'This amazing book gives you the tools and techniques
you need to relax at will under any circumstances.' - Brian Tracy, author of How Top Leaders Lead

# Relaxation

# DUMMIES

#### **Learn to:**

- Understand the importance of relaxation for your mind and body
- Integrate exercise into your everyday life
- Find opportunities for relaxation at home and in the workplace

### Shamash Alidina, MEng MA(Ed)

Mindfulness Consultant, Keynote Speaker & Trainer



'This amazing book gives you the tools and techniques you need to relax at will under any circumstances.' - Brian Tracy, author of How Top Leaders Lead

# Relaxation

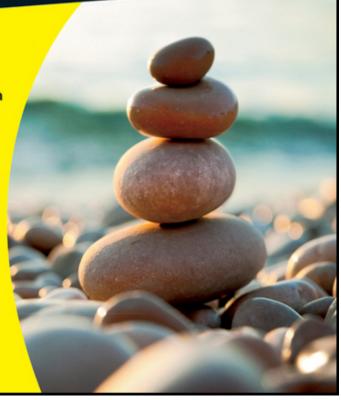
DUMMIES

#### Learn to:

- Understand the importance of relaxation for your mind and body
- Integrate exercise into your everyday life
- Find opportunities for relaxation at home and in the workplace

### Shamash Alidina, MEng MA(Ed)

Mindfulness Consultant, Keynote Speaker & Trainer



#### **Relaxation For Dummies**®

#### **Visit**

www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/relaxationuk
to view this book's cheat sheet.

#### **Table of Contents**

#### **Introduction**

About This Book
Conventions Used in This Book
What You're Not to Read
Foolish Assumptions
How This Book Is Organised

Part I: Introducing Relaxation

Part II: Exploring Relaxation Techniques Using

Your Body

Part III: Discovering Relaxation Techniques

<u>Using Your Mind and Heart</u>

Part IV: Everyday Relaxation

Part V: Managing Problems Using Relaxation

<u>Techniques</u>

Part VI: The Part of Tens

Icons Used in This Book
Where to Go from Here

Part I: Introducing Relaxation

#### **Chapter 1: Discovering Relaxation**

#### <u>Understanding Relaxation</u>

Discovering the relaxation response
Considering different dimensions of
relaxation
Looking at the main ways to relax
Appreciating relaxation as mind-body
medicine
Having fun with relaxation

#### <u>Discovering the Benefits of Relaxation</u>

Effects of relaxation on your body
Effects of relaxation on your mind and
emotions
Effects of relaxation on your behaviour
Uplifting your spirit with relaxation

#### **Letting Relaxation into Your Life**

Clarifying where you're starting from
Overcoming resistance to relax
Starting to use relaxation techniques and activities
Building relaxation into your daily life

#### **Chapter 2: Understanding Stress**

**Explaining the Science of Stress** 

Fathoming the fight-or-flight response

#### Getting to know the signs of stress

#### <u>Discovering the Sources of Your Stress</u>

Living in the 21st century
Identifying common triggers
Dealing with your daily routine
Discovering the effect of perception

#### Considering your personality

<u>Type A and Type B personality</u> <u>Stress Hardiness personality</u> <u>Looking at your locus of control</u>

#### **Measuring Your Stress**

Rating your stress level
Using a stress diary
Measuring stress using your body
Trying a relaxation SWOT analysis

#### <u>Chapter 3: Planning Your Journey into Relaxation</u>

#### **Getting Ready for Relaxation**

Cultivating useful attitudes for relaxation
Finding a suitable time to relax
Keeping a relaxation journal
Recording your own guided relaxation

#### <u>Creating a Relaxation Plan</u>

Beginning the journey to wellbeing
Completing a wheel of life
Prioritising the key causes of your stress
Discovering the most effective relaxation
techniques for your stress
Developing long-term resilience to stress
Using the 6 As for relaxation
Committing to a 30-day relaxation plan

<u>Part II: Exploring Relaxation Techniques Using Your</u> Body

<u>Chapter 4: Trying Progressive Relaxation</u>

<u>Discovering Progressive Relaxation</u> <u>Understanding Muscle Tension and Relaxation</u> <u>Exploring Progressive Relaxation</u>

<u>Trying an active progressive relaxation</u> <u>Trying a passive progressive relaxation</u> <u>Trying a short progressive relaxation</u>

<u>Integrating Relaxation Throughout Your Day</u>
<u>Overcoming Problems in Progressive</u>
<u>Relaxation</u>

