



## Below is an edited transcript of the “Misophonia Treatment With Progressive Muscle Relaxation” Video (10:38) With Tom Dozier

Hello, I'm Tom Dozier, and this video is misophonia treatment with PMR. PMR stands for Progressive Muscle Relaxation and was developed in the early 1920s by American physician Edmund Jacobson to help patients manage stress and anxiety. There's this term: I feel very tense. That relates to muscle tension; we experience it when we feel tense. Originally, PMR was a series of tightening and relaxing 200 different muscle groups in the body. But since that time, we found that we can get the same benefit by working only 15 to 20 muscle groups. PMR is just one way of obtaining a state of deep relaxation. I want to give credit to the source of this information. It's from [The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook by Edmund Bourne](#).

If we look at what it means to have a physiological state of deep relaxation versus stress or panic, this is what you will find physically or physiologically. You will have a decrease in your heart rate, respiration rate, breathing, blood pressure, tension in your skeletal muscles, your metabolic rate, and your oxygen consumption, and you will actually have a reduction in your analytical thinking. This is not a thinking state.

There are a number of benefits from daily deep relaxation, and you get these benefits regardless of how you do the deep relaxation. Here are some of the benefits that you will get with daily progressive muscle relaxation. You get reduced generalized anxiety. It prevents the accumulation of stress. You get increased energy and productivity. You get improved concentration and memory. It reduces your fatigue and insomnia – you sleep better. It reduces psychosomatic disorders such as high blood pressure, migraines, headaches, asthma, and ulcers. And you have increased self-confidence, reduced self-blame, and increased awareness of your feelings. And the reason you have an increased awareness of your feelings is that we take our feelings from our body in a number of ways. And if your muscles are always tense, then you're losing some of the input for feelings such as feeling calm, relaxed, happy, or tense, which have different states of muscle tension. So you have increased awareness of your feelings. These benefits occur from any type of daily deep relaxation.

Specifically for Progressive Muscle Relaxation and misophonia, which is why you're listening to this video, is that with Progressive Muscle Relaxation, you're going to have an improvement in your overall sense of well-being. And anytime you have an increased level of wellness, it will reduce your misophonia symptoms. But that's just one benefit for misophonia. That's not the primary reason for using Progressive Muscle Relaxation. The other benefit that you get from Progressive Muscle Relaxation specifically is that it gives you the ability to relax your muscles after your trigger. We find that anger has a physiological component to it, of tense muscles. And so if I'm angry (mentally), but my muscles are relaxed, it plays a trick on your brain. Those are inconsistent events. Tight muscles go with anger; relaxed muscles go with calm. So by just willfully relaxing your muscles after a trigger, you can drastically reduce the anger that follows a trigger.

The other thing that you find is that you can relax your muscles before a trigger. If you know you're in a situation where you're going to be triggered, you can relax your muscles before the trigger, and that will actually make the trigger less powerful. If your initial physical reflex, (which I talked about that in another video) is a skeletal muscle reflex, then relaxing before the trigger will make that physical trigger reflex less severe. It will actually help change your little lizard brain in terms of progressively reducing your misophonic symptoms – your trigger response. Also, if you want to use the Trigger Tamer app, you will have much faster results if you can relax your muscles during the trigger taming process. That will speed up the process of repatterning (rewiring) your lizard brain.

Here are some guidelines for Progressive Muscle Relaxation. First, it's really best to do it twice a day if you can– morning and night, especially for the first week to 10 days. Once a day is sufficient, but it will take longer for you to get see the benefit of PMR. You need a quiet location with no distractions and 20 to 30 minutes to do Progressive Muscle Relaxation. To start, it's going to take at least 20 minutes. Once you are proficient, you can complete the exercise in 10 minutes. It is best if you do it at a regular time, and on an empty stomach. You need to find a comfortable body position using a sofa, a bed, a recliner, or lying on the floor. You don't want any tight clothing. This is a time that you do not want to worry or think about anything else. You really want to have a more passive, detached attitude of just being there and letting it happen. You have to do the work, but you be unemotionally involved. You want to be more of an observer than concerned or thoughtful about the exercise. Observing the way your muscles feel is an important part of PMR.

To do a PMR session, you simply follow a guided audio. You start with a few deep breaths. Then you tense a muscle group for 7 to 10 seconds. You hold it tight. You don't want to strain, but you want to hold it really tight. You concentrate on the muscle. Feel and visualize the tension. Then you abruptly relax that muscle. Keep it relaxed for 15 to 20 seconds, and you'll feel the limpness. You feel the lack of tension. You note the difference between tense and relaxed. And then you repeat that for each muscle group in your body that you're going to use for this exercise.

Remember, there are many general benefits from Progressive Muscle Relaxation, but Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a powerful treatment for misophonia, and that's why you're going to be doing it. The main benefit for misophonia is that it lets you relax your muscles on demand. You can only do this after you have developed the skill of relaxing your muscles. It takes 14 days to learn the skill of relaxing your muscles, and even then, you will get better with practice. Instead of PMR (Progressive Muscle Relaxation), maybe you should think of it as MRP (Muscle Relaxation Practice). That is what you are doing each day, PRACTICING relaxing your muscles. You are forming neural connections in the brain so that when you say "relax," you can actually relax your muscles. The ability to do this doesn't happen; it's a skill. It is not a concept. So you have to plan on doing MRP for 14 times at least to make sure that you have started to develop the actual skill. Then, when you're triggered, you want to just relax.

Remember, it also improves your overall well-being, which reduces the impact and severity of your Misophonia. Another great benefit is that once you've learned this technique, you can also use it when you know you're going to be triggered, especially if you have an initial physical misophonia reflex that is a skeletal muscle. You can use it on those muscles, particularly to relax and change your little lizard brain.

Now, here is your homework assignment. Go to [misophoniatreatment.com](https://misophoniatreatment.com) and look up the Progressive Muscle Relaxation guided audios. (You can also find the audio clips at Section 7 of this webpage: <https://misophoniacenter.org/progressive-muscle-relaxation-and-applied-relaxation/>) There's one just under 30 minutes long from Dartmouth University, and I suggest you start with it. It emphasizes focusing on tightness and relaxation. Do it two or three times. Then take one of the shorter ones with less talking. Do it twice a day.

Thank you for watching this video on Misophonia Treatment with PMR, Progressive Muscle Relaxation. I hope you've found it useful, but you won't really know how useful it is until you try it for 14 days. If you would support us in the Misophonia Treatment Institute, we would greatly appreciate it. We will use those monies for education, misophonia awareness, research, and development of treatment. So thank you very much.

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