Relaxation Techniques at the Workplace

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Ten easy steps to relief tension and feel energized

There are many benefits to breathing deeply. I will just mention a few:

It is valuable in maintaining our lungs healthy and adding mobility and strength to the thorax or upper torso.

Deep breathing exercises carries oxygen to the brain and has a calming effect when practiced regularly.

Deep breathing reduces stress and helps in relaxing the muscles in the shoulders, neck and arms. It will improve your posture and increase awareness of proper spine alignment.

Anatomically the parts of the spine are:

- 7 cervical vertebrae
- 12 thoracic or dorsal vertebrae
- 5 lumbar vertebrae
- 5 sacral and 4 coccygeal vertebrae

a. (the neck)
b. (the shoulder and chest-area of the spine)
c. (the center-spine)
d. (the root, base or tail-end of the spine)

The spine influences the fine tuning of the entire body and when held tense or too tight, coordination and fluent movement are disturbed which can create physical and mental stress. Now, our first step is to learn how to breathe deeply.

Step #1

Procedure: Sit in a chair, feet on the ground and spine lifted. Place your hand on your abdomen and take a slow, deep breath through your nose, counting to four as you inhale. If done correctly, the hand on your abdomen should rise when you inhale (expand) and contract as you exhale (slowly through the mouth). Repeat four times.

Sources: 1) The actor and his body by Litz Pisk (1975)
2) Raoul Gelabert’s Anatomy for the Dancer (1966)
Different types of relaxation:

1. Relaxation: To most people it means leisure activities, a change from work, to rest from everyday obligations.
2. Relaxation: To release muscular tension by means of specific exercises to use different sets of muscles. (sports’ trainers)
3. Relaxation: Brief periods of relaxation during the workday with easy moves and deep breathing to avoid fatigue and reduce stress.

All the following moves are combined with slow, deep breathing.

1. Deep breathing. Do four times (4 x)
2. Head moves: lateral, (side to side) return to center 2 x
3. Head: quarter circles, alternate sides do 2 x
4. Head: lift up (not too far back) and down, chin to chest, 2 x
5. Head: half circles.
6. Head drops to shoulder, alternate 2 x
7. Head stretch, sideways, do with hand, gently.
8. Shoulder: isolated lifts, 2 x - both shoulders - 2 x
9. Shoulder: isolated circles, back, and forward 2 x each
10. Arms: lift one pressing with hand while the other arm presses down, 2 x each
11. Torso twist with hands on shoulders, 2 x
12. Hands: Circle each; outwards and inwards 3 x each
13. Fingers: articulation exercise. Circles,
14. Hand flexing, back and down, stretch
15. Triceps stretch
16. Standing: Deep breathing using both arms and starting with bent knees.