

## Let go and relieve stress



1. The arms are stretched upwards, the gaze is directed towards both hands, which touch each other lightly. While stretching the arms upwards, inhale deeply. The body shows medium body tension.
2. Now let yourself tilt forward with your arms still stretched out. The gaze is now directed straight ahead. The arms are brought down sideways in a swift movement while the body tilts forward and thus begins to run slowly. As the body starts to move through the forward movement, you emit a long, relieving sound, as if you are getting rid of a heavy load.
3. the gaze now wanders downwards, one comes into a slight, short running while still emitting this sound of relief.
4. Towards the end of this sequence of movements the arms are brought up in front of the body again. Inhale as you do this. Finally you come to a standstill and find yourself in exactly the same position as in point 1.

### Start movements from the belly

First, consciously feel the centre of the body by placing a hand below the navel. In the imagination, you can now also breathe where the hand touches the lower abdomen. What is important in this exercise is that one's attention goes fully into the lower abdomen. Thinking is withdrawn from the head and consciousness moves into the abdominal region. That is where our centre is and this centre also radiates out through the hips. And now one gradually begins to move the whole body while keeping one's attention centred on the lower abdomen. It is not the head that now dictates the movements, but it is the abdomen from which the movements arise. When you start to walk or move your arms, the control of these movements now comes entirely from the lower abdomen, from the centre of our body.

### Progressive muscle relaxation according to Jacobsen

This sequence of exercises is also suitable for when you can't fall asleep in bed at night, to release the stress built up during the day and to get into a good state of relaxation.

Progressive muscle relaxation can be done while standing, sitting or lying down. In the course of this exercise sequence, 17 different muscle groups are tensed and relaxed again. Each focused muscle group goes through the following 5 phases:

1. **sensing:** the person focuses with full concentration on the muscle group in question.
2. **tensing:** The person tenses the muscle group in question. The tension should be clearly perceptible, but not spasmodic.
3. **holding the tension:** The person holds the tension for 7-10 seconds. The attention remains on the muscle group in question.
4. **releasing:** The person relaxes the muscle group in question.
5. **tracing:** the person focuses their attention on the muscle group in question for a further 30 seconds without making any judgements.

### Sequence of exercises

	Muscle group	tense
1	hand and forearm	Make a fist with the active hand (right hand for right-handed people, left hand for left-handed people).
2	active upper arm	Bend the elbow upwards with the open hand.
3	other hand and forearm	Make a fist with the other hand
4	other upper arm	Bend the other elbow upwards with the hand open.
5	Forehead	Raise the eyebrows and frown
6	Eyes and nose	Squint your eyes and wrinkle your nose
7	lips and jaw	Press the lips together and press the tongue against the roof of the mouth.
8	Neck and throat	Tilt the head alternately to the right and left.
9	Shoulders	Raise the shoulders
10	Abdomen	Tense the abdomen without holding your breath.

11	buttocks and pelvic floor muscles	Tense the muscles of the buttocks and pelvic floor.
12	right thigh	Raise the right leg
13	Right lower leg	Push the right foot upwards
14	right foot	Curl the toes inwards
15	left thigh	Lift the left leg
16	Left lower leg	Push the left foot up
17	left foot	Curl the toes inwards