

Relax Your Way
To Health

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To my wife, without whom this book would not have been written.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE PRACTICAL instruction in Relaxation set out in this book is a simplified version of the system of physical relaxation, devised and taught by Mr. L. E. Eeman for the past 35 years. It does not attempt to give any information about the philosophy which underlies the technique, but is merely an attempt to bring to all the benefits of relaxation. For those who would know more of the subject, I must refer them to the writings of Mr. Eeman himself: *How Do You Sleep? Self and Superman*, and *Co-Operative Healing*, deal fully with the possibilities of the use of relaxation for mental and physical health.

I am indebted to Mr. Eeman for his instruction and guidance in matters pertaining to relaxation, and I gladly make this acknowledgement of his generous and kindly help. I believe that he has made a great contribution to the healing art, through his original research into the problem of relaxation. The evidence he has collected over the years provides a sound basis for further investigation into the therapeutics of relaxation.

Miss Mary Cameron, who has assisted Mr. Eeman for many years, has helped the writer to build his own technique, and that help is also gratefully acknowledged.

Mr. John Williams, by his enthusiasm for "de-tensing" (his own word for the subject), crystallised the idea of producing this manual of relaxation, and he has also given practical help and criticism which is reflected in the form of this book.

To Mr. Richard McCue for his patience and excellent technique in producing the photographs, and to Mr. Robert Sinclair, for his drawing and technical advice, I express my sincere thanks.

To the many patients who have shown the practical value of relaxation, by their response to the technique set out in this book, I am indebted for the insight they have given me into the complexity of the human organism. My belief that relaxation is the key to any successful system of healing, and basic to the art of living, has been deepened thereby.

H.D.C.

Southport.

FOREWORD

AFTER TEACHING for thirty-five years that, whatever a patient's illness, relaxation must be his first step on the "way to health," I find that my belief in this truism is as unshakable as ever.

Anyone who has been a motor-mechanic for thirty-five years is also more certain than ever that, no matter what is wrong with an engine, he *must* switch it off before he starts repairing it. But he also knows that switching off is not enough, and that he must, in addition, put a lot of energy and "know how" into his repair business if he is to satisfy his customers. He would, however, grant that anyone can learn "all about switching off" in two minutes.

Yet, if there is one thing the years have taught me, it is that switching off body, nerve and mind, *i.e.*, relaxing, is *not* easy, that it cannot be learned in two minutes even by a very clever person, that it is difficult to teach, even to a genius, and that it is even more difficult to teach in black and white, simply, clearly, so that untrained people can understand and apply the teaching.

That is why I congratulate and thank the author so sincerely for having produced so simple and clear a little volume with illustrations so telling that they dispel any doubt that words alone might leave. And I congratulate him, too, for having made so obvious his conviction that just as the motor-mechanic knows that, after switching off, he needs energy and "know how" as

well, so the patient, after relaxing, needs both vital force and creative thinking if he is to attain the fullness of health.

In short, may I praise Harold Cotton for having made it crystal clear that if we wish to get "life more abundant" out of our periods of rest and nights of sleep, our bodies, nerves and minds, *all three*, must function soundly and positively. And may I wish his book all the success it so clearly deserves.

L. E. EEMAN.

INTRODUCTION

RELAXATION IS the basis for promoting and maintaining health—physical, mental and spiritual. It creates harmony within the body by releasing energy, which is often used wastefully in muscle tension. All bodily functions are therefore improved through the increase of energy available. Health is the harmonious functioning of the body on all planes of being, and tension on any one plane—mental, spiritual, or physical—creates disturbance in the others also. Relaxation, by releasing tensions in the muscles, which are impediments to the free flow of nervous energy, is the key to better living.

Edmund Jacobson, A.M., Ph.D., M.D., in his book, *Progressive Relaxation*, says: "Because of reflex connections the nervous system cannot be quieted except in conjunction with the muscular system. In fact it becomes evident that the whole organism rests as neuro-muscular activity diminishes. To be excited and to be fully relaxed are physiological opposites." He then examines the relationship between many physical disorders and muscular tensions, listing cases of successful recovery through the use of progressive relaxation. The efficiency of relaxation as a healing agent cannot be doubted. Experience of it is exhilarating for the healthy and regenerative for those who are sick.

