

Relaxation techniques for The Third Space.

The Third Space was conceptualised by Dr Adam Frazer and comprises of three elements:

The First Space is the moment after a meeting/ event ends. Use this time to reflect on what you have just accomplished and make a note of key learnings and next steps.

The Second Space is the pause, the reset, the clearing the head. This see below for techniques to achieve this pause.

The Third Space is the preparation for where you will be going next. ie who are you meeting, what do you want to achieve, need to know.

Creating the best environment for relaxation:

If you can access some of the following when you are doing your Third Space relaxation it will increase the effectiveness:

- Fresh Air
- Lack of stimulation
- Motivation (yes you have to care)
- To keep to time, put your phone on aeroplane mode, headphones in your ears and set an alarm or timer on your phone.
- Comfort
- Direct sunlight
- No interruptions

Short relaxation techniques:

Breathing:

Remember all breathing techniques are aimed at slowing down your breathing, maximising the amount of oxygen entering all of your lungs and the carbon dioxide leaving your lungs.

It is advantageous to slowly count as you inhale, and slowly count as you exhale.

- Place your hands on your hips, with your fingers on your abdomen in line with your navel and slowly take a deep breath in. Feel your abdomen expand and your shoulders stay still. Repeat.
- Lie on the floor on your back, breath in through your nose and feel your tummy rise out through your mouth as your tummy falls
- Try with each breath to increase the count
- Try the reach out breathe app <https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/reachout-breathe>

Body:

Hot towel. Take a little towel immerse it in warm water wring it out and then simply drape it over your face and sit back with your eyes closed.

Nourishment:

If chosen wisely, food and drinks can help maintain focus and concentration between meals and meetings. Some simple examples include:

- A slow sip of water
- A very hot cup of herbal tea or milk, the wonderful thing about hot drinks is that they need to be drunk slowly.
- A small healthy energising snack, like a fresh or dried fruit, or handful of nuts.

Physical:

- Stand up straight and start to walk slowly and purposefully. Be aware of how you are walking, focusing on achieving a correct heel toe walking technique.

The following can be done in a sitting or standing position

- Take a moment to notice your posture and correct it. ie your feet are firmly and evenly placed on the floor, your spine is straight your shoulders are back, your head is in line with your spine and you are looking straight ahead. Take a few slow breaths and hold the posture for a short while

- Place both feet firmly on the floor, hold your body straight and then slowly raise your hands above your head being mindful to keep your shoulders down. Gradually lower your arms and then repeat.
- Adapt a small strengthening exercise from your regular regime, like tightening your core and practice it.
- Rotate your left shoulder, up, forward, down and back then repeat the rotation on the right side, the repeat with both shoulders together. Repeat the whole sequence in the reverse direction.
- Let your head fall slowly until your chin reaches your chest, then gradually return to upright position. Slowly tilt your head to left shoulder, then return it to an upright position, repeat on the right side. Then gently rotate your head in a circle clockwise then in an anticlockwise direction. Ensure your shoulders remain relaxed during this exercise.
- Slowly count to 10 as you bend over as if you are going to touch your toes (you may wish to have your back to a wall for privacy). Then once again slowly count to 10 as you uncurl your spine one vertebrae at a time till you are standing up straight. Plant your feet firmly on the ground and reach your arms up high to complete the stretch. Repeat.
- Lie on the floor and place your calves and feet on your chair and breathe slowly.
- Take off your shoes and place a tennis ball under the sole of your foot. Using slight pressure roll the ball so it moves from the front to the back of your foot repeat a few times then switch feet.
- Stand with your back against a wall- feel head shoulders and buttocks touching wall, breathe deeply and slowly raise your arms to shoulder height as you breath in. Slowly lower them as you breathe out. Repeat.

Imagery

- Look at an image that is in front of you (for example a picture on the wall, or the view out the window) and convert it to your relaxing image. In your mind's eye add the elements that make it relaxing, imagine you have stepped into the space and add the sensations from all your senses (sound, touch and taste)
- Save a photo on your phone, or in your pocket of a relaxing place the one that you associate with complete calm and take a moment to just look at it.
- Look at nature, either literally or from a pre-prepared series of images on your phone or computer.

Mentally stilling the mind:

- Pay attention to your surroundings: the three things activity:
 - Name 3 things you can see, 3 you can hear, 3 you can feel.
 - Then 2 you can see, 2 you can hear, 2 you can see.
 - Then 1 thing you can see, 1 you can hear, 1 you can feel.
- As you walk from one meeting or place to another literally count each time you place your foot on the ground and the number of steps you are taking.
- Count backwards from 1000 by a random odd number like 73.
- Do a crossword or sudoku puzzle
- Listen to your own calm playlist with songs that slow down your heart beat and invoke a feeling of relaxation.
- Listen to an audio recording of a sound that brings your joy, like your friend laughing, a cow mooing or a bird chirping.
- Go outside and walk around the block noticing the building numbers that you pass.
- Plan what you can do for someone else.
- Meditate
- Meditate with an app
- Read a few pages of your novel
- research the best app to minimise work distractions <https://zapier.com/blog/stay-focused-avoid-distractions/>

Mindfulness:

- If you have already mastered mindfulness practice it then think about how you can combine it with some of the strategies above or use it on its own. Perhaps mindfully breathing, eating something, or observing something tangible in your environment.

Scents:

Smells have a powerful relaxing associations for some people and energising or allergic connotations for others. So be mindful that what you use should be not too pungent.

- Smell a sachet of your favourite scent
- Use a scented hand cream
- Eat a fruit with nice scent.

Relationships:

Invest in your relationships beyond work:

- Message a friend or family member
- Call a friend or family member
- Make a time to meet a friend or relative.

Leisure:

- Research a leisure pursuit or an aspect of your leisure pursuit
- Block out time in your diary for your leisure activity.

Rest:

- Close your eyes and have a little nap.

Remember this list is not exhaustive and these techniques will compliment NOT replace a comprehensive approach to wellbeing.