

Yoga, stress management and relaxation techniques

- “*yoga chitta vritti nirodha*” —Patanjali
- *Yoga* literally means “union”.

Yoga

- **A system of exercises practiced to promote control of the body and mind.**
- **Yoga combines physical exercises, mental meditation and breathing techniques to strengthen the muscles and relieve stress**
- It is a form of exercise that originated in ancient India. Yoga not only enhances your physical strength but also contributes largely towards your mental health and spiritual growth.

Benefits of yoga

- Improves bone, lung and heart health
- Improves your flexibility, strength and balance.
- Increases blood flow, breathing
- Lowers blood pressure and *blood sugar*
- Reduces digestive problems
- Weight management
- Gives better posture
- Protects your spine
- Founds a healthy lifestyle
- Boosts your immune system
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- Yoga improves your mental well-being.
- Yoga reduces stress, anxiety and depression.
- Yoga boosts memory and improves concentration.
- Helps you to relax and sleep better.
- Gives you peace of mind.
- Increases your self-esteem.
- Helps you serve others.

RELAXATION

- A feeling of refreshing tranquility (An untroubled state; free from disturbances) and an absence of tension or worry.

TYPES OF RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Autogenic relaxation

Autogenic means something that comes from within you. **In this relaxation technique, you use both visual imagery and body awareness to reduce stress. You repeat words or suggestions in your mind to relax and reduce muscle tension.**

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- For example, you may imagine a peaceful setting and then focus on controlled, relaxing breathing, slowing your heart rate, or feeling different physical sensations, such as relaxing each arm or leg one by one..

Progressive muscle relaxation.

- Focus on slowly tensing and then relaxing each muscle group. Tense your muscles for at least five seconds and then relax for 30 seconds, and repeat.

Visualization.

- **In this relaxation technique, you form mental images to take a visual journey to a peaceful, calming place or situation.**

Other common relaxation techniques

- Yoga
- Massage
- Meditation
- Hypnosis
- **Tai chi**
(A Chinese system of slow meditative physical exercise designed for relaxation and balance and health)

Stress Management

Stress Management

- The aim of stress management is to learn methods which can be used to help athletes to control stress and anxiety.

methods of managing stress

Physical Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- This involves the deliberate contraction of muscles followed by a greater relaxation

Self-Directed Relaxation

- Relies on the athletes ability to isolate and relax individual muscle groups. This can be improved through practice.

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Biofeedback

- Observing physiological measurements such as heart rate and breathing rate allow the athlete to focus their attention on reducing these measures

Imagery

Imagery is the use of mental images and scenarios to help relax the mind. This can be either internal (seeing your performance from within your body) or external (viewing your performance as if you are someone or somewhere else). Imagery can be used to relax by picturing a favorite place or calming scene or to rehearse the up-coming performance. Mental rehearsal is thought to be effective on three levels:

Neuromuscular

- Thinking through a movement produces the correct order and force of muscular contraction, much like a dry-run

Cognitive

Thinking through and planning an event in the mind can help the athlete to deal with scenarios as they arise.

Confidence building:

- The certainty in the athlete's mind of what they are going to do during the event, game plans etc can help reduce anxiety and increase motivation

Goal Setting

Goal setting is a highly useful and worthwhile technique. Having set goals helps the athlete to:

- Direct their attention to the task in hand
- Structure training to meet goals
- Increase their confidence once goals are achieved
- Evaluate their performance and progress

THANK YOU