The release of tensions within the physical man means a corresponding release of mental tensions, since all physical activities begin as mental processes. "A contented mind is a blessing kind"; and a healthier body is the direct result of such a mind. *Relaxation, Release and Regeneration* are the three R's

to remember. The first leads automatically to the second and third. *Relaxation* releases the energy locked in muscular tension, and this energy is then used in improved bodily function. The organism is recreated. Sluggish digestion, circulation, elimination, and breathing, or any indispositions caused by lack of vital energy, due to interference of tensions, are stimulated into healthier activity by *relaxation*.

Release of physical tension means also the release of unconscious mental tension and, often in purely physical relaxation, there will come welling back into the conscious mind memories of long-forgotten incidents which have been the unconscious cause of the physical tension. Loosening of the physical tensions often means a "spring-clean" of the mental processes, clearing debilitating "debris" from the subconscious regions of the mind. The resultant sense of freshness is a wholesome thing to experience, and it inevitably stimulates the mental functions. This in turn is reflected in an increase of physical well-being.

Regeneration results from the release of energies held captive by tensions. The innate intelligence of the body is always striving to maintain life at its highest level, and the energies thus released are used creatively to reanimate and restore the tissues. A higher standard of health and happiness results from improved functioning of all the organs of the body.

Relaxation is an experience which can be repeated, and with repetition it becomes a habit. Once established it will prevent the building up of tensional reflexes in the body from the stresses and strains of life. Modern life with its "gearing-up" of man to the machine is placing stresses upon him by setting a speed of living which is far beyond the rhythm ordained by Nature. Worry, anxiety, fear and frustration disturb the balance of living and create tensions. *Relaxation* heightens the awareness, mental and physical, but reduces the reaction to stress and strain, by creating a mental resilience to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

To be aware of *relaxation* is to be conscious of *tension*, and to be aware of *tension* is the first step to *relaxation*.

The following practical instruction for teaching relaxation depends for its success upon making a person aware, by a series of simple movements, of the tensions he is holding in his muscles, of which he is totally unaware. To make him conscious of these tensions means that he can then do something to let them go. He then becomes aware of the opposite state, which is *relaxation*. As long as he is unaware of tension he can do nothing about it, and the tension is controlling him. To become aware of tension puts him in a position to control it by "de-tensing," and so increase his capacity to live more fully with a deeper consciousness of his whole being and environment. Once the experience of being fully relaxed has been apprehended and comprehended by the mind, it can be repeated with an ever-increasing ability to "let go" physically and mentally. The continual and habitual use of *relaxation* will bring about a reorientation of one's outlook, and the world will become a kindlier and more tolerant place in which to live. New horizons are created and life takes on a "new look" by reason of the release of vital forces within the body. This book is a primer—the first steps for those who wish to be initiated into the art of *relaxation*, and those who wish to explore the limitless possibilities of creative living.

THE TECHNIQUE OF RELAXATION

THE TEACHING of the Eeman System of Relaxation requires the help of someone whose purpose it is to make the patient aware of the tension he is holding in his muscles, of which he is unaware, and of which he can be made aware by a series of simple movements. The patient, once aware of these tensions, is then shown how to let them go, thus producing a feeling of physical relaxation. Once this feeling of "letting go" has been experienced by the patient, he can repeat it by simply taking up the position of relaxation. *No effort is required of the patient*, since the sensation of relaxation is one of complete "floppiness," a limpness similar to that of a rag-doll. It is a good thing for a patient to think of himself as a rag-doll, as something quite inert, which will fall by the force of gravity alone, as a leaf from a tree, or a snowflake, whilst the demonstrator is working with him.

The demonstrator, to get the best results, needs to be a person with patience, not too emotionally linked with the patient. A calm manner and, above all, a sense of humour with broad tolerance are essential. The demonstrator, if he is himself a right-handed person, should stand on the right of a right-handed patient and on the left of a left-handed patient. A left-handed demonstrator should reverse these positions.

The patient should lie, face upwards, on a comfortable bed in a warm room, after removing any tight, restricting garments such as belt, collar, tie, corset, "bra," or shoes. The demonstrator should then proceed as instructed in the following pages, observing the order closely, making sure that each stage of relaxation is satisfactory, before proceeding to the next. In this way the patient will become aware of progressive relaxation. In teaching the patient to "let go," a new muscular pattern is being learned

by the subconscious mind, the normal pattern being one of controlled movement. As the new pattern is realised for the first limb, the acceptance of the "letting go" by the mind will become progressively easy.

