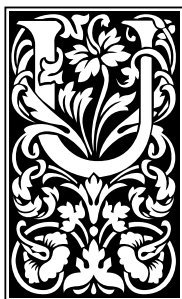


Chapter Thirty-Four

Scientific Relaxation and Normal Suggestion



nder the strain of work-a-day hurry and worry, your nerve vibrations are apt to become more and more intense and excited. They run away with you until, as the saying goes, “you are flying all to pieces.”

A good illustration of this condition of the nervous system may be found in a team of horses shying at some object in their path. The driver, panic-stricken, has dropped the reins, the frightened horses have taken the bits between their teeth and are dashing headlong down the road, until their master regains control, checks the animals in their maddened course, and compels them to resume their ordinary pace.

So the high-strung, oversensitive individual must gain control over his nervous system and must subdue his runaway mental and emotional activities into restful, harmonious vibrations.

This is done by **insuring sufficient rest and sleep** under the right conditions and by **practicing scientific relaxation** at all times.

The “nervous” person gets easily excited. Comparatively little things will cause an outbreak of intense irritation or emotional hyperactivity.

Usually, the victim of unbalanced nerves is of the high-strung, sensitive type, naturally inclining to more rapid vibrations on all planes, capable of greater achievement than the stolid, heavy, slow-vibrating person who doesn’t know that he has any nerves, but he is also in greater danger of mental and emotional overstrain and physical depletion as a result of the excessive and uncontrolled expenditure of life force and nervous energy.

Relaxation while Working

At first glance this expression may seem paradoxical, but experience will teach that it is not only possible, but absolutely necessary that we perform our work in a relaxed and serene condition of body and mind. The most strenuous physical or mental labor will then not cause as much exhaustion as light work done in a state of nervous tension, irritability, fretfulness or worry.

Relaxation while working necessitates planning and system. Most nervous breakdowns result not so much from overwork as from the vitality wasted through lack of orderly procedure.

Therefore, take some time to plan and arrange your work and form the habit of doing certain things that have to be done every day as nearly as possible in the same way (making sure that it is the right way) and at the same time of the day. Such orderly system will soon become habitual and result in saving much valuable time and energy.

Always cultivate a serene and cheerful attitude of mind and soul, taking whatever comes as part of the day's work, doing your best under the circumstances, but absolutely refusing to worry and fret about anything. Do not cross a bridge before you get to it, and do not waste time regretting something that cannot be undone.

Relaxation while Sitting

Sit upright in a comfortable chair without strain or tension, spine and head erect, the legs forming right angles with the thighs (the chair should be neither too high nor too low), feet resting firmly upon the floor, toes pointing slightly outward, the forearms resting lightly upon the legs with the hands upon the knees. This must be accomplished without effort, for effort means tension.

Dismiss all thoughts of hurry, care, worry or fear and dwell upon the following thoughts:

“I am now completely relaxed in body and mind. I am receptive to Nature’s harmonious and invigorating vibrations—they dispel the discordant and destructive vibrations of hurry, worry, fear and anger. New life, new health, new strength are entering into me with every breath, pervading my whole being.”

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Repeat these thoughts mentally, or, if it helps you, say them aloud several times, quietly and forcefully, impressing them deeply upon your inner consciousness.

After practicing relaxation in this manner, lie down for a few minutes' rest—if circumstances permit—or practice rhythmical breathing (see Chapter Twenty-Nine). Then return to your work and endeavor to maintain a calm, trustful, controlled attitude of mind.

If you are inclined to be irritable, suspicious, jealous, fault-finding, envious, etc., dwell on the following thought pictures:

“I am now fully relaxed, at rest and at peace. The world is an echo. If I send forth irritable, suspicious, hateful thought vibrations, the like will return to me from other minds. I shall think such thoughts no longer. God is love, love is harmony, happiness, heaven. The more I send forth Love, the more I am like God; the more of love will God and men return to me; the more shall I realize true happiness, true health, true strength and true success.”

Relaxation Before Going to Sleep.

When ready to go to sleep, lie flat on your back, so that as nearly as possible every part of the spine touches the bed, extend the arms along the sides of the body, hands turned upward, palms open, every muscle relaxed. Dismiss all thoughts of work, annoyance or anxiety. Say to yourself:

“I am now going to sleep soundly and peacefully. I am master of my body, my mind and my soul. Nothing evil shall disturb me. At A. M., neither earlier nor later, I shall awaken rested and refreshed, strong in body and mind. I shall meet tomorrow's tasks and duties promptly and serenely.”

Simple as this formula may seem, it has helped cure many a case of persistent insomnia and nervous prostration.

Having thus set your mental alarm clock, with a few times, practice you will be able to wake up, without being called, at the appointed time and to demonstrate to yourself the power of your

mind over your body.

The quality of your sleep and its effect upon your system depend on the character of the mental and psychic vibrations carried into it. If you harbor thoughts of passion, worry or fear, these destructive thought vibrations will disturb your slumbers and you will awaken in the morning weak and tired. If, however, you repeat mentally a formula such as the above, suggesting harmonious, constructive thoughts, until you lose consciousness, you will carry into your slumbers vibrations of rest, health and strength, producing corresponding effects upon the physical organism.

After a perfectly relaxed condition of body and mind has been attained, it is not necessary to remain lying on the back. Any position of the body may then be assumed which seems most restful.

My patients frequently ask what position of the body is best during sleep. It is not good to lie continuously in any one position. This tends to cause unsymmetrical development of the different parts of the body and to affect unfavorably the functions of various organs. It is best to change occasionally from one position to another, as bodily comfort seems to indicate and require.¹

Many persons fret and worry if sleep does not come as quickly as desired. They picture to themselves in darkest colors the dire results of wakefulness. Such a state of mind makes sleep impossible. If persisted in, it will inevitably lead to chronic insomnia.

Instead of indulging in hurtful worry, say to yourself: "I do not care whether I sleep or not! Though I do not sleep, I am lying here perfectly relaxed, at rest and at peace. I am strengthened and rested by remaining in a state of peaceful relaxation."

However, the "I do not care" must be actually meant and felt, must not be merely a mechanical repetition of words.

Nothing is more conducive to sleep, even under the most trying circumstances, than such an "I-don't-care" attitude of mind. Try it, and the chances are that just because you do not care, you will fall fast asleep.²

¹ We now know that no matter in what position you go to sleep, you will change this position many times while you sleep. It was found that the only individual who did not do this was totally insane. It seems that good old Nature is assuring us that we will not become angular by sleeping incorrectly.

² Having used this "I don't care" technique for over fifty years I can attest to its value.