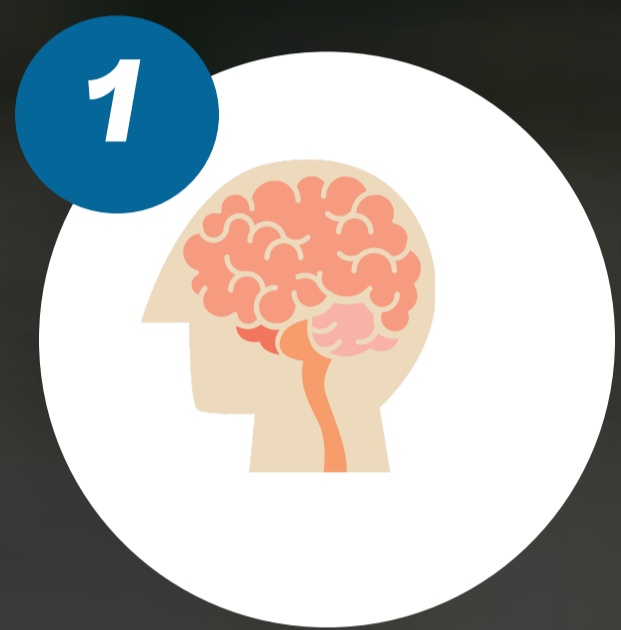




BELIEVE  PERFORM

**PROGRESSIVE
MUSCLE
RELAXATION**

Welcome to your progressive muscle relaxation script. When we experience high levels of anxiety, stress and worry, we often experience tension within our muscles. One way in which you can reduce tension within your muscles is with progressive muscle relaxation. This is a technique where you will be tensing and working on all your major muscle groups and then relaxing them. Tensing and relaxing muscles can help you to feel physically relaxed which can in turn help you to feel mentally relaxed. Before we begin I want you to think about:



Where and when you will engage in your progressive muscle relaxation



Think about when you engage in the process? Have you just eaten a big meal? Have you just finished exercising?



The time and place you will be engaging in the activity



Are you going to be sitting or lying down?