Great importance is attached to the manner of deep breathing and the outward sighing breath. The chest should expand sideways when taking a deep breath, as it does with a dog or horse and, like the animal, the breath should not be held but should be released immediately the lungs have filled. *No effort should be made to expel the breath.* As the air is released and rushes from the lungs, the chest will sink down, like a deflating balloon. The patient should be told to think of breathing to the waist, expanding the chest sideways, and not forwards. He must not "stick out his chest," as he may have been taught from childhood, but should make the best use of his diaphragm by widening the angle of the lower ribs in a sideways stretch as he breathes in, deep and wide. Where there is resilience in the ribs, considerable pressure can be placed on the breastbone by the demonstrator in practising stage 5. *Care should, however, be exercised with older people, or with any patient whose chest is hard and lacking in resilience from established conditions such as arthritis.* In all cases the patient should be assured that no harm can come from the pressure exerted, and he should be quietly encouraged to "let go" as he sighs out, so that the chest will sink a little lower each time. So, too, the pressure should be gently increased as the patient "lets go," just sufficient to assist the downward fall of the chest, until it will fall no further without pain or embarrassment to the patient. Instruct the patient to *sigh, sink, and sag*, with each outward breath, allowing the whole body to fall heavily into the bed.

The plan which follows is a progressive one, and so it should be practised stage by stage in the correct sequence until the patient acquires the ability to relax at will.

The instructions are intended for a right-handed demonstrator and patient. With a left-handed patient the demonstrator should stand on the patient's left. A left-handed demonstrator should reverse the instructions given.

STAGE ONE

Patient flat on his back on bed, head supported on pillow, arms by sides, all tight clothing loosened. Demonstrator on right-hand side of patient.

- I. Ask the patient to give the "Hitler salute" with right arm.
- II. Return arm to side.
- III. Raise both of the patient's arms to "Hitler salute" position.
- IV. Release the left arm. The patient will continue to hold it up as long as the operator holds the right arm.
- V. Point out that tension held unconsciously is responsible for the arm remaining upright and that it should fall if there were no tension. Allow both arms to fall onto the bed.
- VI. Repeat III, IV, V. The patient will usually continue to keep the arm in the air, although conscious that it should fall. Do not proceed any further with this movement, which is merely to show the patient that he is holding tension.

STAGE TWO

The patient is lying at ease.

- I. Place your right hand under the heel, and lift up the right leg to an angle of about 45 degrees;
- II. Place your left hand under the knee;
- III. Remove your right hand from under the heel. The knee should bend and the heel drop without any checking action.
- IV. Repeat I, II, III until the patient is aware that the leg below the knee is falling quite freely, simply by the force of gravity.



Stage One (IV)



Stage Two (III)

STAGE THREE

The patient is lying at ease—repeat stage two, I, II, III.

- IV. Hold patient's right foot with your right hand checking the tendency for it to slide forward;
- V. Remove left hand from knee;
- VI. Ask the patient to let his right knee fall outwards;
- VII. Still holding the foot lightly with the right hand, gently push the knee inwards with the left hand;
- VIII. Allow the knee to fall outwards.
- IX. Repeat VII and VIII several times, to enable the patient to feel the free movement in the hip joint. When the patient has realised the freedom of the right leg, relaxation has been achieved in that leg.
- X. Repeat I to IX with the *left* leg, and it will be found that this leg has automatically acquired the same freedom as the right leg. The patient has now got a sense of relaxation from the thighs to the toes.

STAGE FOUR

The abdominal muscles are a frequent source of tension, especially in the area of the angle made by the ribs. Tenderness on pressure will indicate tension, and "de-tensing" will relieve the pain.

- I. Place your fingers in the right groin.
- II. Ask the patient to (a) take a deep, wide breath to the diaphragm, and (b) release it with a sigh, allowing the air to rush out.
- III. Press gently into the muscles during II (a) and (b).
- IV. Repeat this several times, until you feel there is no resistance to your pressure. Maintain the pressure during breathing in and out.
- V. Repeat I, II (a) and (b), III, IV in the left groin (as shown in the illustration).
- VI. Repeat over the remainder of the abdomen, always pressing gently into the muscles as the patient releases the deep breaths. The patient may begin a rhythmic deep breathing



Stage Three (VII)



Stage Four (V)

at this stage, and he should be encouraged to let this rate of breathing control him, and to make no effort to control it. Wait until this abnormal breathing has settled down into the normal quiet rhythm before attempting to continue the process of abdominal relaxation.

