

TIPP

TIPP Skills

We all experience crises in our lives. Sometimes these crises are big, like a divorce, death of a loved one or a being let go from a job. Sometimes these crises are small, like traffic jams, a long queue at the till, not knowing what to wear that day, or a fall out with friends.

TIPP skills help us to get to a more manageable emotional place for crisis survival. When you're at emotional breaking point, maybe the worst has happened or it was just the "last straw", TIPP skills can help. TIPP skills are designed to reduce intense emotional distress and help you to cope with your feelings.

TIPP stands for Temperature, Intense exercise, Paced breathing and Paired muscle relaxation.

TIPP skills help you to tip the scales on your emotions!



Temperature

When we're upset, our bodies often feel hot. This might be your whole body, your face or your hands, or pretty much anywhere else!

To reduce the intense emotion, we can reduce our temperature. You can do this by splashing your face with cold water, holding an ice cube, sit in front of a fan or sit in the car with air conditioning on.

Changing your body temperature will help you cool down—both physically and emotionally.

Can you think of any more ways you can try to reduce your temperature?



Intense exercise

Do an intense exercise to match your intense emotions. Not a marathon runner? That's ok, you don't need to be. Sprint down to the end of your street, go swimming for a few laps, do jumping jacks or run up and down the stairs.

Keep doing exercises until you've tired yourself out. Increasing oxygen flow helps decrease stress levels.

Plus, it's quite hard to stay dangerously upset when you're exhausted. Doing some intense exercise changes the chemistry in your body and helps to reduce the intensity of the emotions you are feeling.

Can you think of any more ways you can try to exercise?



Paced breathing

Even something as simple as controlling your breathing can have a profound impact on reducing emotional pain.

There are many different types of breathing exercises. If you have a favourite, use it as much as you need. If you don't, try a technique called "box breathing". This is where you breathe in and out in a pattern:

Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 4 seconds, breathe out for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, then start again. Continue to focus on this breathing pattern until you feel calmer. Steady breathing reduces your body's flight or fight response.

Can you think of other breathing exercises?



Paired muscle relaxation

There is a science to paired muscle relaxation which is very fascinating. When you tighten a muscle voluntarily, then relax it and allow it to rest, the muscle will become more relaxed than it was before.

Relaxed muscles require less oxygen, so this will help your breathing and heart rate to slow down—this is really going to help you reduce the intensity of emotions.

You can find muscle relaxation scripts over the next few pages. It does take practise, and you should practise when you feel calm and relaxed already so that you can do it without thinking when you need it.

Which exercises do you find most helpful?



Script 1

When you feel tense, upset, or nervous, muscles in your body tighten. By practicing tensing certain muscles in your body, you will learn to relax them. For this exercise, you need a parent to help you by reading the exercise below to you.....Now get comfortable!

Starting with your hands and arms:

1. Squeeze a Lemon



Pretend you have a whole lemon in each hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out! Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Squeeze hard! Don't leave a single drop. (Hold for 10 seconds.) Now relax and let the lemon drop from your hand. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed.

2. Arms and Shoulders: Stretch Like a Cat



Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat and you just woke up from

Script 1

a nap. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Now raise them way up high over your head. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher and try to touch the ceiling. (Hold for 10 seconds.) Great! Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.



3. Shoulders and Neck: Hide in Your Shell

Now pretend you are a turtle. Try to pull your head into your shell. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold it tight! (Hold for 10 seconds.) Okay, you can come out now. Feel your shoulders relax.



4. Back: Swing up High

Pretend you are on a swing at the park. Swing your upper body back and forth, back and forth. To get really high, use your arms to help you swing! Keep swinging! (Hold for 10 seconds.) Great. You're all done on the swing. Sit back and relax.

Script 1

5. Stomach: Squeeze through a Fence



Now pretend that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence. You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through. Suck your stomach in, try to squeeze it against your back bone. Get it real small and tight. Hold it as tight as you can! (Hold for 10 seconds.) Okay, you've made it! You got through the fence. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs.

6. Jaw: Chew that Carrot



Now, pretend that you are trying to eat a giant, hard carrot. It is very hard to chew. Bite down on it. As hard as you can. We want to turn that carrot into mush! Keep biting. (Hold for 10 seconds.) Good. Now relax. You've eaten the carrot. Let yourself go as loose as you can.

7. Face and Nose: Get That Fly off Your Nose



Here comes a pesky old fly and he has landed on your nose! Try to get him off without using your hands. Wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you

Script 1

can. Scrunch up your nose real hard and hold it just as tight as you can. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose, your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help you and they get tight too. (Hold for 10 seconds.) Good. You've chased him away. Now you can just relax and let your whole face go smooth.



8. Legs and Feet: Squish your Toes in the Mud

Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Squish your toes down. Push your feet, hard! (Hold for 10 seconds.) Okay, come back out now. Relax your feet, relax your legs, and relax your toes. It feels so good to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel warm and tingly.



