

THE Self-Help Workbook



28 EXERCISES
FOR BETTER
SELF-HEALTH

ALL YOU NEED
TO BE THE YOU
YOU NEED TO BE

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THE ROAD TO THE BETTER YOU

Welcome to the only exercise book you will ever need, a self-help workbook that puts the mental back in mental health.

If you suffer from fatigue, depression, piles, anxiety, or suffering itself...this book is for you. The plain fact is that these are really only symptoms of a much bigger problem, an underlying syndrome that causes them all. Modern researchers call this underlying syndrome Egophobia, the irrational fear of one's self.

Egophobia is one of the modern world's most insidious afflictions with broad implications for your psychological and emotional well-being. But take heart!

The exercises outlined in this book have been carefully designed to help you conquer this fear and lead a happier and more productive life. Yes, you *can* overcome Egophobia and start living your own life instead of some pale imitation. Remember: The only thing standing between you and the life you want to live... is *you!*

Start by cutting out the button on the opposite page and wearing it as you do the exercises. Note that it may be worn in one of two positions. With the thumb pointing up it symbolizes terrific feelings, healthy optimism, the positive you. When the thumb points down, it represents lousy feelings, pessimism, the negative you. (A third, horizontal position is useful when hitching rides but that is a different matter.)

Try wearing the button in the down position before you begin each exercise. Then when you complete the exercise, and for the rest of the day, switch it to the up position. This simple tool will visually underscore the change in your self-attitude.

We are so sure that you will find this program of exercises self-helpful that we offer this promise...if you don't feel better about your self after trying the program for one week, then you are completely beyond any help whatsoever! We guarantee it.

So let's get started...

EXERCISE #1

GET ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR SELF

Everyone knows that the self is a big part of our lives, but too often we are unfamiliar with it, even treating it like a relative who has overstayed a welcome.

Therefore the very first step in this program is to open up lines of communication with the self and to show a real intention to work together.

1. Position a mirror outside the door to your room.
2. As if responding to a knock, open the door, look yourself straight in the eye and say “Hi! Good to see ya! C’mon in.”
3. Offer yourself a seat, then place the mirror comfortably in another chair.
- (A cup of tea here is always a good ice-breaker.)
4. Engage in 3-10 minutes of informal and polite banter with your self.



EXERCISE #2

LEARN TO LIVE WITH YOUR SELF

The self can be fun to the self but only if we adopt a positive attitude. In fact, most negative feelings stem from thinking that the self is basically a bonehead. On the other hand, positive self-feelings develop when we think the self is pretty cool or at least worth a lunch date. Therefore, the next step in the program is to practice accepting the you that you are and not the one you wish you weren't. Or something like that.

1. Position yourself in the middle of a room that has a mirror.
2. Walk slowly and casually towards the mirror and come upon your self as if this were the last thing you expected.
3. Face yourself squarely and repeat the following psycho-dialogue:
“Do I know you?”
“Of course you do. I'm you!”
“I am?”
“Yes, you twit. Don't you recognize me?”
“Oh yes, good to see you again. And don't call me a twit.”
“Good to see you too. And sorry about that twit remark.”
“No problemo, amigo!”

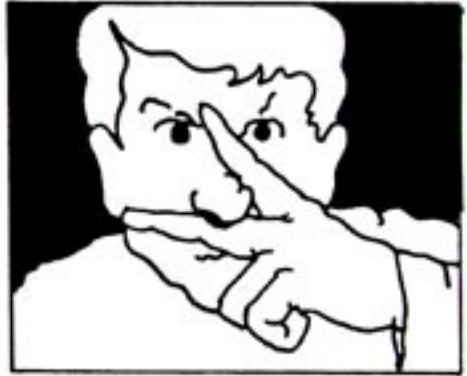


EXERCISE #3

CUT OFF YOUR NOSE TO SPIE YOUR FACE

Once we accept our selves, we are in a position to shift from lousy to terrific self-attitudes. Do you often ask yourself questions like “Who am I?” or “What am I doing?” or even “Why am I doing it so badly? Statements like these are filled with hidden lousy self-attitudes that are self-defeating. They prevent us from getting along with ourselves and make the time we spend together unbearable. To eliminate these lousy self-attitudes, we must acknowledge their harmful results.

1. Stand in front of the mirror and adopt an air of troubled concern.
2. Repeat the following phrase out loud: “I have a lousy self-attitude.”
3. Then perform the illustrated movement using the first two fingers of your left hand.
4. Finish by deciding never to have that kind of foolishness again.