STAGE FIVE

The chest usually has much tension in the muscles between the ribs. The use of the sighing breath (as for the abdomen), whilst the operator maintains pressure on the breastbone, is the method employed to release these tensions.

- I. As the patient sighs out, instruct him to (a) allow the chest to sink under your pressure on his breastbone, and (b) when all the breath has been released to allow the chest to sag a little more, as though the shoulders were collapsing on to the chest.
- II. Repeat several times, until the chest has lost its resistance to your pressure. Again there may be the deep, rapid breathing, as experienced with the abdomen, and again it should be allowed to "work itself out" before proceeding to the next stage.

STAGE SIX

When the chest has been fully relaxed, test the arms by lifting them as in Figure 1, and you will probably find that they will fall, bending at the elbow and wrist, showing that the relaxation has been accepted for the arms without your having had to teach the patient to "let them go." The release of the tension in the chest muscles has released the tension in the shoulder girdle, and the patient will find it difficult to hold the arms up stiffly, as when first tested in Figure 1.



Stage Five (I)



Stage Six

STAGE SEVEN

- I. Take the patient's head in your left hand.
- II. Lift and pull the head forward, allowing the chin to tuck in, and the back muscles of the neck to stretch, so that the head forms the top of a letter C.
- III. Instruct the patient to continue the deep, sighing breathing to allow the pain of stretching muscles to ease by relaxation.
- IV. Take your hand away, and the head should fall like a stone.
- V. Repeat I, II, III, IV until the head falls back quite freely.
- VI. With the head back on the pillow place your left hand underneath the base of the skull and wobble the head from side to side until it moves freely with the least pressure.

STAGE EIGHT

- I. Place your right arm under the patient's knees, and draw them gently over the head.
- II. Instruct the patient to continue with the sighing, relaxing breathing.
- III. As the patient sighs out, gently draw the knees nearer to the head, allowing them to fall towards the head as the muscle tension in the back is eased.
- IV. Allow the legs to slump back gently on to the bed. Repeat I, II, III, IV until there is complete ease and "floppiness" in the legs and lower back. The patient should then have a sense of relaxation throughout the body. In order to test this—
- V. Stand at patient's feet and grasp both heels.
- VI. Give a sideways to and fro motion to the patient's legs. This will give an action similar to "snaking" a skipping-rope, the wave impulse will pass through the patient's body and his head will wobble from side to side, indicating a good sense of relaxation.



Stage Seven (II)



Stage Eight (I)



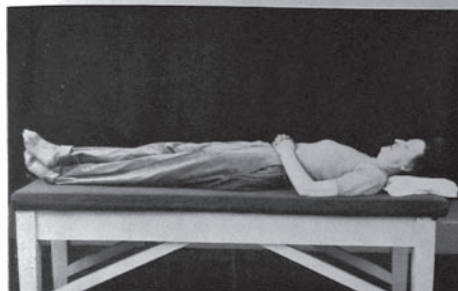
Stage Eight (III)

STAGE NINE

This is the position for complete relaxation by the patient. Instruct the patient to:

- I. Link his fingers gently, and place his hands over his lower ribs.
- II. Cross the ankles. (If this is difficult, place the feet in contact together without strain.)
- III. Close the eyes, and begin to breathe with the deep, sighing breath, as used during the relaxation of the abdomen and chest.
- IV. With each succeeding, sighing breath, the patient should think in terms of each part of his body as sinking and sagging on to the bed. First the eyes should feel as though they were lead weights, falling into the sockets. Then, with the next breath, the tongue should be allowed to loll in the mouth, with the tip behind the lower teeth, and the jaw hanging loosely. With the next sighing breath, the neck should feel easy and loose. Proceeding from the neck downwards, accompanied with the deep, sighing breath for each separate part of the body, the shoulders, chest, abdomen, hollow of the back, thighs, legs, should in turn fall heavily on to the bed. If any part of the body still feels tense, then return to it in thought and repeat the breathing and "letting go." When the whole body is lying inert on the bed, take a final deep breath, allowing the whole body to fall heavily down, as though going through the bed. Then make no further effort to breathe or hold the breath, but allow the rhythm of breathing to establish its own rate. Shallow breathing will be followed periodically by a very deep breath, which will begin in the abdomen and fill the chest completely. This is a good sign of relaxation, and no effort should be made to control the breathing.

