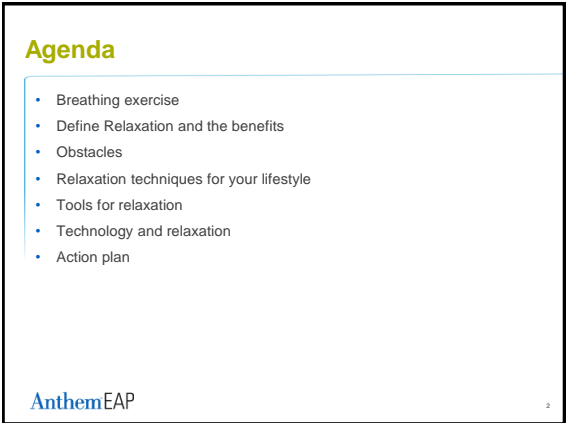
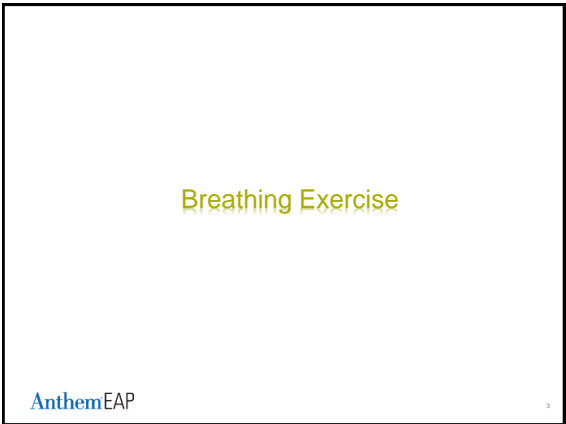




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Definition

Relaxation is when the body and mind are free from tension and anxiety

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Relaxation benefits the whole person

The ability to relax is necessary for our wellbeing

Physical	Emotional	Psychological
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lowers heart rate• Lowers blood pressure• Slows breathing• Relaxes muscle tension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relieves anxiety• Reduces fatigue• Helps with managing frustration and anger• Emotionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increases confidence• Restores patience• Improves problem solving skills• Can improve memory

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Obstacles

What prevents you from incorporating relaxation into your daily routine?

What steps can you take to move or remove the obstacle?

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Practice, practice, practice

- Relaxation techniques are skills and with any skill they need practice.
- People who use relaxation techniques frequently are more likely to derive the benefits.
- Regular, frequent practice is most important if you're using them to help manage a chronic health problem.
- Continuing use of relaxation techniques is proven more effective than short-term use, however there are benefits to any amount of relaxation

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Finding the time

- First thing when you wake up in the morning
- Waiting at a traffic light
- Standing in line at the grocery store
- In the carpool line waiting to pick up your kids
- Before you sit down to eat a meal
- In the shower
- At work before or after a stressful meeting
- Before you get into bed

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Mindful minute

Relaxing doesn't have to take a lot of time out of your day you can reap the benefits from even one minute of a relaxing activity.

Match your inhales and exhales

- Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for four seconds

Count your breaths

- Inhale 1, exhale 2, inhale 3, exhale 4 until you reach the number 10. Repeat as needed

Do a short body scan

- Start at the top of your head and move down to your toes. Focus on each body part and deliberately relax that area. You can even consciously tense and release if preferred

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When you have the time

Guided Imagery

- This technique focuses on pleasant images to replace negative or stressful feelings. This can be self-directed or led by a practitioner or a recording

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- This involves tightening and relaxing various muscle groups and is often combined with guided imagery and breathing exercises

Self-Hypnosis

- In this technique you learn to produce the relaxation response when prompted by a phrase or nonverbal cue (called a "suggestion")

These techniques can vary in length from a few minutes to an hour so you can make it fit to your lifestyle

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Eastern Influenced Relaxation

- Transcendental Meditation: A form of silent mantra meditation. The meditation practice uses mantras and is practiced for 20 minutes twice per day while sitting with one's eyes closed
- Tai chi: A Chinese martial art practiced for both its defense training, its health benefits and meditation
- Yoga: A physical activity consisting of asanas (body postures), often connected by flowing sequences called vinyasas (smooth transition from one posture to another), accompanied by the breathing exercises, and usually ending with a period of relaxation or meditation
- Qigong: The practice involves moving meditation, coordinating slow-flowing movement, deep rhythmic breathing, and a calm meditative state of mind.

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Exercise and sports for relaxation

It may seem counterintuitive, but exercise and sports have shown to relieve stress and improve mental, physical and emotional wellbeing

Exercise

- Participating in a regular workout routine at home or in a gym
- 10-15 minute, walk/run
- Hiking
- Bike ride
- Swimming
- Martial Arts
- Dance

Sports

- Golf
- Tennis
- Basketball
- Baseball
- Volleyball
- Pickleball
- Bowling

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Tools for relaxation

- Weighted Blanket – Studies have shown that using this product can increase your quality of sleep
- Wheat/Rice pillow – Put the pillow in the microwave for about a minute and then place it on whichever body part you'd like to relax.
 - This is especially useful for muscular fatigue and soreness
 - A heating pad can be used as well
- Massage chair cover
- Cooling eye mask
- Scented candles or essential oils

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Technology and relaxation

YouTube – guided imagery videos, stress relieving music

Calm.com - A website with tranquil sounds, soothing images and guided meditation.

Flowy - A free app which uses games to help users fight panic and anxiety attacks

Donothingfor2minutes.com

Headspace

Biofeedback relaxation - Computer programs and wearable devices to help monitor physiological changes in your body such as your breathing, heart rate and temperature

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Action plan

There are many ways you can incorporate relaxation into your routine that does not require a lot of time or money

Before leaving today identify:


- One relaxation technique you are willing to practice
- What time of the day will you commit to?
- Where will you be during this time?

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- Comprehensive website
 - Resources
 - Self assessments
 - Health/wellness library
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