We have recently been discussing results from a recent science report titled ‘What science has shown can help young people with anxiety and depression: identifying and reviewing the 'active ingredients' of effective interventions’ [1]. The next part of this series that we will discuss is ‘relaxation techniques’.

What are relaxation techniques?

Relaxation techniques involve different strategies to help us feel less stressed [2].

Why are relaxation techniques important?

Relaxation techniques such as meditation, yoga and breathing exercises are commonly used around the globe to help young people with their mental health. They are popular because they are easily accessible and often cheap or free to use.

What did the research show?

The researchers looked at all of the evidence available addressing whether relaxation techniques are effective. They found that relaxation effects work very well for anxiety, and worked reasonably well for helping with depression and reducing general distress.

What did young people think about relaxation techniques?

Young people found relaxation techniques very easy to understand, learn and use.

How could a young person could try relaxation techniques?

If you are feeling anxious, upset or low in mood, you could try focussing on your breath moving in and out of your mouth or nose as you breathe. This might help you feel better and relax.

Are there any other resources to help with relaxation techniques?

The following website has some good resources to help with relaxation techniques: https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/for-self-care/relaxation-techniques/

**References**

1. Wellcome. *Report summary: What science has shown can help young people with anxiety and depression*. 2022; Available from: <https://wellcome.org/reports/what-science-has-shown-can-help-young-people-anxiety-and-depression>.

2. Hamdani, S.U., et al., *Effectiveness of relaxation techniques 'as an active ingredient of psychological interventions' to reduce distress, anxiety and depression in adolescents: a systematic review and meta-analysis.* Int J Ment Health Syst, 2022. **16**(1): p. 31.