During relaxation a patient may experience release of tension in the form of twitching, laughing, crying, yawning,



Stage Nine

heavy sighing, or very rapid breathing for a spell. These are beneficial, and should be allowed to "work out," however violent they may be. No attempt should be made to control such releases, which are symptomatic of the efficient working of relaxation in bringing about the release of tensions.

HOW, WHEN AND WHERE TO USE RELAXATION

EVERY NIGHT, before going to sleep, follow the instructions under stage nine. Lie on the back with the fingers linked lightly over the lower ribs, ankles crossed, or feet lightly touching. Use the deep, sighing breathing until the whole body lies heavy in bed, then roll on to the usual side for sleep, take a final deep breath, and allow the rhythm of relaxation to possess you.

During the day, when time is available (say from half an hour to three-quarters of an hour at the most), lie on the bed after releasing any tight garments. Cover yourself with a light eiderdown and follow the routine for "before going to sleep." In due course you will find that you feel that "you have had enough," and that you wish to move. This heralds the end of a cycle of relaxation, but before you get up, stretch and yawn, until you are thoroughly "limbered up." Think of a cat before it moves away after resting—stretching and stretching every part of its body. Under relaxation, function has been going on with the maximum efficiency, but with the minimum expenditure of energy, and so it is necessary to restore the circulation to greater activity before moving freely.

At any time, when sitting in a chair, or as a passenger in a car, bus, or train, make sure that you are sitting squarely with your back well supported against the back of the seat. Link your hands lightly in your lap, and cross your ankles, allowing the knees to fall outwards. (Never cross the knees.) Take a few deep breaths, and allow the body to sink into the seat. You

will find the sense of relaxation taking control of you; you are conserving your energies and restoring the nervous system. This position should always be adopted when one is compelled to listen to irate, tedious, or otherwise "trying" people. It will prevent you from "getting rattled," and help you to keep your equilibrium. Before meals, always make a habit of spending a few minutes sitting in a chair and relaxing. This will allow the rush and bustle of the day to subside for a little time, so that the digestive function can operate to the maximum. To eat whilst mentally tense is to put food into a system which is not working efficiently. This produces the many disorders of digestion so frequently met with to-day. Relaxation before a meal will promote good digestion and avoid the disturbances caused through tension.

RELAXATION QUIZ

What is Relaxation?

Relaxation is "not doing." It is the opposite of tension, which is a state of "doing," even if it is only "holding tight," or "holding on." Relaxation is an experience of "letting go" physically, "de-tensing" all the muscles under conscious control.

Why Do We Need to Relax?

Because tension in muscles is a waste of energy, which reduces the efficiency of our bodily functions and our capacity to work. Tension, of which we are often unaware, controls us, restricting our mental horizon as well as our physical movements.

Who Can Benefit from Relaxation?

Everyone, from the youngest to the oldest person can increase his or her capacity for health and happiness by learning to "de-tense."

Why Do Tensions Come in Muscles?

Because from infancy we have had to learn patterns of muscle-control, in feeding, standing, walking, talking, habits of hygiene, our job of work. Everything we do, apart from breathing, digestion, elimination, circulation, has meant a development of our senses and co-ordination of movement, which means control and tension of muscles.

Mental images have physical reactions, e.g. think of sucking a lemon. Fears, worries, anxieties, frustrations, pain, anger, malice, jealousy, hatred, envy, all set up physical tensions.

How Do the Emotions Affect Muscular Tension?

Through the solar plexus, the "abdominal brain," which controls all digestive function. This "abdominal brain" is part of the autonomic nervous system, which operates outside our conscious control, and through which all our reactions to colour, taste, touch, hearing, smelling, seeing and emotion are translated into muscular activity. For example, a lovely scent relaxes the muscles, but the smell of a bad egg . . .!

Why Does the Abdominal Brain React So?

Because fear, flight, fight, are primitive emotions and primitive man in fear was "geared up" for "flight" or "fight." All his muscles were tensed for activity, breath-rate increased, heart beating more quickly, to meet the need for increased activity.

Modern man thinks it is cowardly to run, so he "stands his ground," or becomes "rooted to the spot." He is "petrified," his "hair stands on end," he "breaks out into a cold sweat," and all this because the energy released by fear is used to tense muscles for activity, but which, if not so used, "paralyses" the system, and causes untold harm.

