



# Dr. K's Guide to Mental Health

Practice | Yoga Nidra | Notes

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The practice of Yoga Nidra is best done at the beginning with audio guidance. Listen to the video audio while you do your first practice. The goal is to sequentially tighten and then relax a particular set of muscles. We'll start with one muscle group, then add another, and another. With each successive round, we'll be contracting and relaxing more of our body until we encompass the whole body.

## Step 1: Lay down on the floor

- Notice the points of contact between you and the ground
- As you inhale and exhale, notice how your body rises and falls
- With each inhalation, notice that your body rises
- With each exhalation, let your body relax into the ground
- Try to sink into the ground, fully relax into the ground

## Step 2: Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

- Each round of contraction and relaxation is accompanied by inhalation and exhalation.
  - Tighten on the inhalation, relax on the exhalation
- Start by inhaling and contracting your toes, then exhale and relax
- Then inhale and tighten your ankles + all the previous muscle groups, then exhale and relax
- Then inhale and tighten your calves + all the previous muscle groups, then exhale and relax
- Then inhale and tighten your thighs + all the previous muscle groups, then exhale and relax
- Then inhale and tighten your whole leg, then exhale and relax
- Take a break – one relaxing breath, nice and slow
- Now continue with:
  - Fists, Forearms, Biceps, Whole Arm
  - Buttocks/Hips, Abdomen, Chest, Back/Shoulder blades, Whole body from the neck down
  - Neck, Jaw, Face, Eyes, Forehead, and Whole-body contraction

Take relaxing breaths as needed – after the whole leg, after legs and arms, after whole body below the neck, and after whole-body contraction.



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## Step 3: Sankalpa & Hypnagogic State

- After the progressive muscle relaxation phase, sit in the space of the Hypno-yogic state
  - Feel the residual sensations in your body
  - Notice the calmness of your mind
  - Float...
- And now, implant a Sankalpa, if you have one
  - In the absence of a Sankalpa, you can repeat “Om” (aah-ooo-mmh) in the space of silence
  - And don’t worry – we’re working on how to help you find the right Sankalpa... it is just a bit complicated because this has historically been highly specific and requires the guidance of a guru. Stay tuned!

Over time, we want to increase the specificity of the PMR phase. You can focus on the left foot and right foot instead of both feet at once, lengthening the practice. Do so with the whole body will double the length of the PMR phase. Eventually, you can increase the specification to each tiny portion of the body – each toe, each finger.