

### ***Mindful Eating Exercise – Eating One Raisin***

In addition to a raisin, this exercise can be completed with a small fruit such as a grape or an apple/orange cut into a small piece (the size of a penny).

- *Holding: First, hold the raisin in the palm of your hand and then holding it between your fingers. Focus on the raisin (imagine that you are from another planet and have never seen a raisin before).*
- *Seeing: Take the time to gaze at the raisin and examine any unique features.*
- *Touching: Explore the texture of the raisin (you may even want to close your eyes as you do this).*
- *Smelling: Hold the raisin under your nose and notice its scent. Pay attention to any sensations in your stomach or mouth.*
- *Placing: Place the raisin up to your lips exploring the texture. Place the raisin in your mouth without eating it. Explore the sensations with your tongue.*
- *Tasting: When ready, chew the raisin and pay attention to the sensations in your mouth. Notice the change in texture moment-by-moment.*
- *Swallowing: When ready, swallow the raisin. Notice your body's intention to swallow by it happens.*
- *Following: See what is left of the raisin as it moves to your stomach. Sense how your body feels after completing this exercise.*

(Taken from Williams, M., Teasdale, J., Segal, Z., & Kabat-Zinn, J. (2007). *The mindful way through depression: Freeing yourself from chronic unhappiness*. New York: Guilford Press.)

### ***Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise***

**Step 1.** Assume a comfortable position. You may lie down; loosen any tight clothing, close your eyes and be quiet.

**Step 2.** Assume a passive attitude. Focus on yourself and on achieving relaxation in specific body muscles. Tune out all other thoughts.

**Step 3.** Tense and relax each muscle group as follows:

- Forehead - Wrinkle your forehead, try to make your eyebrows touch your hairline for five seconds. Relax.
- Eyes and nose - Close your eyes as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.
- Lips, cheeks and jaw - Draw the centers of your mouth back and grimace for five seconds. Relax. Feel the warmth and calmness in your face.
- Hands - Extend your arms in front of you. Clench your fists tightly for five seconds. Relax. Feel the warmth and calmness in your hands.
- Forearms - Extend your arms out against an invisible wall and push forward with your hands for five seconds. Relax.
- Upper arms - Bend your elbows. Tense your biceps for five seconds. Relax. Feel the tension leave your arms.
- Shoulders - Shrug your shoulders up to your ears for five seconds. Relax.
- Back - Arch your back off the floor for five seconds. Relax. Feel the anxiety and tension disappearing.
- Stomach - Tighten your stomach muscles for five seconds. Relax.
- Hips and buttocks - Tighten your hip and buttock muscles for five seconds. Relax.
- Thighs - Tighten your thigh muscles by pressing your legs together as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.
- Feet - Bend your ankles toward your body as far as you can for five seconds. Relax.
- Toes - Curl your toes as tightly as you can for five seconds. Relax.

**Step 4.** Focus on any muscles which may still be tense. If any muscle remains tense, tighten and relax that specific muscle three or four times.

**Step 5.** Fix the feeling of relaxation in your mind. Resolve to repeat the process again.

(Taken from Progressive Muscle Relaxation, n.d.)

## Deep Breathing Exercise

1. Sit in a comfortable chair, maintaining good posture. Your body should be as relaxed as possible. Close your eyes. Scan your body for tension.
2. Pay attention to your breathing. Place one hand on the part of your chest or abdomen that seems to rise and fall the most with each breath. If this spot is in your chest you are not utilizing the lower part of your lungs.
3. Place both hands on your abdomen and follow your breathing, noticing how your abdomen rises and falls.
4. Breathe through your nose.
5. Notice if your chest is moving in harmony with your abdomen.
6. Now place one hand on your abdomen and one on your chest.
7. Inhale deeply and slowly through your nose into your abdomen. You should feel your abdomen rise with this inhalation and your chest should move only a little.
8. Exhale through your mouth, keeping your mouth, tongue, and jaw relaxed.
9. Relax as you focus on the sound and feeling of long, slow, deep breaths.

Practice this exercise for ten minutes, twice a day.

(Taken from Davis, M., Eshelman, E., & McKay, M. (2008). *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Oakland: CA: New Harbinger Publications.)

## ***Visualization Exercise***

### ***Introduction:***

*Make sure you are in a comfortable position in your chair. Shift your focus to the pleasant image of your choice. As we start, take several deep breaths.*

### ***Describing the Image:***

- *Notice what you are hearing*
- *As you breathe, notice what you are smelling*
- *Reach out and touch things that are around you*

### ***In the Image:***

- *Notice what is before you*
- *How does it feel? Smell? Sounds?*
- *Be safe here*
- *Look around...feel the ground with your feet...what do you see?*
- *Sit or lie in your special place...notice smells, sights, sounds...this is your place and no one can harm you here*
- *Spend a few minutes in your relaxed place*

### ***End of Exercise:***

- *Memorize the place's smells, tastes, sights, sounds...you can come back and relax here whenever you want*
- *Leave by the same entrance...notice any smells, sounds, sights*
- *Remind yourself that you created this place...this is your special place and you can come whenever you'd like*

*Now open your eyes and spend a few moments enjoying your relaxation.*

*(Taken from Davis, M., Eshelman, E., & McKay, M. (2008). *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Oakland: CA: New Harbinger Publications.)*