

# 3 Great Ways to Relax!

## 1. Deep-Breathing Exercises

At least once a day, and whenever you start to get stressed, follow these steps:

- Sit down.
- Get comfortable. Loosen tight clothing. Take off shoes and glasses.
- Breathe normally.
- Begin to breathe in slowly through your nose.
- Breathe out through your mouth, with lips puckered.
- Let your stomach rise and fall as you breathe.
- As you breathe in, think, “I am.”
- As you breathe out, think, “Relaxed.”
- Repeat at least 20 times. Then sit comfortably for five minutes. Breathe normally.

## 2. Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Tighten and relax your muscles, starting at your toes and working your way up to your eyes and scalp. Tighten one muscle group at a time for three seconds and then relax. When you have gone through every body part (toes, feet, legs, thighs, hips, buttocks, stomach, hands, arms, shoulders, jaws, face, eyes and scalp), sit quietly for five minutes thinking about how relaxed you feel.

## 3. Imagery

Imagery is using the mind to relax the body. To practice imagery, think about a peaceful place, such as a quiet clearing in the woods, a calm lake or a starry night. Think of the sights and sounds, smells and feelings you would experience if you were actually there. Picture yourself there, calm, relaxed and peaceful.