EXERCISE #4

SHOWER YOUR SELF WITH AFFECTION

The simple fact is that terrific feelings begin at home with – you guessed it – terrific self-attitudes. Let's face it, if you can't stand yourself then who needs you? Not you certainly because you're crummy to be around. Of course, it is not easy to develop a terrific attitude about yourself. It takes practice; in simple lay terms, you have to learn to love yourself.

1. Stand erect with you feet together, your arms loosely at your sides and your back to yourself.
2. Bring your right arm over in front of your body, across your chest, and place your right hand sensually on your back. Do the same with your left arm and hand.
3. In this position, simulate a warm and affectionate embrace for thirty seconds.
4. Then release and continue doing what you were doing.



EXERCISE #5

STOP PICKING ON YOUR SELF

Think of some of the great minds throughout history or even some of the puny ones too. Do you think they picked on themselves all the time? Of course not. But you with your lousy Egophobia do it all the time, right? Makes sense since the mind is the place all your thoughts about yourself originate and so lousy thoughts lead to lousy attitudes. There is only one way to break that habit and that is to stop picking on yourself. Right now.

1. Stand in front of a mirror and engage in the usual critical pickiness that you do so well.
2. Really get into it...think of all your mistakes, errors, dumb moves. Pick, pick, pick. Don't relent.
3. Now suddenly and abruptly stop it and don't do it any more.
4. There now...aren't we feeling much better?



EXERCISE #6

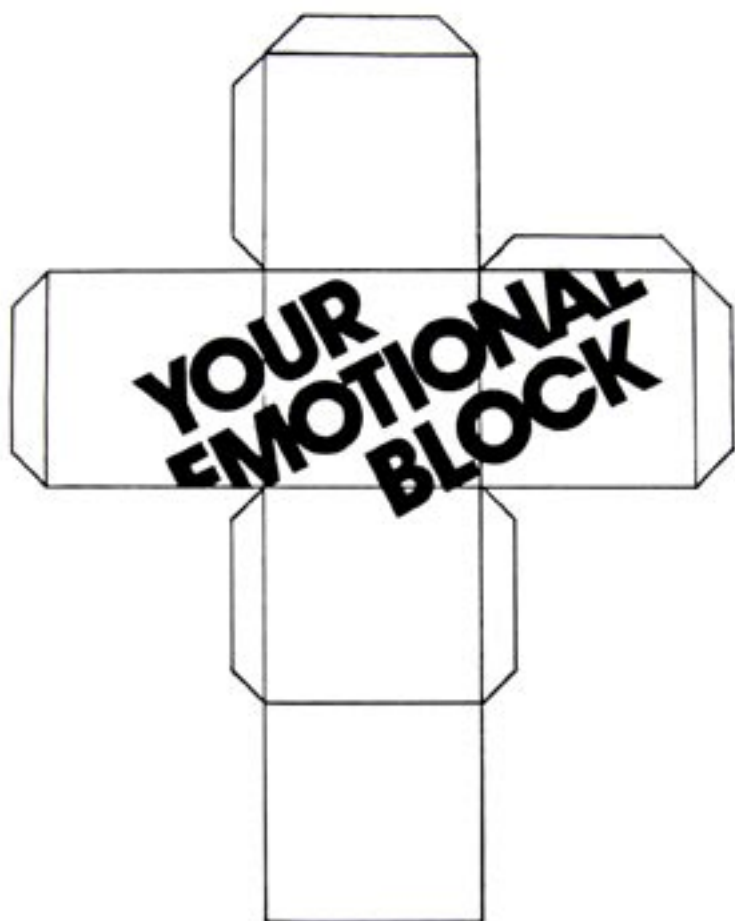
DON'T BE AN IDIOT

Terrific self-attitudes are not just about the way you think about yourself.

They are affected by your behaviors too. One of the most damaging kinds of lousy self-behavior is acting like an idiot. You know what we mean. The fact is that behaving like a fool, goon, jerk, or schmuck can only add to lousy self-feelings. It's inevitable. So the next exercise is designed specifically to help you change this kind of negative behavior.



