

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF: STRESS-REDUCING WITH ROY G. BIV

Dr. Wally Schmitt

www.DrWallySchmitt.com

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Note: *The Stop Your Pain Now!* Emotional Stress Reduction Technique is our first line of defense when confronted by stressful factors, whether they be part of our daily life or long-term stressors. This article provides another adjunctive procedure that you may use to help reduce your stress.

RELAX WITH ROY G. BIV

An excellent relaxation technique can be used which helps to organize the nervous system and brain and hence lower stress levels when they rise to a bothersome level. This technique is based on the color spectrum of natural light.

The colors of the light spectrum, which is what we see when light which goes through a prism or in a rainbow, can be easily remembered by the mnemonic ROY G. BIV as if it were a person's name. These letters stand for:

R = Red
O = Orange
Y = Yellow
G = Green
B = Blue
I = Indigo
V = Violet

Our brain interprets colors in this exact same fashion. That is, the area for recognition of red is next to the area for orange is next to the area for yellow, and so on. By consciously thinking about each of the ROY G. BIV colors in this order, one automatically activates these areas of the brain in a very orderly fashion. The result is a calming or centering effect which counteracts the agitating or scattering effects of stress.

This relaxation technique can be done anywhere and in several different ways. For example:

Imagine you are walking up a flight of steps. The first one is red and you are standing on it. But you cannot leave it until you can see nothing but the red step in your mind. Once you are totally focused on the red step, you may then step to the next step which is orange. Once you have totally focused on the orange step, you can step up to the yellow step. And so on through green, blue, indigo, and violet steps. At the top of the steps is a very bright white light which you can see after you have completed focusing on the violet step.

Another method is to imagine climbing a hill walking through fields of colored flowers that surround you completely and tower over your head. The first field is full of all red flowers. Once you see and feel the red all around you, you may walk into the next field which is full of orange flowers. And so on through yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet fields. Finally you reach the top of the hill and there is a great white light (like the sun) present as you emerge from the violet

field.

You can do the same thing imagining you are swimming under water in colored water pools. Once you are surrounded by one color, dive into the next pool.

There are many other versions of this relaxation technique. You can use your imagination.

You may find that one or two colors are particularly difficult to focus on. These probably represent stressed areas of your body or brain, and you should work extra hard on seeing and feeling these colors before you move to the next one.

Sometimes, when achieving focus on one of these difficult colors, you may notice an involuntary deep breath or sigh take place. This is a good sign.

Most people report a definite relaxation effect from doing the "Relax with ROY G. BIV" exercise. You can take as long or as short a time as you like. Just make sure to completely focus on each color before you go on to the next one.