<u>Chapter 5: Practising Breathing Techniques</u>

<u>Discovering the Power of Your Breath</u> <u>Understanding Your Breathing</u>

Looking at how your lungs work Finding out how you breathe

Appreciating the benefits of healthy
breathing
Discovering the source of unhelpful
breathing habits
Overcoming difficulties with breathing
exercises

#### **Exploring Relaxing Breathing Exercises**

Beginning with diaphragmatic breathing
Counting your breath
Diving in with deep breathing
Trying straw breathing

#### **Combining Breathing Techniques**

Breathing with relaxation affirmations
Breathing with guided imagery
Smiling as you breathe

#### Chapter 6: Using Physical Activity to Relax

Seeing How Exercise Leads to Relaxation

Meeting the benefits of exercise Knowing when NOT to exercise

#### Finding the Right Exercise Routine for You

Working out how much to exercise
Integrating physical activities into your
life
Staying motivated

#### <u>Discovering Some Popular Exercises</u>

Walking works wonders
Running for exercise
Going swimming
Enjoying cycling
Starting dancing

#### <u>Trying Mindful Exercise</u>

<u>Discovering a powerful mind-body</u>
<u>relaxation</u>
<u>Looking at ways to practise mindful</u>
exercises

#### <u>Chapter 7: Yoga, T'ai Chi and Qigong</u>

#### <u>Practising Yoga for Relaxation</u>

Understanding how yoga relaxes you
Preparing for yoga
Exploring yoga breathing exercises
Trying some relaxing yoga poses
Attending a yoga class
Practising yoga at home

#### <u>Trying T'ai Chi and Qigong to Relax</u>

Understanding the key principles of t'ai chi and qigong
Discovering the benefits of t'ai chi and qigong
Beginning learning t'ai chi and qigong

#### <u>Trying some simple routines</u>

<u>Chapter 8 : Massage, Acupressure and Reflexology</u>

**Discovering Massage** 

Choosing a massage therapist

Discovering popular types of massage for relaxation

**Exploring Self-Massage to Relax Your Body** 

Understanding the principles of selfmassage Practising different techniques for different parts of your body Integrating self-massage into your daily routine

<u>Trying Acupressure and Foot Reflexology</u>

<u>Applying acupressure for relaxation</u> <u>Using foot reflexology to de-stress</u>

<u>Part III: Discovering Relaxation Techniques Using Your</u> <u>Mind and Heart</u>

<u>Chapter 9 : Guided Imagery, Self-Hypnosis,</u> <u>Autogenics and Music</u>

<u>Using Guided Imagery or Visualisation</u>

Discovering the power of imagery
Cultivating the right attitude
Using guided imagery exercises to relax
Accessing an inner advisor
Overcoming resistance

#### **Discovering Autogenics**

Preparing to practise autogenics
Practising autogenic training for
relaxation
Developing autogenic practice

#### **Sussing Out Self-Hypnosis**

<u>Practising self-hypnosis</u>
<u>Trying a sample hypnosis script for relaxing through stressful times</u>

#### <u>Using Music to Relax</u>

Discovering the power of music

Using music to help you relax

Using a music therapist for further help

#### **Chapter 10: Meditation**

#### <u>Uncovering the Basics of Meditation</u>

Seeing how meditation relaxes you Finding the right posture for you Understanding the principles of meditation

#### **Discovering Mindfulness Meditation**

Trying a breath meditation
Connecting with your senses mindfully
Engaging in mindful sitting meditation
Practising a body scan meditation
Using regular mini-meditations

#### **Exploring Relaxation Response Meditation**

<u>Choosing a relaxation response phrase</u>
<u>Trying the relaxation response meditation</u>

#### **Exploring Alternative Meditations**

Gazing at an object
<a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/j.com/">Trying metta (loving kindness) meditation</a>

#### **Chapter 11: Spirituality and Prayer**

#### <u>Creating Spiritual Relaxation</u>

<u>Defining spirituality</u>
<u>Discovering the benefits of spirituality</u>
<u>Exploring your spirituality</u>
<u>Engaging in spiritual practices</u>

#### <u>Using Prayer to Relax</u>

Appreciating the power of prayer
Seeing how prayer and spirituality affect
your brain
Finding a time and a place to pray

Preparing to pray
Learning how to pray
Trying a prayer for relaxation

#### **Chapter 12: Managing Your Mind**

<u>Using Cognitive Behavioural Techniques to</u> <u>Relax</u>

Breaking problems into five areas
Understanding your mind with the ABC
model
Identifying stress-inducing thinking
Learning to question your stressful
thinking

#### Making Your Thinking Optimistic

Discovering the benefits of balanced optimism

Learning how to be optimistic

Setting positive goals

Creating self-confidence step-by-step

#### <u>Using Problem-Solving Techniques to Relax</u>

Identifying the problems causing stress
Coming up with solutions
Choosing a solution
Breaking down the solution
Trying your solution and reviewing the outcome

