



SURVIVORS' Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) Educator Script Extended Version (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: This tool is a **two-step exercise** designed to reduce stress and tension that can be practiced with your students in the classroom to help students learn the difference between a **tense** and a **relaxed muscle** allowing greater control over their body's anxiety response. Part of the PMR process is learning to isolate each different muscle. It can become an important part of your student's stress management toolbox.

As our bodies and minds are responsive to one another, our muscles tense up when we are stressed, anxious, or fearful. PMR helps release those feelings of anxiety or stress presenting as muscle tension through a series of easy-to-follow relaxation techniques. During the exercise, each muscle will be intentionally tensed and released, resulting in relaxation.

Duration: 15 to 20 minutes

Setting: On the floor or in a chair

Area Needed: None

Find a quiet place free from noise and distraction. It is helpful to remove excess clothing, glasses, shoes, or headwear. Find a comfortable spot on the floor or in a chair in which you can recline. You may also shut your eyes.

Start by taking several deep breaths in and out of the diaphragm to relax your body. You will want to continue to breathe slowly and deeply throughout the exercise. You will now focus your attention on specific areas of the body. You will want to pay particular attention to only a specific area of your body one at a time.

Forehead

Squeeze the muscle in your forehead and hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your forehead feels. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your forehead now feels.

Jaw

Squeeze the muscle in your jaw and hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your jaw feels. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your jaw now feels.

Neck and Shoulders

Squeeze the muscle in your shoulders and neck by raising your neck toward your ears, and hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your shoulders feel. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your neck and shoulders now feel.



Stomach and Chest

Squeeze the muscle in your stomach and chest, and hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your stomach and chest feel. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your chest and stomach now feel.

Arms and hands

Squeeze your hands into your fists and hold the fists against your chest as tight as you can for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your hands feel. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your hands now feel.

Buttocks

Squeeze the muscles in your buttocks and hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your buttocks feels. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your buttocks now feels.

Legs

Squeeze the muscle in your calves and thighs by flexing your calves and squeezing your thighs together; hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your legs feel. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your legs now feel.

Feet

Squeeze the muscle in your feet by curling your toes and arching your foot; hold for 15 seconds. Notice how tense and tight your feet feel. Then release the tension while counting to 30. Notice how relaxed your feet now feel.

Count to one backward from five, open your eyes, and slowly sit up. You should feel a sense of relief and relaxation.

A free online guided audio version of this script is available here:

<https://wellness.mcmaster.ca/your-health/mindfulness-and-relaxation/>

Adapted from:

<https://www.guidetopsychology.com/pmr.htm>

<https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/progressive-muscle-relaxation-script>

