



UNT System College of Pharmacy

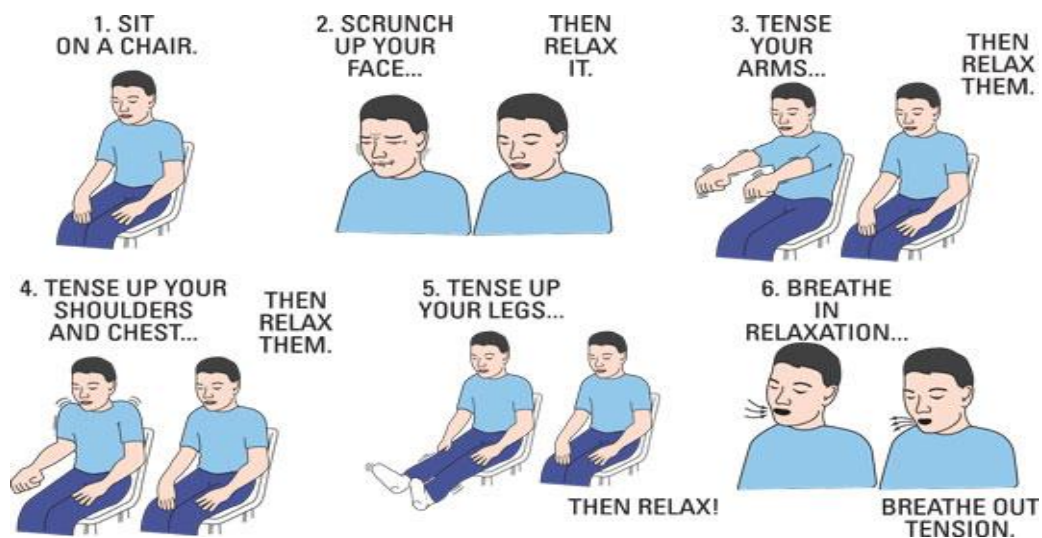
Self-Care and Relaxation Tips from Around the World

We can all learn from each other. This month we shift gears a bit to dive into the Fall semester, welcome students back to class and move forward on the college goals and our yearly objectives. I hope that you were able to take a refreshing break this summer, scheduling in your de-stress moments and taking some time to reflect at the beginning or end of each month. If not, don't fret, it's not too late. The suggestions below include self-care and relaxation tips from around the world. Please take a moment to pack your creativity bag and be open to learning something new. Enjoy!

Australia:



Recent relaxation tips from Australia focus on progressive muscle relaxation. This technique involves tensing and relaxing different muscle groups throughout your body. When you're feeling stressed, anxious or suffering from an anxiety disorder, you often develop really tight muscles. Learning how to relax your muscles properly can reverse this. This is a common type of relaxation training and works best if practiced regularly.



Thailand:



Thai massage is a science in Thailand and it can be considered as an essential part of your wellbeing routine. It's a rigorous massage often using the knees and elbows of the masseuse to apply pressure. By stimulating pressure receptors the body releases serotonin which is a natural antidepressant. Thai massage also boosts blood circulation, reduces stress, and calms the nervous system.

Greece:



Tips from Greece include the word “mesimeri” meaning midday, the time between 2 -5 pm, but it also has another meaning: quiet time. It has been noted that until 30 years ago most people worked until 2 or 3 pm and the nap was part of the daily routine. Today there is still evidence of this healthy habit even in big cities. Some stores are noted as closing for mesimeri and re-opening later in the afternoon. During these official quiet hours, you are not allowed to have loud music or make noise.

Africa:



Several tips from Africa include group drumming suggestions, which have been shown to improve mood and decrease stress, with some folks believing that it can also strengthen the immune system. African djembe drums are almost always found beside bongos and congas in modern drum circles, but in West Africa, the djembe drummer is usually a solo storyteller who sets the rhythm and structure for a celebratory dance. Drumming creates a sense of unity with other drummers, helps sharpen concentration, and offers an appreciation for a different culture.

Japan:



Beautiful photos of the areas around Mount Fuji in Japan are filled with natural hot springs which contain minerals and elements. Some have mentioned that the minerals could have health benefits, as the hot baths can help remove lactic acid from muscles more efficiently, helping you recover from exercise and feel relaxed.

France:



Relaxation suggestions from the French include relaxing with a petit aperitif after a stressful day. This includes a small glass of wine with a side snack of cashews or bread and olives. Wine is noted as a relaxant, and many mention it as an important ritual to wind down after a stressful day.

India:



In India, meditation and yoga are noted as great approaches for spiritual and stress-reducing benefits. There is also equally effective supporting evidence on a cellular level in your body. People practicing yoga and meditation show fewer signs of inflammation, including a decrease in inflammatory proteins. Furthermore, meditation and yoga have been shown to help with attention, memory, creativity and a slowing of age-related shrinkage of the brain.

China:



The centuries old tradition of Tai chi is an exercise-meets-mindfulness practice that, in its slow-motion movement, seems like the opposite of the high-impact so many of us favor. Some have called it the anti-aerobics. A series of standing poses and movements between them, tai chi requires balance, breathing control, muscle fluidity, and meditative concentration.

Sweden:



An interesting suggestion from Sweden involves Fika. It has been noted as being ingrained in Swedish work culture. Whereas in America we might get a 10-minute mid-morning coffee break, in Sweden, a leisurely coffee break – with cake – is practically mandated. Think of it as a slow coffee break – a lovely set-aside time to gather with friends, family, colleagues, and take a break from the rigors of the day.

Tibet:



In Tibet, a common method of relaxation includes sound healing. Although the singing bowls don't actually sing, they do produce an undeniably melodic song when prompted by a leather-wrapped mallet. The meditative hum is often used to start and end a yoga session, but the bowls are also used in sound healing, where their sonic vibrations are employed to heal the mind and body.

The tips for relaxation and self-care are endless and come from every part of the world. You probably have some tips of your own. Between your busy work schedule, taking care of the kids, running errands, and, oh, the hundred other things you have to do in a day, it's easy to forget the amount of stress you're actually under. But your body is well aware. All that tension could start a chain reaction of health problems. That's why it's so important to build in a relaxation routine.

For more Examples & Sources:

1. 5 Great Relaxation Tips from Around the World by Maria Belfort:
<https://onetiny leap.com/5-great-relaxation-tips-from-around-the-world/>
2. De-Stressing Secrets from Around the World by Corrie Pikul:
<http://www.oprah.com/world/global-relaxation-secrets-de-stressing-advice-from-around-the-world/all>
3. Stress Relief Tips from Around the World by Aviva Patz:
<https://www.health.com/mind-body/stress-relief-tips-from-around-the-world?>