Similarly, he does not fight, but "grits his teeth," "clenches his fists," "feels he could burst," and "goes white with anger" or "purple with rage." Again, all this is due to tension in the muscular system, which is not being used in activity and, as it were, "goes bad on you." During all the time these tensions are built up, digestion ceases completely, and so it is not strange that modern man should suffer indigestion, stomach ulcers, and nervous breakdowns because of these "frustrations."

What Can Relaxation Do?

It releases energy wastefully used in tension for useful function; e.g. clench the fist and note the blanching of the skin, obliteration of the veins, and the rapid feeling of tiredness in the hand as the fatigue products build up. Tension inhibits function; relaxation stimulates function, especially the digestive function, which operates perfectly in states of happiness, contentment, peace, love, security. Relaxation causes a fall in blood-pressure,

and eases the burden on the heart and lungs. All physical function goes on with the maximum efficiency, and with the minimum expenditure of energy. Wherever you hold tension, as in the example of the clenched fist, you are interfering with function.

What Can Be Expected from the Use of Relaxation?

Progressive improvement in general health, because the innate intelligence of the body will use energy to promote and maintain life at a high level. More energy released from tension means more life force for creative use.

Progressive improvement in mental states, and consequently happier social relationships. Release of physical tension implies the release of mental tension which must precede the physical tension. Reduced mental tension means a calmer, quieter mind, kindlier outlook, greater tolerance towards "the other fellow," and even "a couldn't-care-less" attitude to former irritations.

Increased "awareness" through the ability to recognise tensions as they arise, and to let them go before they do harm, means a fuller life in every sense. As the capacity to direct one's energies creatively develops through the increased "awareness," physical and mental, one's consciousness of living is expanded. *Release through relaxation* means that you control tension, instead of tension controlling you. Release of physical tension will release memory of incidents which have been the cause of the tension, since emotional upheavals, long lost from the conscious mind, still function in the unconscious mind, creating tension and thus inhibiting function.

Does Relaxation Improve Sleep?

"Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care . . . chief nourisher in life's feast" is Shakespeare's description of the function of life which is more important than feeding. A French proverb says, "Who sleeps, dines." During sleep, and only during sleep, the tiny battery cells in the nervous tissue (Nissl's spindles) are recharged, and much repair work goes on in the system. Relaxation of all physical tensions before sleep is therefore

necessary, so that the maximum energy flow is available for repair. To go to sleep tensed in muscle is to waken unrefreshed and tired out. Physical relaxation will induce mental quiet, and overcome the "chasey" mental conditions often associated with "laying one's head on the pillow."

What is the Difference between Right and Left-Handed People?

The body has polarity-positive and polarity-negative, since its energies may be described as "electro-magnetic." In a right-handed subject, it is assumed, for the purpose of relaxation, that the right of the body is positive, and the left negative. The head is positive and the base negative. In a left-handed subject these are reversed.

Why Should the Fingers be Linked and the Ankles Crossed in the Relaxation Position?

Because by linking the opposite "poles" the energy circuit is closed, and the energy "in circuit" is conserved. It is similar to the horse-shoe magnet, which, if left open when not in use, will run down, but will re-energise itself if a "keeper" is placed across the poles when it is not in use.

What Causes Deep Breathing which Comes with Relaxation?

The release of tensions means the release of fatigue products, which have been held in the tense muscles. The body's way of clearing these is to oxidise them and eliminate them *via* the lungs in the form of carbonic acid gas. Hence the need for deep breathing to meet the increased need for oxygen to cope with the increased acid wastes in the bloodstream. When the breathing settles down to a normal rhythm, the elimination of the acids is completed, and further progress can be made in relaxation.

What is the Meaning of the Twitching and Jumping Experienced in Relaxation?

Tension released means energy released, and energy in muscle, when released, means movement. No effort should be made to control these movements, since control means tension. When

the twitchings and jumpings have ceased, then the tension has been discharged, just as a coiled clock spring, if severed, will shoot out and quiver until all the energy has been discharged. A deeper sense of relaxation has been attained.

What is the Significance of the Laughter and Tears Produced through Relaxation?

Laughter and tears are the "safety valves" of the nervous system. Constant control or suppression of these emotional releases means the building up of physical tension in the muscular system. The release of physical tension brings the release of the emotional tension, which has been the cause of the physical tension. It must be expressed before proceeding to a further stage of relaxation. Generally the patient is unaware of the causes of the laughter or tears, and will probably say, "How silly! I don't know why I should do this." He should be encouraged to "let go" completely, and be assured that the outburst is healing, and that he will feel better for "getting it out of his system." When he becomes quiet, a great sense of well-being will be experienced, as though "a load had been lifted" from the patient, as indeed it has.

