

## Dr. Jaiyant Cavale

Clinical Psychologist  
MPhil, PhD (Clinical Psychology)  
RCI CRR No. A32093  
New Zealand Psychologists Board: 90-07466

## fiendish® therapy

18, Corporation Building, Residency Road,  
Bangalore 560025, India  
+91 88264 02788 | +91 80 2221 9745  
[jaiyant@fiendishtherapy.com](mailto:jaiyant@fiendishtherapy.com) | [fiendishtherapy.com](http://fiendishtherapy.com)

# Jacobson's Progressive Muscular Relaxation (JPMR)

JPMR is a simple yet effective relaxation technique that helps reduce depression, anxiety, and stress. You can learn it quickly with your clinical psychologist's help.

There are minor variations in the sequence and style. Still, the fundamental principle remains the same across methods: you either lie down or sit comfortably, relax your body, and tense and relax one muscle group at a time.

Typically, you begin with clenching your fists, move towards your upper body and face, and then finish the relaxation exercise by focusing on your legs.

The rationale behind JPMR is simple: when you're under duress, your muscles tense and contract. By progressively tensing and relaxing specific muscle groups, your body learns to relax on its own. As a consequence, you will also experience a sense of mental well-being and calmness. JPMR is usually used alongside other psychological and behavioural interventions. Make sure to follow your treating clinical psychologist's advice regarding the frequency and duration.

### Important Safety Instructions

- Tense only till you experience mild discomfort. Never until you experience pain or cramping.
- Skip or modify any muscle group that causes injury risk, pain, or strain.
- Stop immediately if you feel dizzy, short of breath, have chest pain, experience a rapid heartbeat, feel panic, or feel distressed.
- Practice in a safe place (not while driving, operating machinery, or in water).
- If you experience severe symptoms or a crisis, contact emergency services.
- Follow your clinical psychologist's specific instructions on frequency and duration.

Here's a basic script that may help you to try on your own, before you're taught (and corrected) during sessions.

**Note:** *Count five as you slowly tense, retain the tension for five more seconds, and take five seconds to release each muscle group gently. It should take about 15 to 20 seconds per muscle group.*

- Lie on your back with your arms resting comfortably on the bed. Make sure you're wearing loose-fitting clothes.
- Clench your fists together and feel them tense. Hold the tension, then slowly release your fists.
- Raise your forearms to clench your biceps, and feel the tension around that region. Hold and release slowly while observing your biceps relax.
- Rest your arms on the bed and tense your triceps. Hold, release.
- Raise your eyebrows as if you're frowning, and feel your forehead wrinkle up and tense. Make sure the rest of your face isn't tense. Slowly lower your eyebrows, and feel your forehead relax.
- Close both your eyes and feel your eyelids press against your eyeballs. Slowly open your eyes while you sense the tension ease.

- Press your lips together slowly and feel the discomfort. Slowly release the lips.
- Clench your jaws. Hold the tension, then release.
- Press your tongue against the palate. Hold your tongue in the same position, then release slowly.
- Bend your neck backwards slowly without hurting yourself. Feel a sensation of mild discomfort. Hold your neck in this position, then release slowly.
- Bend your neck forward while your head rests on the pillow. Feel the tension, and release slowly.
- Shrug your shoulders up and hold them there. Release slowly. You may feel your abdomen tense up, too, when you shrug your shoulders, and that's ok.
- Clench your buttocks, feeling the tension in your buttocks and pelvic muscles. Remain in that position, then slowly release.
- Tighten your thigh muscles (left and right) and feel the tension. Release slowly.
- Tighten your calf muscles. Hold and release.
- Bend your toes towards your ankle and feel the tension in your feet. Hold the tension, then release slowly.

Once you've completed all the muscle groups, you may feel tired or drowsy. It's ok to drift into sleep.

**Note:** *JPMR does not require you to believe in it. Even if you find it basic and unconvincing, it eventually begins to work.*