Relaxation Response

Term was coined by Dr. Herbert Benson, Harvard Cardiologist in the 1970s.

A state of relaxed, passive attention to a repetitive or absorbing stimulus that turns off the “inner dialogue” thereby decreasing arousal of the sympathetic nervous system.

Components of the Relaxation Response:

1. Nonjudging (receptive) awareness*
2. Mental focus, i.e. repetition of a word, phrase, prayer, or image*
3. Comfortable position
4. Quiet environment
5. 15-20 minutes
6. Once or twice a day

Mind Body and Relaxation Response resources:

Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine, Mass General Hospital- www.mgh.harvard.edu/bhi
- training, mind body programs, relaxation CDs

Deepak Chopra- www.chopra.com
- world renowned mind body expert and meditation practitioner, down load and stream guided mediations

“My stroke of insight” by Jill Bolte Taylor, PhD- www.TED.com-
- 20 min lecture about the experience of her stroke. Fascinating! Keep a tissue handy.

Relaxation Response, by Herbert Benson,
- NY Times best seller, first book introducing Relaxation Response

Relaxation Revolution, by Herbert Benson, MD
- Relaxation Response and other Mind Body techniques, specific medical symptom guide