

SELF-REGULATION
RELAXATION
STRATEGIES

DR. NEAL

DR. NEAL KINGS' INSTITUTE

Discussion Topics

1. Progressive Muscle Relaxation
2. Autogenic Training
3. Guided Imagery Relaxation

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- A deep relaxation technique that consists of tensing and relaxing different muscle groups
- Person learns **muscle self-awareness**: ability to recognize a tense muscle from a relaxed one
- Used as a treatment strategy for tension-related disorders
- Research shows effectiveness in reducing anxiety

Abbreviated Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- Abbreviated form: quick and easy to learn
- 1,030 skeletal muscles grouped in groups of 16, 7, and 4
- A cue word is used so clients can learn to release tension by recalling the cue word
- Goal is to learn how to self-regulate relaxation

Potential Issues in Progressive Relaxation Training

- Several issues that can easily be dealt with:
 - **Comfort:** lie down and wear comfortable clothes
 - **Cramping:** hold muscles for only 5-7 seconds to prevent cramps
 - **Sleep:** can be effectively used to induce sleep
 - **Anxiety:** some clients experience anxiety symptoms such as losing control
 - Remember that exercise can always be stopped
 - **Self-consciousness:** can do with lights off or alone to reduce self-consciousness

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise

- Follow these steps:
 - Tensing a muscle group
 - Holding the tension for a count of 5 seconds
 - Releasing the tension
 - Taking a deep abdominal breath
 - Holding it for a count of three seconds
 - Slowly releasing your breath

Brief Relaxation Exercise

- Stress Management Exercise
- Uses skills you develop through practicing abdominal breathing and progressive muscle relaxation



Systematic Desensitization

- Pair graduated imagined phobic scenarios with the experience of deep relaxation
- Counterconditions anxiety response by replacing anxiety with relaxation
- If successful and realistic, it should carryover into real life
- Appears to be effective in treating phobias
- Must create an anxiety hierarchy with a fear ladder with least phobic stimulus at bottom

Systematic Desensitization (cont'd.)

- Measure fear in Subjective Units of Distress (SUDS) on a 100 point scale
- Select one or two relaxation images to use to calm yourself
- The therapist goes up the fear ladder, and a session typically lasts 15-30 minutes
- Next session begins with last successful scene and then continues to progress



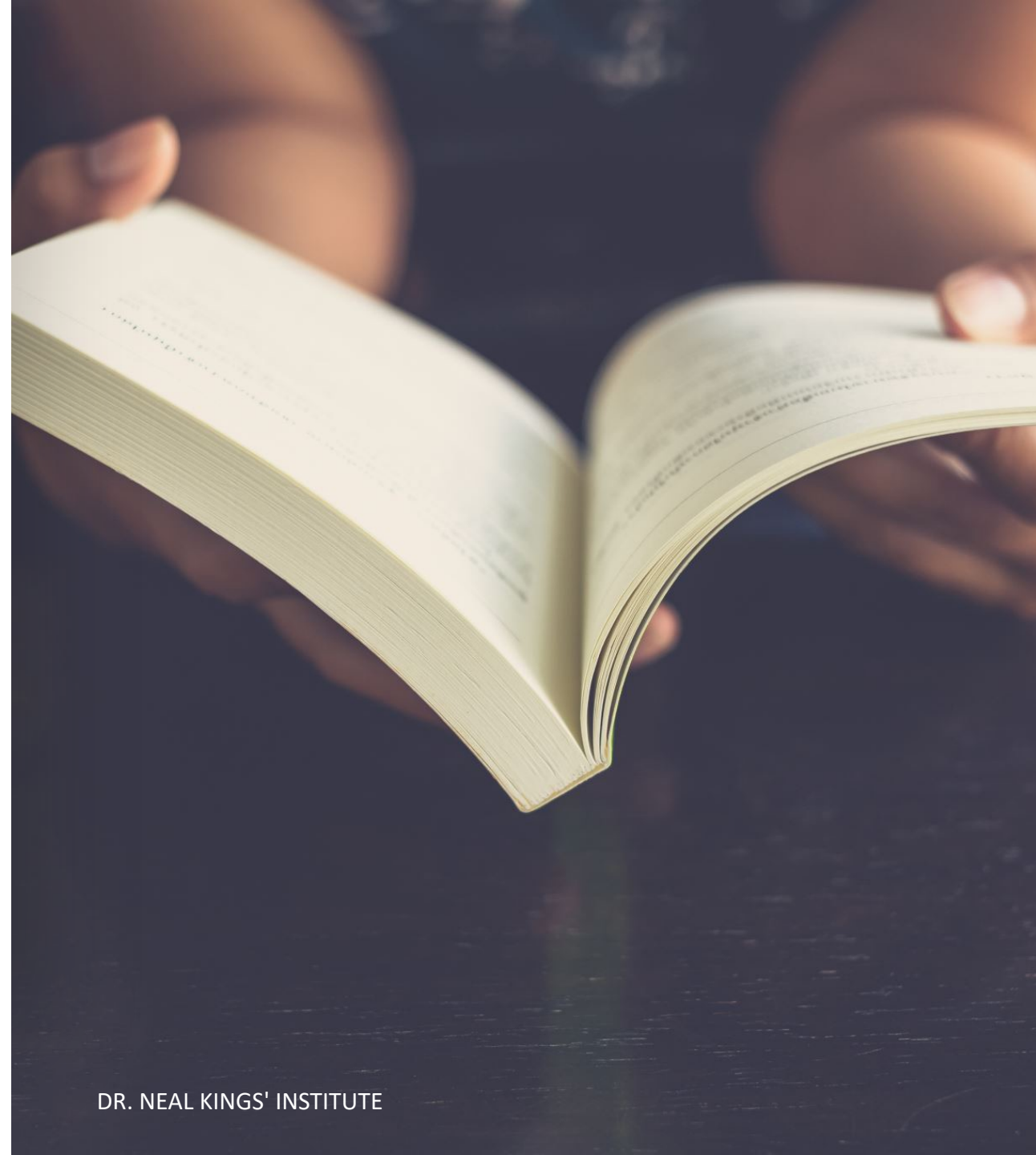
Feared Event	SUDS
Giving the speech	100
Five minutes before the speech	90
The day before the speech	80
Practicing the speech in front of a small group of friends	70
Practicing the speech alone	60
Preparing the speech	50
Being given a speech presentation assignment	40
First day of the Speech class	30
Enrolling in a Speech class	20
Thinking about enrolling in a Speech class	10