#### Chapter 13: Improving Your Attitude

#### **Developing Gratitude**

Learning the benefits of being grateful Finding ways to be grateful Using a gratitude journal to feel more relaxed

#### <u>Discovering Laughter</u>, <u>Humour and Play</u>

Bringing on the benefits of laughter
Finding opportunities to smile mindfully
Using laughter as a relaxation tool
Using playfulness in communication

#### **Practising Self-Compassion**

Understanding self-compassion
Discovering the benefits of selfcompassion
Measuring your self-compassion
Trying self-compassion exercises
Performing a random act of kindness

#### Part IV: Everyday Relaxation

Chapter 14: Finding Ways to Sleep Serenely

#### <u>Understanding Sleep</u>

Getting the right amount of sleep Discovering your sleep profile

#### **Preparing to Sleep**

<u>Using wind-down time</u> <u>Creating a relaxing bedroom environment</u>

#### **Dealing With Insomnia**

<u>Investigating causes of insomnia</u> <u>Overcoming insomnia</u>

#### <u>Chapter 15: Discovering Relaxation at Home</u>

Breaking Down Barriers to Relaxation at Home

Enjoying your relationship with your partner
Coping with financial pressures
Dealing with children's behaviour

#### Finding Relaxation at Home

Creating your space for relaxation
Getting organised at home to unwind
Gardening for relaxation
Cooking your way to relaxation
Getting a pet to help you relax
Enjoying a relaxing bath

#### <u>Trying a Relaxation Diet</u>

Eating food to encourage relaxation

Avoiding nutritional habits that cause stress
Eating mindfully to relax and enjoy

#### <u>Using Your Senses to Relax</u>

Choosing the right approach for your stress

Moving for rest and rejuvenation

#### <u>Developing Your Social Support Network</u>

<u>Discovering ways of making friends</u> <u>Improving your social skills</u>

#### <u>Chapter 16 : Find Relaxation at Work</u>

#### Managing Stress in Your Workplace

Discovering the warning signs of workplace stress
Identifying the causes of workplace stress
Finding ways to relax at work
Getting organised at work to feel more relaxed
Overcoming unhelpful work attitudes
Trying other strategies to stress less and relax more

#### <u>Improving Communication in Your Workplace</u>

<u>Listening attentively</u>
<u>Developing your communication skills</u>

#### **Resolving conflicts**

#### Balancing the Demands of Work

<u>Developing a work-life balance</u> <u>Setting your priorities and perspectives</u>

#### <u>Part V: Managing Problems Using Relaxation</u> <u>Techniques</u>

<u>Chapter 17: Managing Anxiety, Worry, Panic and Depression</u>

#### Managing Worry and Anxiety

Understanding worry and anxiety
Discovering whether you have an anxiety
disorder
Understanding why you keep worrying
Trying self-help techniques for anxiety
and worry

#### **Dealing with Panic**

Recognising and understanding panic attacks
Using techniques to reduce panic Looking at longer-term strategies

#### **Dealing with Phobias**

<u>Understanding phobias</u>

<b>Overcoming</b>	<u>phobias</u>	<u>by</u>	<u>gradually</u>	<u>facing</u>
your fears				

#### **Handling Depression**

<u>Understanding depression and stress</u> <u>Using self-help strategies for depression</u>

#### Chapter 18: Managing Chronic Disease

#### <u>Understanding Long-Term Illness and Stress</u>

<u>Discovering how your disease causes</u> <u>stress</u> <u>Clarifying the benefits of relaxation</u>

#### Managing Your Life to Stay More Relaxed

Prioritising good nutrition

Maintaining a positive outlook

Keeping a diary

Living mindfully

Setting achievable goals to feel better

Pacing yourself

Getting some sleep

Exercising to relax

#### <u>Using Relaxation to Help You</u>

Finding the right relaxation technique for you Exploring day-to-day relaxing activities

### Embracing Support to Feel More Relaxed and Healthy

Getting professional help to manage your condition
Considering complementary health options
Joining a support group

#### Chapter 19: Anger and Burnout

#### **Mastering Anger Management**

Understanding anger
Discovering whether anger is a problem
for you
Trying anger management techniques
Last-minute techniques to prevent anger
getting out of control
Long-term strategies to reduce future
outbursts of anger
Changing your thoughts to simmer down

#### **Preventing or Coping with Burnout**

Understanding burnout
Discovering whether you have burnout
Using strategies to prevent burnout
Recovering from burnout

