



TIPS FOR A

CLEAR COMMUNICATION

RELATIONSHIPS SKILLS

• How can you communicate clearly?

Maguire & Pitceathly, 2002

ACTIVE LISTENING

- Understanding the message through paying attention to the speaker and the prevailing vibe or ambience

ACTIVE SPEAKING

- Engage in conversation.
- Use inclusive language

ASK FEEDBACK

- Read the receiver. Pay attention to non-verbal communication

• What should you do in stressful situations?

Dessy, 2009; Robinson et al., 2017



First and foremost, consider whether now is the appropriate time to address this topic.



Giving yourself a moment to pause and take three deep breaths can help you clear your thoughts and calm your emotions, despite the clichéd nature of the advice

• What should you do during conflicts and disagreements?



Be open to negotiating. Sometimes, if both sides bend a little, a satisfactory compromise could lessen stress for everyone involved.



Communicate your needs. Make sure the other person understands how you feel. Simply expressing your emotions allows the other person to understand your point of view



Use body language to express positive feelings even when you aren't feeling them. If you're nervous about a situation you can use positive body language to convey confidence even if you don't feel it.



Make your understanding obvious. Many of us believe we can comprehend someone under stress, but when it comes to expressing that understanding verbally, we struggle.



TIPS TO

CALM DOWN

RELAXATION EXERCISES, VISUALIZATION AND MEDITATION

There are many different relaxation techniques available. Numerous tasks can be completed quickly without any tools.

BOX BREATHING

While there are numerous types of deep breathing exercises, box breathing can be especially beneficial for relaxation. Box breathing is a **breathing exercise that can be used before, during, and/or after stressful experiences** to help individuals manage stress. Box breathing consists of four simple steps. The title is meant to help the individual **visualize a box with four equal sides** while performing the exercise. This exercise **can be performed in various settings** and **does not require a calm environment** to be effective.

(Norelli et al., 2020)

- 1 Breathe in through the nose for a count of 4 
- 2 Hold breath for a count of 4 
- 3 Breathe out for a count of 4 
- 4 Hold breath for a count of 4 

Note: The length of the steps can be adjusted to accommodate each person (e.g., 2 seconds instead of 4 seconds for each step).





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MEDITATION

Is a 'mind-based' relaxation strategy. Meditation does not explicitly focus on relaxation; however, meditation eventually leads to a physiological relaxation response in the short term by decreasing nervousness, worry, and emotional discomfort while increasing muscular relaxation and emotional calm.

- 1 Choose a quiet spot where you will not be disturbed by other people or the telephone
- 2 Sit quietly in a comfortable position
- 3 Eliminate distractions and interruptions during the period you will be meditating
- 4 Commit yourself to a specific length of time and try to stick to it
- 5 Pick a focus word or short phrase that's firmly rooted in your personal belief system
- 6 Close your eyes. This makes it easy to concentrate
- 7 Relax your muscles sequentially from head to feet. This helps to break the connection between stressful thoughts and a tense body. Starting with your forehead, become aware of tension as you breathe in. Let go of any obvious tension as you breathe out. Go through the rest of your body this way, proceeding down through your eyes, jaws, neck, shoulders, arms, hands, chest, upper back, middle back and midriff, lower back, belly, pelvis, buttocks, thighs, calves, and feet.
- 8 Breathe slowly and naturally, repeating your focus word or phrase silently as you exhale.
- 9 Assume a passive attitude. Don't worry about how well you're doing. When other thoughts come to mind, say, "Oh, well," and gently return to the repetition.
- 10 Continue for 10 to 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time, but do not use an alarm. After you finish: Sit quietly for a minute or so, first with your eyes closed and later with your eyes open. Do not stand for one or two minutes

(Pathath, 2017)





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PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)

This technique relieves tension, a symptom of anxiety. As the exercise progresses throughout the body, muscles are tensed and released, with the release of the muscle being the relaxation phase. You can practice progressive muscle relaxation on your own or with a narrator's help.

- 1 Sit or lie down comfortably. Ideally, the space will have minimal distractions
- 2 Starting at the feet, curl the toes under and tense the muscles in the foot. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation.
- 3 Tense the muscles in the lower legs. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation.
- 4 Tense the muscles in the hips and buttocks. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation.
- 5 Tense the muscles in the stomach and chest. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation.
- 6 Tense the muscles in the shoulders. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation.
- 7 Tense the facial muscles (e.g., squeezing eyes shut). Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation
- 8 Tense the muscles in your hand, creating a fist. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly release for 10 seconds. During the release, focus attention on the alleviation of tension and the experience of relaxation.

Note: Be careful not to tense to the point of physical pain, and be mindful of taking slow, deep breaths throughout the exercise



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VISUALIZATION/GUIDED IMAGERY

Using your imagination to assist your body to become more relaxed is known as imagery or visualization. Your body can tense up and stress out in response to thoughts that make us angry or anxious, but it can also become more at ease and relaxed in response to calming, peaceful, and enjoyable thoughts. Close your eyes and visualize yourself in a tranquil, soothing area as one of the simplest methods to utilize images to unwind. It might be a location you've visited in person or a place you made up in your head

- 1 Sit or lie down comfortably. Ideally, the space will have minimal distractions.
- 2 Visualize a relaxing environment by either recalling one from memory or creating one (e.g., a day at the beach). See the elicited elements of the environment using each of the five senses using the following prompts:

 What do you see? (e.g., deep, blue colour of the water)

 What do you hear? (e.g., waves crashing along the shore)

 What do you smell? (e.g., fruity aromas from sunscreen)

 What do you taste? (e.g., salty sea air)

 What do you feel? (e.g., the warmth of the sun)

- 3 Sustain the visualization as long as needed or able, focusing on taking slow, deep breaths throughout the exercise. Focus on the feelings of calm associated with being in a relaxing environment.

Center for Integrated Healthcare, 2013