Can Any Harm Come to Anyone through the Use of Relaxation?

Relaxation can do nothing but good, since it is the release of energy from malfunction for use in healthy function. No harm can come through the use of relaxation, although resistance to any form of release as manifested in twitching, jumping, laughter or tears, delays the beneficial effects to be gained through "letting go." Once these releases have been set in motion, they should be allowed to run their course without interference.

Does Everyone Have These Outbursts?

No, only a minority of cases show strong reactions, but everyone does experience the sense of inward peace, quietness, and deep physical comfort, through the use of relaxation.

What is the Innate Intelligence of the Body?

The body is a self-regulating, self-healing organ, under normal conditions. Function in muscular activity, digestion, breathing,

elimination, and circulation of the blood is maintained by the "innate intelligence" of the body, outside our consciousness. We only become conscious of these activities of the body when they cease to function normally; there is a lack of ease which we call "dis-ease"—the body's alarm signal that something is not working normally. If we cut a finger, or break a bone, it is only the body's own powers of healing which restore normality. Nothing we can do will heal a broken bone. It is the "innate intelligence" of the body which sets in train the complicated business of producing the many different tissues for the repair of the break. The best the surgeon can do is to put the broken ends of the bone in the approximate position for the bone to heal in a straightforward way. The actual uniting of the ends of the broken bone is Nature's own secret. This intelligence is working all the time to keep us alive and functioning at the highest level. If, accidentally, we eat food which is bad, we shall be sick or have diarrhoea—the body's effort to eject something which might destroy life. So, too, the eye will water in an effort to flood away irritants which might injure the sight—an automatic response of the body's intelligent control system, working to prevent loss of function or injury to a vital organ.

For the body to function it requires fresh air, water, sunlight, food—especially fruits and vegetables—and adequate rest and relaxation. The correct use of these natural aids to health will keep the body in a state of maximum efficiency, which is health. Just as the "innate intelligence" will attempt to preserve and protect the body from injury, so, too, will it attempt to keep the body well and healthy by cleansing efforts. These may take the form of colds, skin eruptions, or fevers, and should be regarded as "spring-cleaning" efforts of the body's intelligence. They should be accepted as good evidence that the life-preserving forces of the body are at work to eliminate accumulated waste matter from the system. A patient suffering from constipation may find a "looseness" of the bowels after relaxation, showing that the release of tension causes improved function. Similarly, a cold, following relaxation, is an effort of the body to clear

accumulated waste products, and so increase its efficiency. Suppression of such "healing crises" promoted by relaxation is bad, since the "innate intelligence," working to improve the body's health, should be encouraged to clean the system and so improve its function. "Let well alone," and wait patiently for the elimination to run its course. Better health will be the result.

The illustration on page 33 attempts to show the physical results of the emotional patterns as set out in the Quiz sections on page 27. The negative emotions of fear, worry, anxiety, frustration, malice, envy, jealousy and hatred "tie you in knots," and *inhibit* the digestive function. The positive emotions of love, joy, peace, happiness and security release all physical tensions, and *stimulate* the digestive function. These physical responses to the emotional stimuli operate through the autonomic nervous system, and are outside our conscious control. *Tension* inhibits function, and prolonged disturbance of function, through tension, will produce "dis-ease." Digestive disorders, circulatory troubles, nervous conditions, etc., are all on the increase, and in many cases they can be traced to tensional problems.



FINAL NOTE

RELAXATION IS the negation of effort. Therefore you must never *try* to relax but should just allow the feeling of "letting go" to possess you. Never say, "I must relax," because the word "must" is a command "to do," which creates tension. Once you have experienced the feeling of relaxation induced by the use of this technique, all that is necessary is to take the position lying flat on the back, fingers lightly linked on the abdomen, and ankles crossed. Take a few deep, sighing breaths—sigh, sink, sag, until the whole body feels heavy and sinking into the bed. The more often you use this technique the easier it will become to relax in any and every circumstance. Like anything else which is done without thinking, it becomes second nature.

Time spent in relaxation is time saved, since it improves efficiency, reduces fatigue, restores the body's harmony, and improves health and happiness.