#### Part VI: The Part of Tens

Chapter 20: Ten Golden Rules of Relaxation

Accepting What You Can't Change
Being Kind to Yourself
Choosing Relaxation Techniques that Work for
You
Expressing Yourself
Making Time for Daily Relaxation
Noticing When You Need to Relax
Preparing Your Mental Attitude for Relaxation
Seeing Relaxation as a Skill
Taking Control of Your Life
Understanding the Amazing Power of
Relaxation

#### Chapter 21: Ten Quick Ways to Relax

Breathing Deeply
Building Your Optimism Muscle
Coming to Your Senses
Doing Something Pleasurable
Getting Physical
Practising Peaceful Place Imagery
Smiling or Laughing
Trying the RELAX Technique
Using a Three-Stage Mini-Meditation
Visualising a Successful Outcome

#### <u>Chapter 22: Ten Ways to Deep Relaxation</u>

<u>Deep Self-Hypnosis</u>
<u>Guided Imagery</u>
<u>Hot Bath</u>
Massage

Mindful Body Scan Meditation
Progressive Muscular Relaxation
Relaxation Response Meditation
Stretching for Relaxation
T'ai Chi
Yoga Nidra

#### <u>Chapter 23: Ten Resources for Further Help</u>

Getting in Touch
Trying Physical Relaxation DVDs
Watching Comedy Films for Light Relief
Relaxing to Music
Reading Books
Using Guided Relaxation Audios
Looking at General Relaxation and Stress
Reduction Websites
Helping Your Children Relax
Reducing Stress in the Workplace
Finding Relaxation Classes in your Area

<u>Appendix: Audio Tracks</u> Cheat Sheet

**Download CD/DVD Content** 

# Relaxation For Dummies $^{\circledR}$ by Shamash Alidina

Foreword by Cary L. Cooper



A John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, Publication

#### **Relaxation For Dummies®**

Published by
John Wiley & Sons, Ltd
The Atrium
Southern Gate
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 8SQ
England
www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2012 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, West Sussex, England

Published by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, West Sussex

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except under the terms of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 or under the terms of a licence issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd, Saffron House, 6-10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS, UK, without the permission in writing of the Publisher. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, England, or emailed to permreq@wiley.co.uk, or faxed to (44) 1243 770620.

**Trademarks:** Wiley, the Wiley logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com, Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc., and/or its

affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty: The contents of this work are intended to further general scientific research, understanding, and discussion only and are not intended and should not be relied upon as recommending or promoting a specific method, diagnosis, or treatment by physicians for any particular patient. The publishe, the author, AND ANYONE ELSE INVOLVED IN PREPARING THIS WORK make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation any implied warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. In view of ongoing research, equipment modifications, changes in governmental regulations, and the constant flow of information relating to the use of medicines, equipment, and devices, the reader is urged to review and evaluate the information provided in the package insert or instructions for each medicine, equipment, or device for, among other things, any changes in the instructions or indication of usage and for added warnings and precautions. Readers should consult with a specialist where appropriate. The fact that an organization or Website is referred to in this work as a citation and/or a potential source of further information does not mean that the author or the publisher endorses the information the organization or Website may provide or recommendations it may make. Further, readers should be aware that Internet Websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read. No warranty may be created or extended by any promotional statements for this work. Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for any damages arising herefrom.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit <a href="www.wiley.com/techsupport">www.wiley.com/techsupport</a>.

Wiley publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that was not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at <a href="mailto:booksupport.wiley.com">booksupport.wiley.com</a> For more information about Wiley products, visit <a href="https://www.wiley.com">www.wiley.com</a>.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-119-99909-6 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-119-95114-8 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-119-95116-2 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-119-95115-5 (ebk)

Printed and bound in Great Britain by TJ International, Padstow, Cornwall

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



#### **About the Author**

**Shamash Alidina** is a stress management expert, mainly using a scientifically researched approach called mindfulness. He is a renowned mindfulness trainer and consultant in the UK. A bestselling author of *Mindfulness For Dummies*, he regularly features on national television, radio, newspapers and magazines. Shamash has taught mindfulness in a secular way for over a decade. Previously he taught in schools where all the children practised meditation and mindfulness techniques on a daily basis.

Shamash holds two Masters degrees – in Engineering and Education. He trained in the clinically researched approach called Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction through the Center for Mindfulness in Massachusetts, USA and at the Centre For Mindfulness at Bangor University, which is part of its School of Psychology.

Shamash runs his own successful training organisation, LearnMindfulness.co.uk. He teaches mindfulness professionally to the general public, coaches, therapists, clinicians, trainers and corporate organisations, both in-person and through distance learning programmes accessible to all. He has trained in managing workplace stress and regularly coaches executives in mindfulness for optimising performance, creativity, decision-making and for reducing stress. He has taught mindfulness all over the world, including the Middle East, the Far East, the US and Europe.