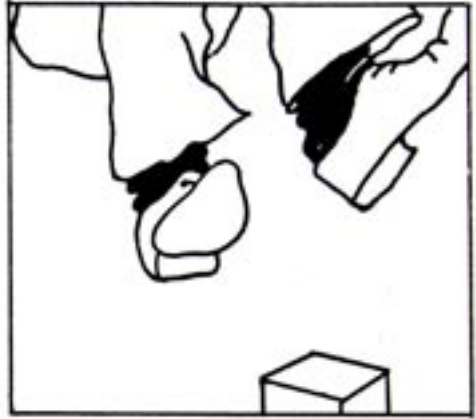
1. Pick a situation in which you are clearly and obviously behaving like a complete idiot.
2. Catch yourself doing that and suddenly bring yourself up short.
3. Glare at yourself with a withering sneer designed to humiliate the idiot in you. Hold that for a few uncomfortable minutes.
4. Now stop being an idiot and don't start again. So simple.



EXERCISE #7

BREAK YOUR EMOTIONAL BLOCK

One of the reasons we get stuck in Egophobic patterns is that our emotions get all turvy-tpsy. We can't express the good ones, let the bad ones seep out in nasty ways. It's a real mess. Think of it as a big fat gob of gunky feelings blocking your emotional pipeline. But take heart...this is a gob that can be eliminated with a simple exercise.



1. Cut out the visual self-aid on the opposite page and assemble it into a block.
2. Imagine all your stinky self-feelings as being inside the block. You might even write a few of them down on the block.
3. Place it on the floor and approach it with an air of firm resolution.
4. With as much vigor as you can muster...stomp it flat as a pancake.

EXERCISE#8

GET HOLD OF YOURSELF

Is “Oy vay” not just an expression but a way of life for you? Of course it is otherwise you would not need this program of self-help.

Anxiety attacks, night sweats, the heebie-jeebies and even the jim-jamjeeters. These are all common symptoms of Egophobia and the best and simplest way to get them under control is to get hold of yourself.



1. Have an anxiety attack. Right now. Go on, don't hold back.
2. Once you are really freaking out, bring your left arm around behind your head and firmly grab the right side of your face.
3. Clutch your upper throat and jaw with the fingers of your right hand.
4. Hold this position until the attack subsides or you pass out from the stress. Either way, proof that you are still in charge.

EXERCISE #9

SNAP OUT OF IT

Did you know that depression is the major cause of bad feelings in unhappy people. Of course you did. Are you one of those people? Obviously you are because Egophobes are rampant with all sorts of negative vibes, depression among them. But there is actually a very simple way to eliminate depression from your life. Not drugs, not sex, not reality TV but by simply snapping out of it.

1. Adopt the posture, attitude, and demeanor of your depressed self.
2. Sag, slouch, succumb. Really get into it as only you can. Wallow.
3. Now quickly and without giving yourself any time to reflect...perk up!
4. Chin up, head up, mood up up up!
5. Maintain this cheery poise for as long as possible and don't forget to keep practicing!



EXERCISE #10

BE NICE TO YOURSELF

Along with depression and lousy self-feelings comes a really nasty need to dump on the self, treat it like dirt, float mean rumors. Egophobes are crummy friends because they bring everyone down, but they are worst to themselves. This exercise is designed to change that pattern and to begin to make the self more welcome, more comfortable and to show a positive side to your stinking personality that got you here in the first place.

1. Try holding the door for yourself from time to time.
2. Hold a chair for yourself at a restaurant or even in your own kitchen.
3. Take that heavy package, hold the bus, offer to pay for the cab.
4. And don't forget to acknowledge these efforts with a "thank you" and a "you are too kind." now and again.



EXERCISE #11

GIVE YOURSELF A PAT ON THE BACK

One of the biggest reasons that most people fail at self-help is that they do not acknowledge their own success. Sound familiar? Too often we dwell on the bad and gloss over the good. So take a moment out to try this exercise in which you can practice acknowledging the good work you have done in the effort to overcome your own Egophobia.

1. Extend your right arm across the front of your chest and over your left shoulder.
2. Place your right hand as far onto your back as you can.
3. Take a deep encouraging breath.
4. Now execute a friendly and heart-warming pat on your back for all the fine effort you have made.

