


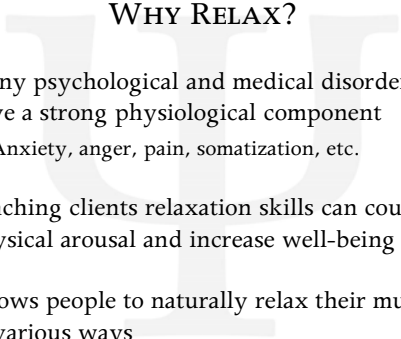
dr. caleb lack's



RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's



WHY RELAX?

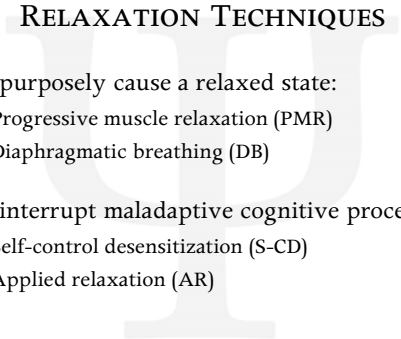
Many psychological and medical disorders have a strong physiological component
Anxiety, anger, pain, somatization, etc.

Teaching clients relaxation skills can counter physical arousal and increase well-being

Allows people to naturally relax their muscles in various ways

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's



RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

To purposely cause a relaxed state:
Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)
Diaphragmatic breathing (DB)

To interrupt maladaptive cognitive processes:
Self-control desensitization (S-CD)
Applied relaxation (AR)

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

PMR directly targets tension that builds in muscles, and indirectly targets heart and breathing rates

Increases awareness of tension feelings and provides a way to combat that tension

Many alternate versions available, including using both stretching and tensing to relax

| behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

A skill learned through regular practice

First in a quiet, dim area guided by therapist or audio recording of therapist

Move to typical daytime conditions without guidance

Optimally practiced at least twice daily to master the skill

| behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

PMR STEPS

1. Therapist teaches client how to tense and then relax separate muscle groups
2. Client learns to systematically tense and relax those groups in a scripted exercise
3. Client learns to systematically relax *only* the muscle groups

| behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

PMR STEP ONE

Part 1 – Training muscle tensing and releasing

Therapist explains and demonstrates how muscles feel when relaxed

Next, therapist demonstrates how to tense and relax each specific muscle group in a developmentally appropriate fashion

This is followed by the client rating and noting his level of anxiety

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

PMR STEP ONE

Part 2 – Implementing the exercise

Using a script, guide the client through

- Tensing and releasing of each muscle group
- Deepening the relaxation
- Positive imagery (if desired)
- Focusing on the breath
- Ending the exercise

At the finish, ask for feedback and have client rate anxiety and tension

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

PMR STEP TWO

This step involves learning how to relax without tensing first

Identical to Step 1-2, but without the tensing

Allows for the use of PMR anywhere, without others noticing

Practice just as in tense-release PMR, but without the audio guidance outside of session

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

Gives client a very simple tool for calming the body and controlling physiological arousal

Helps to control headaches, high blood pressure, insomnia, pain, rage, and anxiety

Purpose of DB is to breath as if in a relaxed state

Eight basic steps in learning DB

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

DB STEPS

1. Offer basic information on breathing
 - Lungs have no muscles
 - Diaphragm controls size/frequency of breaths
 - Breathing is usually automatic, but can be controlled through diaphragm
 - When stressed, diaphragm contracts, causing shallow rapid breaths and chest and shoulders to rise and fall
 - When relaxed, diaphragm is loose, breathing is deep and slow, abdomen rises and falls

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

DB STEPS

2. Client loosens any tight clothing
3. Client places one hand on chest and another on abdomen
4. In DB, as client breathes only the hand on the abdomen should move, shoulders should stay still

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

DB STEPS

5. If DB is not easily achieved, have client relax ab muscles, then expand abdomen during inhalations while chest is still
6. Once client has pattern of DB mastered, have him slow to 8-10 breaths per minute
7. With this established, have clients focus on mentally saying "Re" with each inhalation and "Lax" with each exhalation

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

DB STEPS

8. Client should focus on "Relax" and sensations of relaxation while letting other thoughts and images go

Practice is *essential* to master DB, and should be done multiple times a day

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

SELF-CONTROL DESENSITIZATION

Adaptation of systematic desensitization

Teaches clients how to interrupt maladaptive thought processes with relaxation

Basic process is to induce a relaxed state (via PMR or DB), then introduce a stimulus that causes an unpleasant reaction

E.g., anxiety, fear, worry, anger, hatred

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

APPLIED RELAXATION

Involves implementation of relaxation for reducing distress in different situations

After learning PMR, client begins to relax before entering distressing situations

Similar to S-CD and systematic desensitization

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

COMMON PROBLEMS

"I've tried relaxation before and it didn't work."

Therapist should assess if clients were doing techniques properly, and how often they were being practiced

Practice paying attention to physical sensations and not thoughts during relaxation

behavior therapy

dr. caleb lack's

COMMON PROBLEMS

"My (symptoms) got worse!"

Assess what caused increase in problems

- Change in bodily sensations / alertness
- View of relaxation as waste of time / indulgent

Allay concerns with education and practice

behavior therapy
