

# **I AM SO TENSE**

Norman Vincent Peale

Your trouble indicates that you are tied up, taut, drawn up tight like a rubber band. But understand this fact: tautness is probably not in your actual nerves or in your physical body. It is in your mind. The tense thoughts in your mind make your body feel tense because the nerves obey the thoughts.

A cure is to fill the mind with habitual peace thoughts rather than mental attitudes of tension.

Practice daily the process of draining or emptying the mind of thoughts that make you tense. Do this by using the following affirmation: "I now empty my mind of all irritation, all frustration, all hate, all worry, all impurity." As you do this, visualize a stream of impurities flowing out of your mind.

Follow the above by a second affirmation: "I am now filling my mind with peace, with love, with purity, with calmness, with faith." As you do this, form a mental picture of a pure stream of thought flowing down a channel into your mind, cleansing and refreshing it. Perform points three and four in this lesson at least twice every day.

Practice systematic exercises of relaxation to reduce muscle tensions derived from thought tension. One simple method for relaxation is to stop occasionally and take three deep breaths. As you exhale say, "I am breathing out tension thoughts." As you deeply inhale affirm, "I am breathing in peace thoughts."

Sit in an easy chair, place your feet squarely on the floor. Let your head fall back against the head rest, imagine that little lead weights are on your eyelids. Open your eyes and conceive of the lead weights as pulling your eyelids shut. Let the muscles of your face relax by thinking some quiet thoughts. Notice how your face feels rested.

Practice imaginative visualization by bringing into your mind pictures of peaceful scenes. Examples are, a full moon shining down upon a snow-covered earth; or a quiet stream flowing through a beautiful meadow on a sunlit summer afternoon. Practice holding such pictures in your mind for a minute or two when you feel tense.

**Make a list of peaceful and quieting words and periodically say them over to yourself. Repeat these words slowly, expressing their full melody. Make the saying of them as musical as possible and meditate upon each word. Suggested words are: tranquility, serenity, imperturbability.**

**Honestly face and eradicate any guilt feelings or sinfulness, for it is out of these poison pockets that tension often develops. There can be no peace of mind unless there is also peace of soul.**

**Eliminate, by the process of forgiveness, any ill will, hatred, resentment and jealousy. These are evil mischief-makers that keep you stirred up and in a turmoil in the essence of your nature. When you truly forgive, they will be driven off and, like a healing balm, peacefulness will come into your mind and pass through your entire being-physical as well as emotional.**

**Underline in your Bible all passages expressing the peace of God. Commit these to memory and often say them over. As you do so conceive of their healing quietness as touching your entire personality with that ineffable peace which is the true cure for tenseness.**