

RELAXATION

Relaxation is now known to be a fundamental building block of “sound health.” Relaxation can help you live a healthier, happier life.

How can you fit periods of meaningful relaxation into your hectic schedule? One of the easiest ways is with music. But not just any music!

Why doesn't most music relax you? The tempo of most music is simply too fast. Due to the Law of Rhythm Entrainment, your heart is forced to speed up to get “in sync” with an external rhythm. Your heart has no choice: it's a biological law. There are many other factors, such as emotional content, lyrics, the compositional structure, and the instruments themselves. However, the most fundamental element of all is the tempo.

From Bach to Rock, from Pop to New Age, most music is composed as “sonic caffeine.” It literally makes your nervous system more nervous. Up-tempo music is an ineffective choice when your goal is to relax the body and quiet the mind ... not that there's anything wrong with that. The fact is: **most music was not composed with the intent of evoking relaxation within the listener.**

Many people have the misconception that because a piece of music is entertaining, it's also relaxing. This is simply not so.

Imagine a place of complete tranquility... where you can disconnect yourself from the demands of the day... where you can experience the benefits and pleasures of true relaxation and inner peace...

RECOMMENDED MUSIC FOR RELAXATION

CLASSICAL:

J.S. Bach	Air on a G String Cello Suites Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring Sheep May Safely Graze
Barber	Adagio for Strings
Beethoven	Piano Concerto No. 3 (Second Movement) Piano Concerto No. 5 (Second Movement) Piano Sonatas Symphony No. 9 (Third Movement) Violin Concerto (Second Movement)
Brahms	Violin Concerto (Second Movement)
Chopin	The Meditative Chopin by Roy Eaton
Debussy	Claire de Lune
Dvorak	Cello Concerto (Second Movement) Symphony No. 9, "New World" (Second Movement)
Franck	Panis Angelicas Symphony in D Minor Violin Sonata (First Movement)
Mahler	Symphony No. 4 (Third Movement) Symphony No. 7 (Second Movement)
Massenet	Meditation from Thais
Pachelbel	Canon in D
Rachmaninoff	Piano Concertos Nos. 2 and 3
Schubert	Ave Maria
Vivaldi	The Four Seasons

NEW AGE MUSIC:

Music by the following artists: Patrick Ball, Deuter, Dan Gibson (Solitudes-Environment Sounds), Steven Halpern, Kitaro, Daniel Kobialka, Enya, Paul Winter, and Woolenweider.

Music Listening for Relaxation: Tips

Music Listening

Keep in mind that most music is too fast for relaxation. Due to the law of Rhythm Entrainment, your heart is forced to speed up to get “in sync” with an external rhythm. Choose music that is slow enough to decrease your heart rate. If possible, try to match your resting heartbeat (this is often around 60-70 beats per minute). This will lead to deeper relaxation.

Choose music that has no lyrics. Lyrics can distract you from focusing on your body.

Choose music that you like. It is difficult to relax when you do not like the music you are listening to. Everyone has different preferences.

Suggestions For Music Listening

Modern: Janalea Hoffman: Mind-Body Rhythm and Musical Acupuncture

Stephen Halpern: In the Key of Healing

Enya, Yanni, and other “new age” composers have created many pieces that are appropriate for relaxation. Please note the information under the above heading *Music Listening* to ensure that the music you choose is best for your relaxation experience.

Classical: Bach: Air, Sinfonia in G, Concerto in D Minor

Barber: Adagio for Strings

Beethoven: Largo from Piano Concerto #3 in C Minor

Brahms: Intermezzo in E Flat

Mozart: Clarinet Concerto in A (Movement 2)

Pachelbel: Canon in D

Pavane: Op. 50

Tchaikovsky: Andante from Violin Concerto #2 in D

USING YOUR VOICE FOR RELAXATION

Singing

Singing can help you to focus inward on your body, concentrate on breathing deeper (to oxygenate your whole body), relax your muscles, and brighten your mood to decrease stress and anxiety.

Toning

Toning has the same physiological benefits as singing, but allows for an even more concentrated focus. Toning means to make a sound with an elongated vowel for an extended period of time. It is a sound from within. Vowels are a natural toning progression for healing the areas of the body corresponding to the chakras. Toning the vowels in the order indicated below (Ooo to Eee) causes the body to vibrate in specific areas, as pictured. If you put these vowels together in sequence, they sound like the word "why" from the first vowel (Ooo) to the final vowel (Eee).

Where the vibrations are typically felt:

- Eee** (as in wheat)— crown -----
- Ih** (As in interest)— brow -----
- Eh** (as in whether)— throat -----
- A** (as in absolute)— collarbone -----
- Ah** (as in father)— chest -----
- Aw** (as in awful)— diaphragm -----
- Oh** (as in smoke)— belly -----
- Ooo** (as in smooth)— root -----



Adapted from Sounding the Inner Landscape by Kay Gardner (1990).

Chanting

Chanting is a variation of singing and toning. You can start out with a vowel sound, as in toning, and then substitute a word or phrase for the vowel sound. You may want to chant one of the attached *affirmations* or any other positive statement. Be creative! There is no right or wrong.