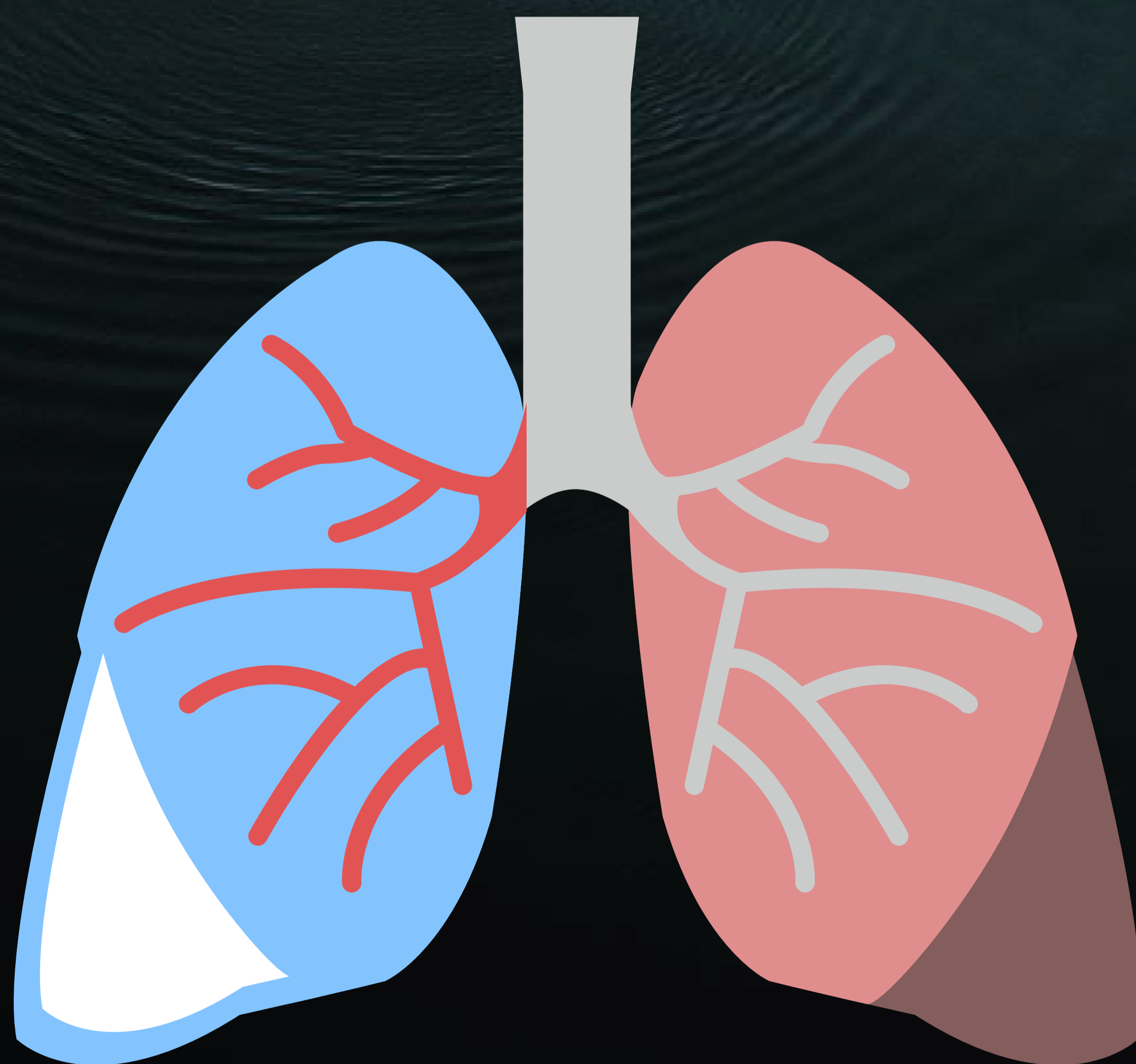


If you have any injuries or concerns, please consult your doctor before engaging in this script. If you experience any pain when engaging in the activity we recommend that you stop participating

Within this script we will slowly work through the major muscle groups in the body. I will be asking you to tense and relax them one by one. As you engage in this activity you might experience sensations in your muscles which will demonstrate the tension you are experiencing. Try not to overdo the tensing. Think of tensing between 70-90% of your maximum capacity. By engaging in this activity, you will learn to identify tension in your muscles and how to release it. It is a skill that if you practice you can use to relax at any time you want.

I want you to find a comfortable position either lying down or sitting in a quiet location where there are very few distractions. Pay attention to your body and allow yourself to see how it feels. If you feel that your mind starts to wander in this exercise, try to refocus on the muscle group in which we are working.

Let's start with your breathing. Let us begin to by getting your breathing into a natural soothing rhythm. Take a deep but slow breath through your nose and I want you to hold it for a couple of seconds. Now breathe out. Let the air gently fill your lungs and breathe out slowly releasing any tension. Take another deep breath, hold for a couple of seconds and breathe out. As we keep working through this exercise remember to keep breathing slowly and develop your own steady rhythm. As you breathe out imagine the tension in your body being released and flowing out of your body. Breathe in and out and feel your body relaxing more and more with each breath.