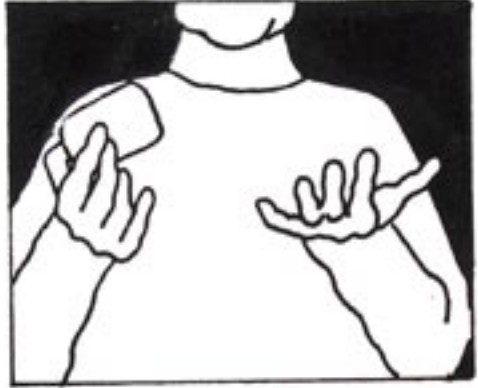


EXERCISE #12

HAND IT TO YOURSELF

Self-support is of course a keystone of any self-help program. In fact, giving yourself credit for your own hard works is one of the best ways to build up positive self-feelings. That winning grin, that pat on the back, those words of encouragement are all part of this strategy. The following exercise will also help you develop a technique for rewarding your own positive actions in a way that you can use at any time and for any appropriate moment.

1. Write down something nice about yourself on a piece of paper.
2. Now pick up the paper with your right hand.
3. Standing straight, open your left hand with the palm up.
4. Using a grand sweeping gesture, deliver the paper into your open hand.
5. Close the fingers of your left hand around it and nod knowingly.

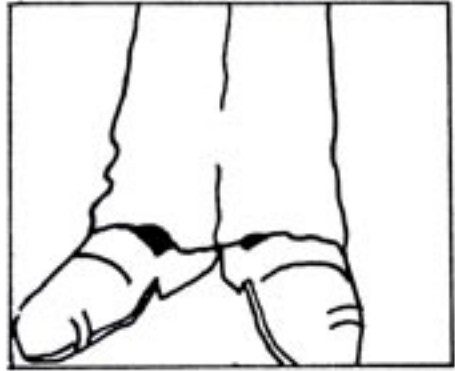


EXERCISE #13

PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD

Too often we see Egophobics stuck in their own self-loathing. How do we know this? They look like hell. Standing like jerks, slumping into their own depression, and never showing their best side to the world. It's an old saw but true that putting your best foot forward goes a long way towards making a better impression and, in turn, feeling a whole heckuva lot better about yourself. Try this exercise and you will see what we mean.

1. Stand with your arms at your sides and your feet together in your usual slouch of defeat.
2. Now very slowly build up an aura of confident determination.
3. Take your best foot and place it firmly a few inches in front of the other foot.
4. If you can't decide which foot is best, see our companion volume *Decision-Making for Putzes*.





EXERCISE#14

CELEBRATE YOURSELF

A common misunderstanding among Egophobics is that the opposite - egotism - is an equal problem. Nothing could be further from the truth. While egotism can obviously be annoying, a little dose of it goes a long way towards overcoming negative self-attitudes. Sure it's hard to be yourself, feel what *you* feel, and think your own thoughts and so on. Harder still to be proud of all that. But for the struggling Egophobic...it is absolutely necessary.

1. Start by cutting out the visual self-aid on the opposite page.
2. Sit comfortably in a chair with an air of unfocused nonchalance.
3. Now lift the visual aid up and wave it proudly as you take a few moments to wallow in self-regard.
4. Experiment with other aids for tooting your own horn, pumping your own ego, singing your own praises, etc.

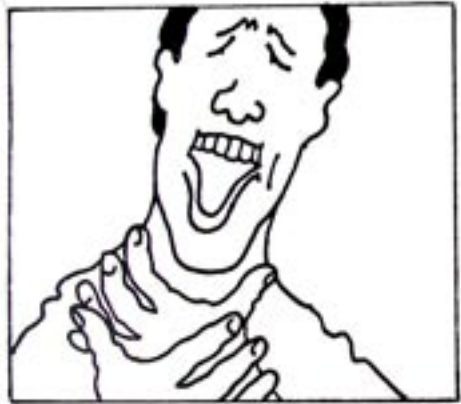


EXERCISE#15

GET THAT MOOD UP

Sure you feel lousy all the time. Why wouldn't you...you dislike your self, bore yourself to tears, and think of yourself as a complete nincompoop. And who could argue? But a little known fact about Egophobia is that even the slightest change in your mood can have a huge effect. Here are a few ways to get that mood up and change your whole attitude about yourself.

1. Practice an infectious grin...in front of the mirror or even while waiting for the movie to start. This can even have a positive effect on others as they pick up your own positive selfness.
2. Try out an irresistable laugh. Next time you are in a situation in which a laugh is appropriate, don't just giggle like a ninny but really get into it. Laugh like the bats have left the belfry and just see what happens.
3. Play your teeth.



