

# Relaxation Scripts

The following scripts can be used for practicing relaxation techniques before or during labor.

## Progressive Relaxation Exercise

*In this exercise you'll gradually relax your whole body. To practice, sit back into your partner, or lie down on the floor, on a couch, or in bed with supportive pillows, and close your eyes.*

“Take a long slow, deep breath in. Hold it for a moment, and then slowly exhale. Allow any tension to melt away as you gradually begin to soften your muscles, letting go with each breath. Continue to breathe slowly and gently as you bring your awareness to the top of your head. Just sense or imagine a feeling of warmth and softness beginning to spread down from the top of your scalp.... feel the muscles in your forehead and temples relax.

Allow your eye muscles to release. Let your cheeks and jaw soften and let go of all tension.

Now let this peaceful feeling flow down into your neck. With each breath you take, this relaxing feeling becomes deeper and warmer. It works its way deep into the muscles in your shoulders...soothing them...releasing them. It loosens the muscles in your upper arms...your forearms...your hands...relaxing and soothing...all the way to the tips of your fingers.

As your body softens, your thoughts seem to become lighter. You are slipping further and further into a dreamlike state of stillness.

Now, bring your awareness to your chest and your stomach. The peaceful sensation flows throughout this area of your body, soothing every muscle and relaxing every organ.

Turn your attention to your upper back, and feel this softening sensation flow all the way down your spine. As it gradually works its way down your body, feel every muscle in your back let go and unwind. Feel that your entire upper body has become loose, limp and soft. Sink into this serene sensation.

Now feel your hips soften as the peaceful feeling starts to work its way through your lower body. Release the muscles in your buttocks...the backs of your thighs...the front of your thighs. Feel all these large, strong muscle groups becoming softer with each passing moment.

Soothing feelings flow down through your knees, and into your calves. Your ankles let go. Now your feet let go. Allow your entire lower body to let go completely, and allow any remaining tension from anywhere in your body to flow out through the tips of your toes. Feel the deep state of calmness and register it in your mind so that you can remember it during labor. Now, take a deep breath, and as you exhale, bring your attention back to the room, your awareness is in the present.”

# Relaxation Scripts continued

## Prenatal Bonding Exercise

*This guided exercise can help you get in touch with your baby.*

“Ease into a comfortable position and prepare to take a journey into the womb. Close your eyes. Breathe deeply and allow every single part of your body to be completely relaxed. Imagine that you are able to be in the womb, seeing your child. Picture the baby in a way that brings you joy. You may see the baby floating peacefully inside the womb, or just the way you think he or she may look. Simply enjoy being with your baby in this place.

If your mind begins wandering in different directions, remind yourself to concentrate on your beautiful baby. Keep your body and mind completely relaxed as you share your love with your baby. You can do this by talking to the baby.

You may even ask your baby questions and imagine the answers. Ask anything you want, perhaps what he or she wants from you, or what will make the baby happy.

The main emphasis should be on the love you have for your baby, and sharing that love. Tell yourself that you are going to give your baby anything and everything he or she needs to grow up and be healthy. You are giving your baby all the nutrients he or she needs. Your body is made to give birth, and your baby, as well as your body, grows stronger every day. Think about how grateful you are for the miracle that you have created. Say goodbye to your baby for now; tell your baby that you’ll visit again soon.”

## Active Imagery Exercise

*Active imagery is a journey your mind takes to a relaxing and beautiful place. The purpose is to reduce tension by concentrating on a place and a mood completely separate from your current situation.*

“Close your eyes. As you’re breathing in and out slowly, think of your favorite place. Picture yourself in this place. Notice everything about it. What do you see? Your favorite colors surround you. Are there other people in this place with you, or are you alone? Are children playing? Are there any animals, plants, or trees? What types of sounds do they make? Is music playing, or do you hear the soothing sounds of a stream? What does it smell like?

Are you floating or walking? If you are walking, what does the ground feel like beneath your feet? As you reach out your hand, what do you feel? What is the temperature? Open your mouth. What do you taste? Is it sweet? Begin moving around the place, appreciating every aspect. It is as if everything and everyone is there just for you. You are completely secure and peaceful in this place. You are free.

Once you have observed and taken in everything in this place, it is time to leave. You turn to say goodbye, knowing that this place will always be here, knowing you can return whenever you wish. When you are ready, open your eyes and find yourself relaxed in this room, enjoying your peaceful feeling.”