9. Upper Arms

Hold your arms out straight, then bend them at the elbow. Try to get your wrist and shoulder to touch. You should feel

Script 1

your upper arm muscles going hard and tense. Keep squeezing your arms! (Hold for 10 seconds). Ok, now drop your arms by your sides and let them go completely relaxed.

Well done! Remember to practise this skill a lot, then it will work better when you need it. You could do it with friends, with your parents or record yourself reading it and follow your own instructions!



Script 2

Introduction:

Muscle relaxation means tensing and relaxing muscles in your body on purpose. Muscle relaxation is very helpful for us to do when we are cross, worried or feeling unhappy.

Your brain and your body are linked. If you feel cross, your body will show that you are cross. If you feel relaxed, your body will show that you are relaxed. Muscle relaxation helps your body to relax, which makes your brain feel relaxed too.

At first, muscle relaxation is difficult to use when we are cross. This means we have to practise a lot when we aren't cross or worried. You need to practise muscle relaxation a lot. Then you will be able to relax your brain when you are cross or worried.

So, let's practise! But remember, you should only tense your muscles a bit, this should not hurt:

Script 2

Sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes, and take a deep breath. As you breathe out, make your eyebrows frown and squeeze your eyes closed. Remember, you should only tense a little bit. Stay like this for 5..4..3..2..1. Notice to how uncomfortable your face feels. Now relax, notice that your face is more comfortable. Now, purse your lips. Stay like that for 5..4..3..2..1. Notice that your face is uncomfortable. Now relax, this might make your face feel warm because the muscles are relaxed.

Good job! Now, you are going to relax your neck. Tip your head backwards and notice that the muscles in the front of your neck are tight. Stay like that for 5..4..3..2..1 then relax. Good. Now, tip your head forwards like you're trying to touch your chin to your chest. This makes the muscles at the top of your back go very tense. This might feel uncomfortable. If it hurts, then don't tense quite as much 5..4..3..2..1. Now relax, your muscles feel calm and at peace.

Script 2

Great! Now for your shoulders. Lift your shoulders up as high as you can, try to touch your ears with your shoulders. Stay like this for 5..4..3..2..1. Notice how uncomfortable your shoulders feel. And now relax. Notice you feel so much more comfortable. Sometimes we tense our shoulders like this when we feel cross or worried, and we don't even notice! By practising, you will notice your shoulders doing this when you get cross or worried. Then you will need to do some relaxation to calm your body and brain.

Awesome, now for your arms. Lift your hands up to your shoulders. Squeeze the muscles in your upper arms. Hold this for 5..4..3..2..1. Now relax and feel your muscles getting much more comfortable. To tense your lower arms and your hands, make your hands into fists and squeeze the muscles in your hands. Look at the differences this creates in your hands. Your skin may go pale, or it may go very red. Your hands feel very uncomfortable and tight like this 5..4..3..2..1. Now, relax and let your hands drop by your sides. Notice the relief you are feeling now that you are relaxed.

Script 2

Well done! Now, you are going to tense the muscles in your back, then in your tummy. So, arch your lower back, 5..4..3..2..1. And now relax back onto the chair, notice how much more comfortable that is. Now, tense your tummy. Squeeze the muscles until your tummy goes hard 5..4..3..2..1. This isn't very comfortable is it? Ok, so relax your muscles and allow your tummy to relax. Notice how much calmer your brain feels now that your tummy is relaxed.

Nearly there! You're doing really well! Now, you're going to tense your legs. Put your feet flat on the floor and really push your feet into the floor. This makes the tops of your legs feel all tense doesn't it? Hold this for 5..4..3..2..1. Now relax. Notice a feeling of relief, feeling happy that you don't have to tense any more. Great. Now you need to keep your feet flat on the floor, then lift your toes up towards the ceiling. Keep your heels on the floor though. Notice how tight your calf muscles are 5..4..3..2..1. Now relax and let your feet rest comfortably on the floor. One more to do, lift your feet off of the floor and point your toes. Your legs should

Script 2

be straight and your feet should be pointed. This makes a lot of muscles in your legs feel tight 5..4..3..2..1, where can you feel tension? Great, now relax and let your legs drop to the floor.

Now just take a few moments to notice how relaxed, calm and happy your body feels. It may feel a bit warm; this is because you have used your muscles. Take 3 deep breaths in for 1..2..3 and out for 1..2..3, in for 1..2..3 and out for 1..2..3, in for 1..2..3 and out for 1..2..3. Let your brain and body relax.

Well done! That's all of the relaxation done. You've done a great job, how does your body feel? What is your brain thinking?

Well done! Remember to practise this skill a lot, then it will be more effective when you need it. You could do it with friends, your parents or record yourself reading it and follow your own instructions!

