you have warm water inside your head and are full up with this water and that the water represents stress or tension.
- Now imagine that the water just seeps out through your skin, just falls out of your head taking any stress or tension with it

Now imagine floating off to a favourite place, perhaps by the sea or in a grassy warm meadow, anywhere that is relaxing for you. Feel the sun on your skin and hear birds chirping or water bubbling and then visualize all of your worries just evaporating from your body and rising up and away until you feel quite serene. Following this you will probably be in a deep alpha brain wave state. Great, now

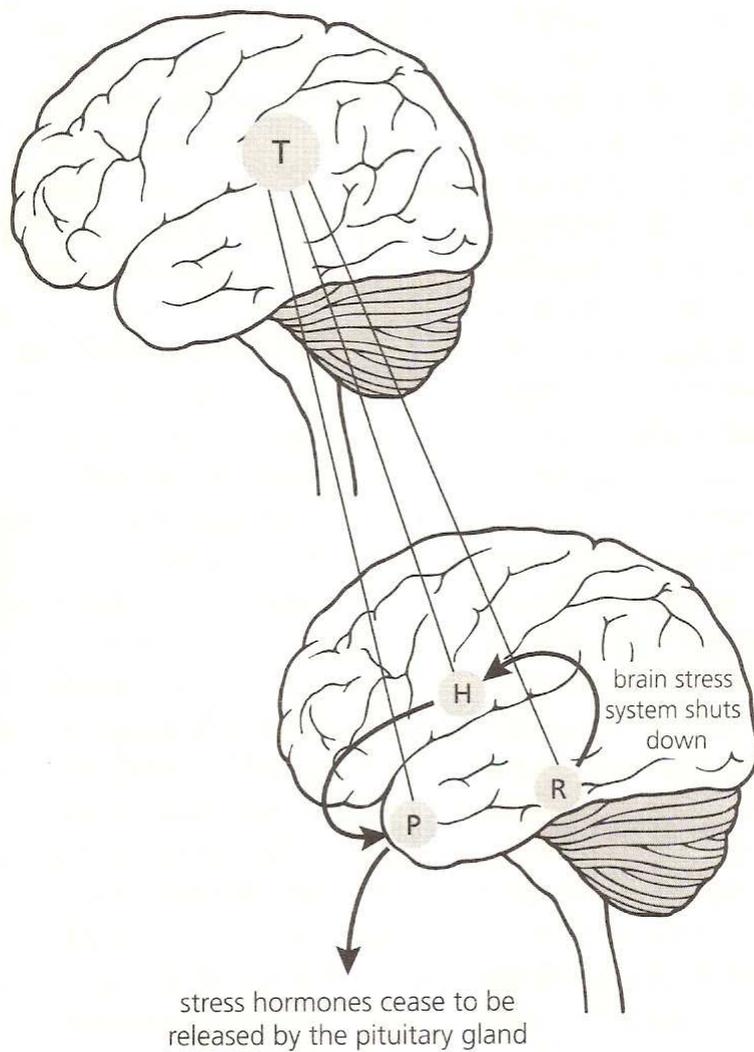
for the next step, even deeper.

Whilst still in the relaxed state above I would like you to imagine that you are a smaller person and you are inside your own thalamus, which was why it was important to familiarize yourself as to where these glands are first in your head. Imagine and see yourself calm and relaxed, in fact actually see yourself inside this gland appearing calm and serene. Once you have done this pretend you have a laser like gun in your hand and out of it shoots a calming peaceful ray of white light. Remember you are in your thalamus. Aim this white light to the rear of the reptilian brain, to an area labelled the locus ceruleus – see above diagram for exact positioning - Keep shooting the light into this structure and pretend you are massaging the structure with the light and feeling its warmth also. Take a few minutes to do this .Then aim the laser at your hypothalamus and shoot out calming rays of light onto and into the thalamus imagining the calming feeling going on their. Do this a for a couple of minutes and then switch the ray to your pituitary gland and keep shooting this calming ray of light which you can make a white colour to induce extra calming qualities. Keep this up for a few minutes again and then switch to visualizing your adrenal glands which sit on top of your kidneys in your lower back area. Aim the white calming laser from your thalamus into and around your adrenal glands and keep firing the ray of light for a further few minutes. While this is going on you will remain alert but will feel your body and muscles relaxing deeply as you continue to switch off the stress producing systems in your body and brain. Don't worry if you don't get it perfect the first time, after a few goes it becomes very simple to do Below is a diagram that shows you in a more simplistic way how to do this and which areas to direct the light ray to and in what order. The sequence will deactivate the stress producing areas and if anyone is watching you while you do this they will see your facial muscles in particular becoming very flaccid and relaxed as you do this. You can continue with another round of this for as long as you like but fifteen to twenty minutes is enough to start. Once mastered you might aim for twice a day, half an hour in the morning – which includes the basic relaxation sequence first for about ten minutes and then twenty of the advanced visualization. Cognitive psychologists say that you

generally have to do something for 21 days before it becomes a habit but you can feel the relaxation and stress reducing effects from day one. Also, if you have any physical illnesses this will help because it will let your body go to a deep theta state which is very beneficial for healing. This particular brain wave state of deep theta is very near the Schumann Resonance of 7.5 Hz which is the natural resonance of the earth's field and therefore is the optimum state for self-healing.