EXERCISE#16

GET UP ON THE RIGHT SIDE

How many times have you gotten up to start the day full of pep and verve and watched it all dribble down into the sinkhole of life? Plenty we'll bet. After all, that's why you are a miserable Egophobe in the first place. Right? And how often have you heard that familiar refrain "who got up on the wrong side of the bed today?" Well one of the secrets to having a good day is getting up on the *right* side of the bed and here is some practice in that basic strategy.



1. Note which side of the bed you normally get up on.
2. Now keep doing that. Huh??
That's right, keep getting out of bed on the *same* side.
3. Why? Because there is no right side so whichever side you get up on *is* the right side anyway.
4. But do it because *you've* decided to!

EXERCISE#17

GET OFF YOUR BUTT

It is a little known fact that action - or what is more technically known as self-doing - is a basic strategy of winners, doers, and self-lovers. After all, action is to living as ketchup is to French fries...without it it's just some sliced potato.

You, on the other hand, can barely get out of bed let alone conquer the world. So here is a helpful exercise to give you practice in giving yourself that all important boost.

1. Sit down in a chair and adopt your usual lumpy demeanor of stubborn immobility.
2. Now quickly put your feet together, shift your center of balance, lean forward and...
3. Stand up!
4. Revel in the moment by swinging your derriere jubilantly in the air.



EXERCISE#18

GIVE YOURSELF A KICK IN THE ASS

Sometimes a boost to the ego or a shot in the arm is simply not enough. You know the routine. Stuck in the muck or in a rut, and no matter how much you try, you cannot get yourself going. You're nothing but a lump looking for an excuse. When that happens, the following exercise is necessary, as a way of practicing the art of taking a chance, going with the flow, getting yourself moving again.

1. Stand up straight with your hands hanging loosely at your sides.
2. Bring either leg (but not both!) up behind you in a forceful manner, bending at the knee
3. Now finish by bringing your heel into sharp contact with the base of your rump.
4. Turn around as if surprised by the jolt and say to yourself "thanks, I needed that." Now go about your business.



EXERCISE#19

TWIST YOUR OWN ARM

Sufferers of Egophobia often find themselves frozen in indecision. In fact one of the earliest signs of creeping self-loathing is an inability to make a plan and carry it through. Weeks on the couch, in bed, or hiding in the can are sure signs that indecision is taking over your life and when those moments strike, try the following exercise to change course.



1. Think about something that you want to do but can't.
2. Grab your left wrist with your right hand but with a firm grip not a wimpy clasp.
3. Now forcefully exert a clockwise twisting motion and force your left arm behind your body.
4. Keep your arm in this awkward (and hopefully painful) position until you give in to your own demands.

EXERCISE #20

SAY NO TO NO AND YES TO LIFE

Yes and no...two of the most powerful words in all of self-help literature. But it is an amazing fact that most sufferers of Egophobia use these back-words. They say no to yes and yes to no - when what you really want to do is just the opposite. Make sense? No? Then the following exercise should help you straighten this out.

1. Stand in front of the mirror with an expression of stern resistance.
 2. Think about the rotten things that have happened to you in your life.
 3. Now say *no* to them, no to negative thinking, no to all the no's of your miserable existence.
-
1. Now adopt a manner and demeanor of positive upbeat optimism.
 2. Think about the good things, the good times, the good vibrations.
 3. Say yes yes yes and keep saying it until you are blue in the face.





EXERCISE#21

BLOW YOUR TOP ONCE IN A WHILE

Egophobics, as we have seen, are typically afraid of their own emotions. This makes sense since our emotions are one of the primary ways that we know how to feel about stuff. Positive feelings are great but even negative ones like anger, rage, and outrage are important to experience because running away from them only creates more problems for the self.

This exercise should help you to get in touch with these strong emotions.

1. Stand in front of a mirror and get peeved.
2. We mean really pissed off, on the verge, at the end of your tether.
3. Now deal with it.

1. Cut out the visual self-aid on the opposite page.
2. Write your name on it so that you know it is your top and no one else's.
3. Now blow on it with all your might.



EXERCISE#22

STOP STRUGGLING WITH YOURSELF

In order to overcome your Egophobia, it is important that you get out of the way of your self. In other words stop stopping yourself from moving ahead and moving on.

Here is a classic exercise that you can practice privately and remind yourself of an important Egophobic fact...that the only thing standing in the way of your happiness is your own self.