Shamash currently lives in London and occasionally New York.

## Author's Acknowledgments

A tree doesn't grow from a seed alone – it needs soil, nutrients, warmth, water, sunshine and air. In the same way, I didn't write this book alone. Thousands of people helped to shape the content of this book, from the very close support of friends, family and colleagues, to the clients I have had the privilege to coach, the various lectures I've attended, the books and journals I've read, the online conversations on social networks and the authors and experts I've interviewed. This book has been a team effort.

I'd like to personally thank my immediate and extended family for their patience and support of this project: Fateh, Manju, Aneesh, Ashok, Parul, Vijay, Nirupa, Nikhil, Amisha, Amy and last but not least, Shona. I'd like to thank my friend Jo, who is so supportive of my work and always full of creative ideas and intelligent, positive suggestions; Margarita whose knowledge of psychology and spirituality helps me to put things into perspective; Garry, who's wisdom and sense of humour I always enjoy and deeply appreciate; Maneesh, who's wealth of knowledge in a wide variety of subjects is consistently enlightening and fascinating, and Rizwana, who's practical and perceptive suggestions aided me to speed up my writing. I'd also like to thank all the staff at my local Starbucks coffee shop - they were friendly, welcoming and encouraging for the hundreds of hours I spent typing away, drinking tea and eating porridge!

I've been thoroughly impressed by the support and professionalism of the *For Dummies* team at Wiley. I'd like to

personally thank my project editor, Jo Jones, who has been incredibly patient and encouraging as I worked through writing the chapters for this book, from start to finish. I'd like to thank my commissioning editor, Kerry Laundon who was supportive of my passion to make this idea a reality, and always encouraging. I'd also like to thank my development editor, Colette Holden, my copy editor, Martin Key, my technical editor, Roger Henderson and proof-reader, Dawn Bates.

I'd like to thank some of the many supporters from my 'Relaxation For Dummies' and 'Learn Mindfulness' Facebook pages, and who have been closely following and encouraging me right from the ideas stage of this book. Those that come to mind, in no particular order, are: Caroline, Steven, Angel, Sarah, Andy, Mark, Anuk, Laura, Paul, Jenn, Mel, Amy, Stefka, Aseea, Meryl, Tracey, Lisa, Khurty, Mirja, Didi, Marie, Nancie, Gideon, Therese, Jacqueline, Linda, Roisin, Nadia, Geoff, Maria, Aimee, Phil, Matthew, Claire, Carole, Alice, Ladio, Grethe, Carrie, Jen, Alastair, Hannah and Suki. I'm sure I've forgotten a few names and I'm so sorry for that – I certainly deeply value our online interactions and look forward to connecting with you online, if you like that sort of thing.

I'd like to thank one of the world's leading experts on stress management, Professor Cary Cooper, who took time out of his busy schedule to write the foreword to this book. And I'd finally like to thank Brian Tracy, personal development expert, for reading the script and offering his support for this book.

I'm deeply grateful for all your contributions.

#### **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this book to my wonderful grandma and grandpa who taught me so much about the value of culture, community and family. They both recently passed away. May they rest in peace.

#### **Publisher's Acknowledgements**

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <u>dummies.custhelp.com</u>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

Acquisitions, Editorial, and Vertical Websites

**Project Editor:** Jo Jones

**Commissioning Editor:** Kerry Laundon

**Assistant Editor:** Ben Kemble

**Development Editor:** Colette Holden

Copy Editor: Martin Key

**Technical Editor:** Roger Henderson

**Proofreader:** Dawn Bates

**Production Manager:** Daniel Mersey

**Publisher:** David Palmer

Cover Photos: © iStock / Michał Krakowiak

**Cartoons:** Rich Tennant (<u>www.the5thwave.com</u>)

**Composition Services** 

**Project Coordinator:** Kristie Rees

**Layout and Graphics:** Carrie A. Cesavice, Joyce Haughey, Andrea Hornberger

Indexer: Claudia Bourbeau

#### **Publishing and Editorial for Consumer Dummies**

**Kathleen Nebenhaus,** Vice President and Executive Publisher

Kristin Ferguson-Wagstaffe, Product Development Director

Ensley Eikenburg, Associate Publisher, Travel

Kelly Regan, Editorial Director, Travel

#### **Publishing for Technology Dummies**

**Andy Cummings,** Vice President and Publisher

#### **Composition Services**

**Debbie Stailey,** Director of Composition Services