Table Fear Hierarchy for Public Speaking. SUDS represent the client's estimate of subjective units of distress associated with each event.

AUTOGENIC TRAINING

Autogenic Training

- A relaxation technique derived from clinical hypnosis
- Note: What does the Bible teach regarding hypnosis or control of the mind!
- **Hypnotic state:**
 - altered sense of waking consciousness with sleeplike characteristics distinguished by increased suggestibility
- **Autohypnotic state:**
 - hypnotic state induced by the self through mental exercises



Autogenic Training

- **Autogenic training:**

- learning a method of “deep relaxation” through self-hypnosis or passive concentration that centers on the autonomic nervous system
- What does the Bible teach around “passivity” of the mind?
- Few studies show physiological differences between progressive muscle relaxation and autogenic state
- Autogenic training more popular in Europe and Japan

Autogenic Training

- Practitioner focuses on six types of sensations, each accompanied by a statement and followed with “quiet”:
 - Heaviness (muscular relaxation)
 - Warmth (vascular dilation)
 - Heart (heart regulation)
 - Breathing (breathing regulation)
 - Viscera (visceral organ regulation)
 - Head (cooling the forehead)

Autogenic Training (cont'd.)

- Should be practiced regularly and is usually done in groups
- Sometimes done in abbreviated form
- May not be best method for anxiety reduction, but a viable option if progressive muscle relaxation or meditation are not possible in a particular case



GUIDED
IMAGERY
RELAXATION

Guided Imagery Relaxation

- Use language to create relaxing, sensory-filled images and scenarios to transport us to our imaginations
- Language guides with scripts that engage all five senses
- Has a long history of use in religion
- Limited research, but it seems to aid cancer patients with pain in conjunction with traditional pain therapy

Guided Imagery Relaxation

- Suggestive evidence that guided imagery can elevate immune responses
- Stronger evidence for its use in athletic performance improvements



Using Guided Imagery to Promote Deep Relaxation

- Listen to a recording or write and record your own script
- Most scenarios are of solitary experiences
- Allow unwanted thoughts to pass through your consciousness
- Scripts should be 15-20 minutes long



- Progressive muscle relaxation, autogenic training, and guided imagery relaxation are deep relaxation strategies
- Progressive muscle relaxation one of the most effective in managing anxiety
- Systematic desensitization is used to induce deep relaxation for treating simple phobias
- Autogenic training involves relaxation through self-hypnosis

Summary

- Guided imagery relaxation uses language to create relaxing scenarios that involve the senses
- Guided imagery used to promote stress reduction, reduce pain, strengthen immune system, and improve sports performance

Summary (cont'd.)