Important points to note with this technique:

- Please do not do it whilst driving – only perform this technique when you are in a quiet place.
- Please visualize and remember where the brain stress producing structures are first as this is the real key to this technique – a further look at neurological structures in an anatomy and physiology book wouldn't be a bad idea as an e-book can be a little restrictive with images but I have tried to provide you with the most important ones.



Visualize yourself in the thalamus **T** in your brain.  
 Visualise the mental laser of your directed attention switching  
 off the reptilian brain **R** ; then the hypothalamus **H** ;  
 then the pituitary gland **P** . Lower your conscious mind  
 into the theta state

When eliciting this deeper relaxation response technique:

- Your metabolic activity decreases
- Your heartbeat slows down
- Your muscles relax deeply
- Your breathing slows down
- Your blood cortisol levels will decrease considerably over time.

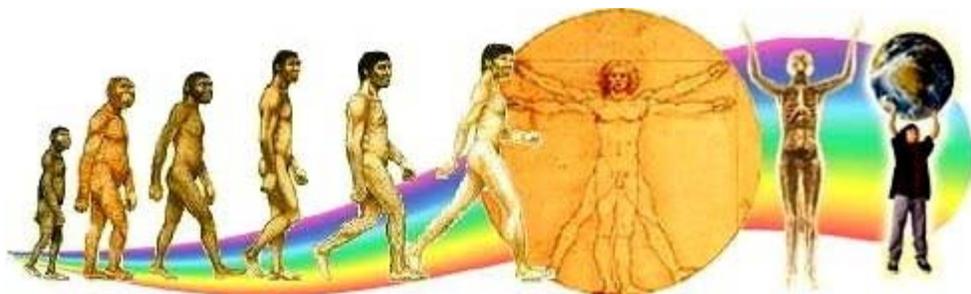
Another little technique that you can use to rid your mind of unwanted thoughts is to go into peripheral vision. If you are aware of anxiety or stress starting to build all you do is look straight ahead and then slowly move your vision (both eyes) gently to the periphery of the room. For example, your right eye moves its vision to the right periphery and your left eye moves its line of vision to its left periphery. When your peripheral vision is being utilized there is no internal dialogue (mental chatter) or any internal images in your mind. It is the self-talk and/or the internal images that spark the stress or continue it and when they are switched off there are simply no stressful thoughts intruding into the mind. Start off doing it for a few seconds until you can work up to about thirty seconds, it's easy to do and gets instant results. I still use this simple technique when I am about to start public speaking to get rid of any mental clutter prior to speaking.

If practiced regularly, and remember to do it in two stages, the main technique above will have lasting effects and health benefits. **However it is not a substitute for professional health care. Always consult a healthcare professional if you are unwell.**

For other stress control methods and general information please visit:

[www.anxietycoach.com.au](http://www.anxietycoach.com.au)

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## ***Why Do Personal Development?***

Part of the nature of humans is to be constantly developing, growing and moving toward a balanced and mature way of being. Our present personality is determined by both who and what we have been and by the person we strive to become. The goal of personal development is to learn and apply that which enables us to attain emotional wellbeing, understanding and effectiveness, and to share this knowledge with others.

Personal development is the conscious evolution of human nature, and yet throughout history it has been sorely lacking! Although it is in our nature to learn and grow, we are held back by our culture, which is predominantly focused on survival needs, each of us in competition with others, and our spiritual inner nature is repressed. The animal rules. We make no room for unconditional love.

Even though the culture may have evolved with technological advancement and administrative complexity, human nature has not moved forward as it might. We are now paying the price for human selfishness and inconsideration. Going forward, the quality of our lives on this planet - even our survival - now depends on each of us taking responsibility for our personal growth.

The human being needs to awaken to the soul that inhabits each body and is our true self and source of inner knowing. Awaken through a process of self-discovery, leading to one's own, self-directed spirituality. We need to become mindfully conscious instead of ruled by the dictates of instincts, past habits and fixed beliefs. We need to throw away dogma, open our minds and reconsider. Instead of fear about our survival and competitive angst, we will then be motivated by compassionate understanding and creative love.

For those that do move forward, the next epoch - that is almost upon us as we move into 2012 - will be a celebration of human cooperation and shared love. It's our best hope for the future - and it's in our hands.

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