LET US BEGIN

Start by tightening the muscles in your forehead and brow. Feel your eyebrows raise upwards. Notice the tension in your forehead build up and relax the muscles. Let the tension slowly disappear.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now tense your eyes and cheeks. Close and squint your eyes and feel the tension build up. Try not to force the movement and feel the tension build up. As you release the tension feel your eyes and cheeks relax more and more with each breath that you take.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Next it is time to tense your mouth and jaw. Open your mouth widely feeling your cheeks stretch and the hinges of your jaw widening. Don't overdo it. As you slowly close your mouth feel the tension disappear more and more. Feel the tension drain out.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now slowly tilt your head back and look at the ceiling. Feel the tension build up in the muscles around your neck. Now slowly bring your head back to its original position. Notice how your muscles feel when relaxed. Feel the tension and weight of your neck slowly release.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now slowly raise your shoulders up as high as you can as if they were touching your ears. Feel the tension build up in your shoulder blades. And as you bring your shoulders back down feel the tension release and your shoulders feel more relaxed. Notice the relief and comfort

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Remember to keep slowly breathing in and out. And with each breathe out feel your body becoming more and more relaxed.

Now tense your shoulder blades. Slowly pull your shoulder blades backwards as if they were touching each other. Feel the tension build up as your shoulder blades get closer and closer. And then relax feeling your shoulder blades and muscles relaxing.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Next it is time to gently clench your fists. Take notice of where your hands are. With your knuckles facing the floor I want you to slowly clench your fists. Feel the tension build up and I want you to slowly release that tension. Feel yourself relaxing more and more as your hands open back out. Notice the comfort

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now I want you to focus your attention on your arms. With your palms facing downwards I want you to slowly stretch out your arms. Don't over do the tension. Lock your arms and feel the tension in your forearm and triceps. Stretch out your finger tips and feel the tension build up from the top of your arms all the way down to your fingertips. Feel it build up and then relax. As you release the tension in your finger tips and arms notice how it feels when they are fully relaxed.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Next I want you to flex your biceps. Slowly flex your arms and feel the tension build up within your biceps. Visualise the tension build up and slowly release enjoying the feeling of your arms relax. Notice how your muscles feel when fully relaxed. Feel comfort returning to your arms

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now I want you to tighten your chest. Take a deep breathe in through your nose and hold for about 5 seconds. Feel the tension and tightness in your chest build up. As you slowly breathe out feel that tension release from your chest. Notice how it feels you as breathe out.

As you continue to breathe in and out feel a sense of deep relaxation

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Next I want you to slowly but gently tighten your stomach muscles. Feel your stomach muscles tightening and the tension building up. Slowly release and feel the tension disappear from your stomach. Let the muscles soften

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Next I want you to focus on your lower back. Slowly arch your lower back and feel the tension build up in the muscles in the bottom of your back. Hold the position and notice the tension. Slowly release the tension and relax your muscles. Feel your back becoming more and more relaxed. Enjoy the feeling of relaxation going through your body.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now tense your hips and buttocks. Feel and study the tension in your buttocks. Let the tension build up and then slowly release feeling your hips and buttocks relax.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

