

## Exercise 8: Autogenic Training

Autogenic Training puts Neuroplasticity to use where it can do us some good: in the employ of sleep. It's a given that we all want to have control over our own body. When we're ill, the sense that our body is failing us can allow negative self-talk to gain a foothold in the mind. "Insomnia is controlling my body; stress is controlling me ..."

This method for calming the overactive SNS was invented in 1932 by one Dr. Schultz, a German cardiologist. It is my understanding that he created it after growing sick and tired of seeing his patients die. That would be a strong motivator. Dr. Schultz formulated a program so his patients could learn to regulate their own blood pressure and heart rate.

First, massage Yintang and Under 3rd Toe twenty-four times in each direction, while taking deep breaths.



Do the exercise while seated, or lying down, whichever you prefer. Take in a breath and close your eyes. As you breathe in and breathe out, scan your body. If you're carrying tension, breathe into the areas of tension, be it your neck, your back, and so on. As you breathe, focus on this time that you've set aside to increase your control over your body, calmly and effortlessly. Let your hands rest on your lap and uncross your feet. With each long breath out, allow yourself to relax more deeply.

Now focus on your hands. Notice how your hands are relaxed, as they rest on your lap. And now, with each breath, your hands can become even more relaxed. Once you focus on your relaxed hands, notice how, when hands are

# Rewired for Sleep

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How to Repair  
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truly relaxed, they're very heavy. In fact, as you notice your relaxed hands you can even say to yourself, out loud or in your own mind, "My hands are heavy. My hands are heavy." Go ahead and say that, either aloud or in your own mind. "My hands are heavy. My hands are heavy."

Allow your hands to feel that sense of heaviness, as you breathe in, and breathe out.

Think of the word warmth, and as you focus on your heavy hands say to yourself, "My hands are warm. My hands are warm." And as you say that to yourself, notice the sensation of warmth in those hands. Actually say to yourself, "My hands are warm. My hands are warm." Notice the sensation of warmth.

As you breathe in, and breathe out, say to yourself, "My hands are warm and heavy. My hands are warm and heavy." Now, continue to breathe in, and breathe out, with each breath doubling that sensation of relaxation, enjoying this time with yourself. Now open your eyes. Take in a deep breath, fill the lungs with oxygen and reorient back into the room.

*This exercise is from the book Rewired for Sleep by Daniel R. Bernstein, L. Ac., CH published by Aconagua Press, 2019.*

*Along with other exercises from the book, and many other audio and video resources designed to help you release stress and anxiety, repair insomnia and achieve better sleep naturally, it can be downloaded from Dan Bernstein's website <https://rewiredforsleep.com> where you can also purchase the book.*

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