



Tension & Trauma Releasing Exercise®

For more relaxation, psychological, emotional
& physical *wellbeing*.



Explanation Tension-Releasing-Exercise®

What is TRE®?

Tension-Releasing-Exercise® (TRE®) is a series of physical exercises designed to release the tension in the body caused by stress and trauma through a natural neurogenic tremor process.

In the event of a dangerous situation, i.e., an experience that is potentially traumatizing or exceeds coping mechanisms, energy and tension-generating chemicals are released, protecting the body by tensing various muscle groups and preparing it for one of three emergency responses: Fight, flight or freeze.

Shivering is a natural mechanism of the body to release the strong tension and excess energy generated in the organism in a dangerous situation. Shivering, trembling and other involuntary movements help the body to retain a state of calm and balance.

Often those chemical substances are not used, because in nowadays stressful situations (e.g. conflict, road traffic, etc.) we rarely flee or fight. As a result, the organism remains in a feedback loop and uses the substances to contract muscles to hold the excess charge and release it at a later time.

If these muscles do not get the opportunity to do this, a chronic state of tension develops. If the body remains in such a state of danger, many bodily functions are suppressed (e.g. immune function, cell renewal, etc.).

The state of tension in the muscles sends a signal to the brain that the danger is not yet over, keeping the body in a state of danger. Because of the communication between the body and the brain, the person also remains psychologically in a state of protection and defence which suppresses psychological growth, development and learning.

The excess tension in the body can be released through the TRE® exercises by eliciting the body's own involuntary movements through purposeful pre-fatiguing the involved muscle groups.



Explanation Tension-Releasing-Exercise®

Scientific Background

TRE® was developed by Dr. David Berceli, an American biogeneticist and psychotherapist, with the aim of supporting the body in processing traumatic experiences.

The research results of the American psychologist and biophysicist Dr. Peter Levine (Somatic Experiencing) show that mammals react to shock experiences or traumatic situations with numbness (the so-called dead centre reflex). After surviving the shock experience, the rigidity dissolves and the whole body begins to tremble. This trembling is considered by Dr. Levine as a self-healing mechanism of the body to restore the inner balance after the shock. If the body cannot dissipate the traumatic energy by trembling, it remains frozen in the body. The body then continues to respond as if the traumatic threat is still present.

Building on Dr. Levine's findings, Dr. Berceli developed the Tension and Trauma Releasing Exercises. The exercises are used to make the body tremble and release traumatic energy that is bound up in the body.

What happens in the body during TRE®

According to Berceli, the psoas muscles play a central role in the physical process of trauma. These muscles are located in the centre of the body. They connect the back to the pelvis and legs. If a traumatic event occurs, these muscles contract to protect the vital organs.

The tremor caused by TRE® releases the tension in this deep-seated muscle group. This can then return to a balanced state. According to Berceli, the central nervous system sends signals to the brain that the threat has passed.





Explanation

Tension-Releasing-Exercise®

Who should practice TRE®

TRE® is not only helpful for people who have experienced trauma. Most people report relaxation after doing the exercises. TRE® can thus be used whenever one feels tense or stressed. For instance, it is recommended to practice TRE before going to sleep.

TRE® should always be learnt under the guidance of a trained provider. Training as a TRE® provider at NIBA e.V. includes weekend seminars, trauma education, practice hours and exams over a period of at least 2 years.

To gain confidence in the technique, two sessions a few days apart are recommended. Once TRE® has been learnt, it can be practised alone. A provider can be consulted at any time to deepen the process or work more specifically with interventions. TRE® can take place in groups of up to 12 people.

TRE® as a series of physical exercises can be adapted to any age and fitness level and can generally be performed by anyone who is advised by a doctor to engage in sport or physical activity. In case of doubt, a doctor should be consulted beforehand.

How to practice TRE®

It is recommended to complete all exercises before the shaking process. However, as the body becomes more familiar with the tremor, it will eventually no longer be necessary to do the exercises before each session. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the process has a different quality if the exercises have been completed beforehand.

At the beginning, 10-15 minutes of shaking on the floor is adequate to get the body used to the process. You can do this once a week or as required if you feel you want to release tension. After 2-3 months, you can gradually increase this period up to 40 minutes. In your process, keep a friendly, open and curious attitude towards the sensations and emotions you observe.

It is recommended that you regularly seek the guidance of a certified provider, as we also fall into patterns during the shaking process that can be resolved through targeted interventions by a trained provider.

TRE® Exercises