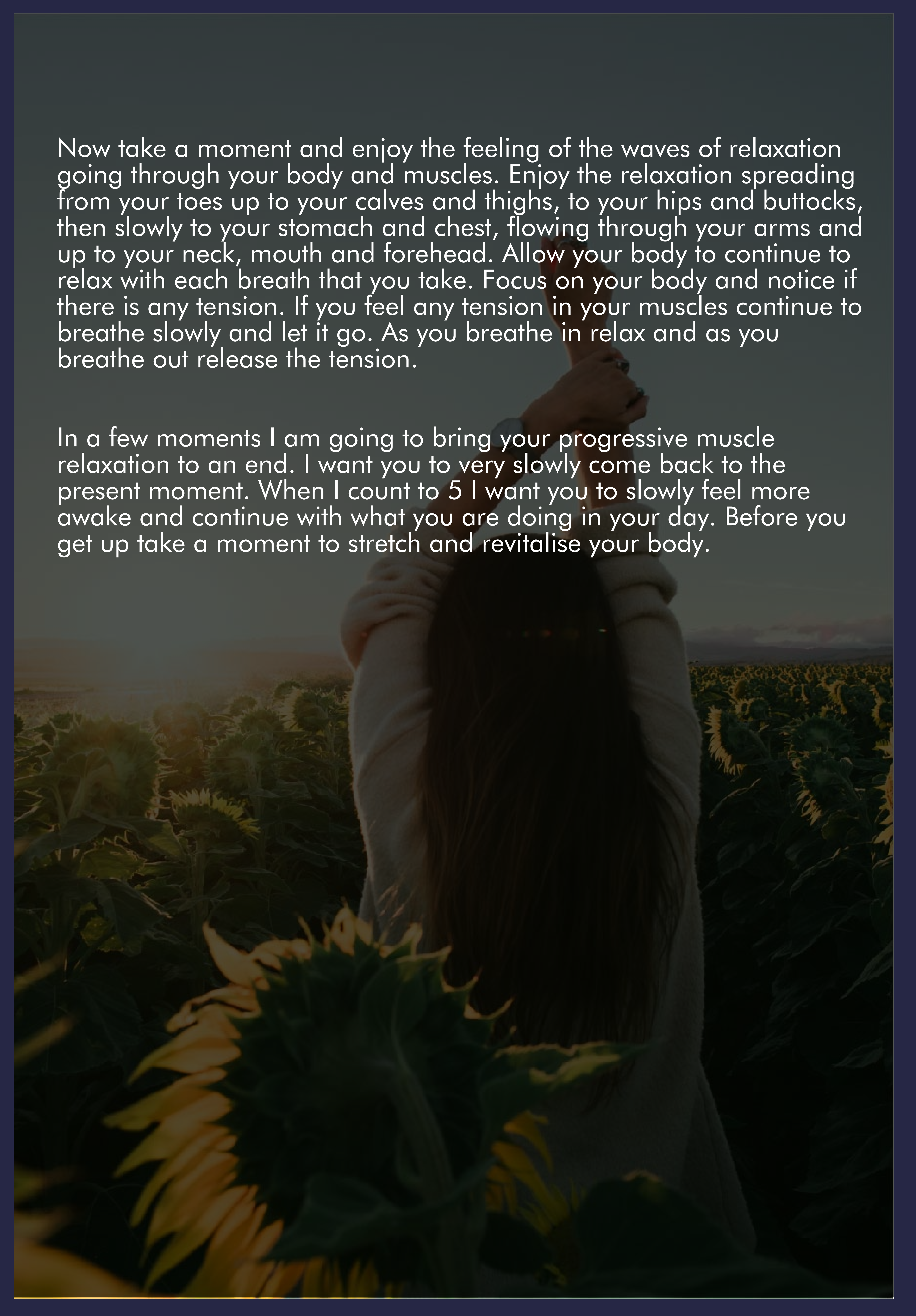
Turn your attention towards your legs. Now I want you to tense your thighs and quadriceps. Stretch your legs out as far as they can go. Feel the tension building up as your legs become rigid. Now relax the muscles in your thighs and feel the tension disappear. Notice the sensations you get from your muscles as they slowly relax.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Let's focus on your calves. Focus on your feet and slowly pull and point your toes towards you and the ceiling. Feel the tension build up within all the muscles that stretch along your calves and slowly release. As you release feel your legs becoming more and more relaxed with each breathe.

PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS

Now I want you to focus on your feet. Slowly curl your toes under and feel the tension. Don't tense too hard and as you slowly relax feel a wave of relaxation flow through your legs and down into your feet



Now take a moment and enjoy the feeling of the waves of relaxation going through your body and muscles. Enjoy the relaxation spreading from your toes up to your calves and thighs, to your hips and buttocks, then slowly to your stomach and chest, flowing through your arms and up to your neck, mouth and forehead. Allow your body to continue to relax with each breath that you take. Focus on your body and notice if there is any tension. If you feel any tension in your muscles continue to breathe slowly and let it go. As you breathe in relax and as you breathe out release the tension.

In a few moments I am going to bring your progressive muscle relaxation to an end. I want you to very slowly come back to the present moment. When I count to 5 I want you to slowly feel more awake and continue with what you are doing in your day. Before you get up take a moment to stretch and revitalise your body.