**PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION**

Progressive muscle relaxation is a deep relaxation technique for releasing stress, tension, and extra energy. It's a two-step process where first, you tense a group of muscles and hold them tight and second, you release the hold. As you release the muscle, the tension flows away with it leaving the muscle group feeling more relaxed.

Coordinating the breath adds another layer of release and relaxation. Deep breathing activates the relaxation response in the body that slows the heart rate, slows breathing to normal, and calms the mind. And, the breath helps kids visualize the energy leaving their body.

Adapt this script to personalize it for your kids. There is no right or wrong. Pick a position that is comfortable for your child. Your child doesn't have to lie down- sitting or standing can still work. You can add, remove, or repeat body parts based on where your child is feeling uncomfortable energy.

Progressive muscle relaxation can help with releasing all kinds of energy from the body. I use the word ENERGY as a generic term for any emotion, feeling, stress, or tension. Have your child name the energy they are experiencing and use that word instead. Some examples are worry, anger, and stress.

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**GET READY**

Lie down and get comfortable. You can close your eyes. Take a deep breath in through your nose and let it our slowly through your mouth. Take another deep breath in through your nose and blow it out through your mouth. Take one last deep breath and let it out slowly.

**THE SCRIPT**

1. Imagine a bug has landed on your face, and you can’t use your hands to shoo it away. Take a deep breath in through your nose, and scrunch your face as tight as you can to get the bug off, you can wiggle your nose a little, too. Now, breathe out through your mouth and relax your face. Feel all of the tightness flow away from your face.

2. Imagine you are a turtle hiding in its shell. Take a deep breath, pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down. Hold it tight. And now, breathe out through your mouth and relax your neck and your shoulders, and feel the tension flow away.

3. Imagine you are holding lemons in your hands. Take a deep breath in, and squeeze the lemons. Use your whole arm to squeeze out every last drop. Let your breath out through your mouth, and relax your hands and arms. Feel any tightness flow down your arms and out your fingertips.

4. Imagine a playful puppy is going to pounce on your belly. Breathe in a big breath as you tighten your belly and get ready for the puppy. Hold it tight, here he comes. Now, let your tummy relax as you breathe out.

5. Last, imagine you are walking on the sand at the beach. Take a deep breath in, and dig your feet into the sand. Use your whole leg to push deeper and deeper into the sand. Push just a bit more. Now, breathe out and relax your legs and your feet, and feel the energy flow down your legs and out your feet. Take one last deep breath, and open your eyes when you are ready.

This is my body before relaxing.

This is my body after relaxing.

**DISCUSSION STARTERS**

*Progressive muscle relaxation can help with releasing all kinds of energy from the body. I use the word ENERGY as a generic term for any emotion, feeling, stress, or tension. Have your child name the energy they are experiencing and use that word instead. Some examples are worry, anger, and stress.*

1.Where did you feel energy in your body?

2. What did it feel like? look like? sound like?

3. Do you know what caused the uncomfortable energy?

4. Were you able to notice the energy leaving your body? Did you see it, feel it, or hear it leave?

5. How did you do with the progressive muscle relaxation? 6. Was there a body part that was harder to relax than the others? 7. How about a body part that was easy to relax?

8. Do you feel more calm and peaceful after progressive muscle relaxation?

9. Did you like progressive muscle relaxation?

10. Would you change anything for next time?