



Relaxation

Relaxation exercises are effective in teaching children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other special needs how to self-regulate and develop self-control over his body, mind and behaviour. Relaxation techniques support children to develop longer attention spans, become more focused, experience greater relaxation, reduce in anxiety, and develop a better body awareness.

The iMsocial™ program incorporates activities that will focus on three primary areas of relaxation:

1. The **Progressive Muscle Relaxation** technique helps to relax the muscles into a deep relaxation by the tensing and relaxing of them. This technique is supportive of increased body awareness.
2. The **Guided Imagery** relaxation technique focuses on the relaxation of the mind. The guided imagery helps to focus and direct the thoughts, feelings and attention to one area.
3. The **Yoga Relaxation** technique uses breathing, postures and meditation activities. The breathing activities and controlling the breath, as well as the posture activities, such as strengthening, stretching and calming of the body, together with meditation activities to quiet the mind, all increase the body awareness and self-control over the movement of body and mind.

References

Delgado-Bridges, T (2012), *Yoga for Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Curriculum with a Sensory Approach that Incorporates Coping Strategies for Stress and Promotes Physical Fitness*, Project for M.A. Education (Special Education), California State University, Available: <<http://csus-dspace.calstate.edu/handle/10211.9/1948>>, (21 June 2013).

Goldberg, L., (2004), 'Creative relaxationSM: a yoga-based program for regular and exceptional student education', *The International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, 14:1, pp. 66-68.

Kenny, M., (2002), 'Integrated movement therapyTM: yoga-based therapy as a viable and effective intervention for autism spectrum and related disorders', *International Journal of Yoga Therapy*, 12, pp. 71-79.

Radhakrishna, S., Nagarathna, R., Nagendra, H. R., (2010), 'Integrated approach to yoga therapy and autism spectrum disorders', *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, 1:2, pp. 120-124.

Zipkin, D., (1985), 'Relaxation techniques for handicapped children: a review of literature', *The journal of Special Education*, 19:3, pp. 283-289.