

## **Progressive Muscle Relaxation Sequence: Nine Muscle Group**

- *Sit or lie down in a comfortable, relaxed position.*
  - *Tense muscle groups for 7-10 seconds (can count 1-one-thousand, 2-one-thousand, etc).*
  - *When tensing muscle groups, inhale completely until lungs are full, then exhale. Notice if you are recruiting muscles necessarily (i.e. clenching your jaw while raising your shoulders), and let the tension go.*
  - *Release the muscle group abruptly (NOT gradually), then allow relaxation to develop for 15-20 seconds before proceeding to the next muscle group.*
  - *During the relaxation phase, you may repeat to yourself “I am relaxed”, “I am at peace”, “Tension is flowing away”, “I am letting go.”*
  - *If your attention wanders, bring it back to the muscle group you are focused on, or bring it back to your breath. Remember there is no need to judge yourself for wandering attention!*
1. Both hands and lower arms (make a fist, simultaneously tense lower arm)
  2. Both legs and thighs (point toes while tensing calves, press knees and thighs together)
  3. Abdomen (draw abdominal muscles tightly in, as if bracing to receive a punch)
  4. Chest (take a deep breath and hold it)
  5. Shoulders (draw shoulders up to ears)
  6. Back of neck (press head back against headrest or chair)
  7. Lips/mouth (press lips together tightly, not so tightly as to clench teeth, or place tip of tongue on roof of mouth behind upper front teeth)
  8. Eyes (close eyes tightly)
  9. Forehead (raise eyebrows as high as they can go)