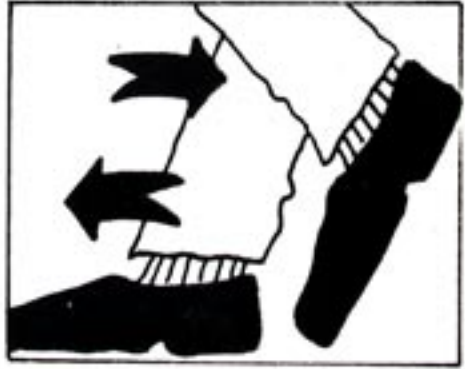
1. Stand at attention and then step forward in an effort to make a move to do something.
2. Meanwhile firmly grip your collar and stop yourself from finishing the step.
3. Now...let go of yourself! Free your grip. Give yourself a break for chrissake!
4. You can also try this kind of maneuver when you stop your hand from reaching for something you want.



EXERCISE#23

TAKE TWO STEPS FORWARD...

Negative thoughts, dumb behaviors, half-baked schemes. That's you in a nutshell. Doesn't it often seem like you a taking two steps forward and one step back? Sure it does...you're a confirmed Egophobic. So here's a little exercise that will let you practice getting out of this self-defeating behavior.



1. Start walking forward, complete one full step, then shift your weight.
2. Take a second step.
3. Now instead of moving forward with the other foot, take a step backwards and keep repeating this until you get damn sick of it then...
4. Stop it because it is a completely idiotic thing to be doing.

EXERCISE#24

TELL YOURSELF HOW GREAT YOU ARE

You may not believe it but you are great. No really, you are. How do we know? Because greatness is nothing more than the self telling the self that it is great. Think it, do it, believe it... and it is.

Try this exercise to prove the point and you will see that even after a few attempts at it, your own inner greatness will start to become as plain as the nose on your face.

1. Stand in front of a mirror with that normal expression of timid wimpiness on your face.
2. Now adopt a vocal tone somewhere between cocky self-assurance and outright obnoxious self-adoration.
3. Tell yourself how great you are, how you can do anything, how the world is your oyster and only little minds are stopping you from ruling it.
4. Sweet.



EXERCISE #25

BREAK BAD HABITS

Let's say you are behaving like an idiot, a spoiled brat, a fool and a clod. Not very far-fetched is it? After all, with your lousy self-image, the only way you can think to make your presence known is by being a jerk. But there is more to life than that and you will soon find that these are merely bad habits of behavior that can be eliminated with practice.

And by eliminating them, you free yourself up to act in ways that will make your self proud rather than gag.



1. Go on...do it. Act like a complete idiot. And really get into it. Be obnoxious, stupid, annoying as only you can be.
2. Now just stop it.
3. Why? Because you don't need it,. It's not helping, nobody likes it. Tell yourself that.
4. Don't do it again.

EXERCISE#26

**KEEP BOTH FEET
ON THE GROUND,
BUT GO THE DISTANCE**

Egophobics are often confused about realistic expectations. Not as bad as politicians maybe, but bad enough. Plans versus reality, whim versus wisdom. This exercise is designed to help you find that delicate balance between being realistic in your goals and forceful in your efforts. Knowing your limits but still moving forward towards a clear future.



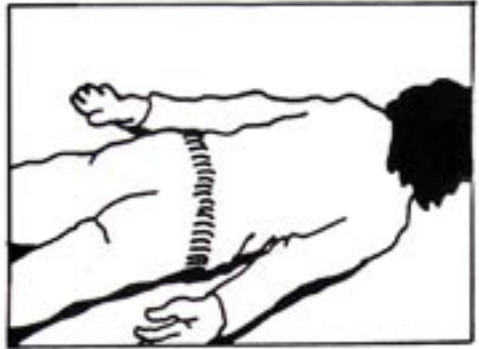
1. Start by planting your feet firmly on the ground. No tiptoes, no dancing around like a ninny.
2. Now determine a goal a few feet or yards away from where you are standing.
3. Boldly walk the entire distance to the end and don't stop until you get there.
4. Feel good about it.

EXERCISE#27

TAKE IT EASY

Studies show that relaxation is one of the most important strategies for people without any tension in their lives. Like magic, the more you relax, the more relaxed you feel. This kind of release of stress and tension is very conducive to building up positive feelings about the self, which is why drugs are so useful.

But hey...you don't need drugs to achieve a state of unconscious blither. All you need is this simple exercise.



1. If you are sitting, relax all your muscles, let the energy drain from your body, and collapse into a deep torpor.
2. If standing, relax and drop like a sack of rice to the floor.
3. Stay there.
4. Don't get up until someone makes you.