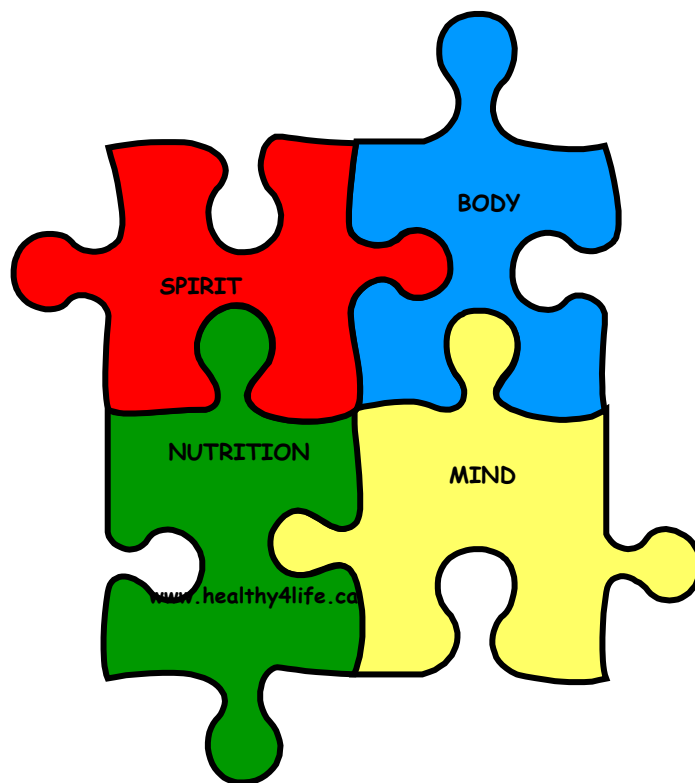


# **Nutrition and Lupus**

## **Book 3: Relaxation Plus**

### **Living Well With Lupus**

**KNOWLEDGE AND HOPE**



**Cathy Ferren RHN**  
Registered Holistic Nutritionist



# Nutrition and Lupus Book 3: Relaxation Plus

1<sup>st</sup> Edition - Digital

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**Warning** This book is a distillation of current nutrition science and stress management, as interpreted by Cathy Ferren based on her understanding and experience. Its purpose is to educate and inform those who wish to better understand the role of nutrition in health. It does not diagnose any disease or ailment. The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to be caused, directly or indirectly by the information contained in this book.

## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to lupus patients everywhere, and all of my treatment teams, instructors, spiritual advisors and support team members over the years.

Each of you shares in my journey with lupus with all its challenges and rewards. I am humbled by and grateful for the wisdom and knowledge each of you has given me.

## **Introduction**

I share this third book in the series with you, as a product of my experiences learning to live with chronic illness, and learning to use nutrition to improve my symptoms and wellbeing.

I may not be able to control the disease process, but I can have a beneficial effect on my physical symptoms, psychological wellness and my spirituality through good nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices.

My hope is that in these pages you will find practical ideas to incorporate into your own wellness plan so you can live well with lupus.

## **Other Books by Cathy Ferren**

Nutrition and Lupus Book 1: The Basics

Nutrition and Lupus Book 2: Movement

Nutrition and Lupus Book 4: Your Treatment and Support Teams

Nutrition and Lupus Book 5: Spiritual Health

Smoothies Easy and Nutritious

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## **Relaxation Plus!**

### **What is it all about?**

Relaxation techniques can help you feel better physically, emotionally and spiritually! It involves all 3 parts of holistic nutrition body, mind and spirit.

Relaxation techniques are skills or things you do to help relax your mind and body. The goal could be many things; to reduce pain, to quiet racing thoughts, to lower anxiety, lift depression, to improve the quality or quantity of sleep, to reduce stress, to breath deeply oxygenating your tissues, to improve digestion, constipation or diarrhea, to relax tight or contracted muscles or any number of physical or emotional strains on the body, mind or spirit. As with any skill, the more you practice, the quicker and deeper you will relax.

The techniques are as varied as your imagination. The basics will include different types of breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, autogenics, mindfulness, thought stopping techniques and creative imagery or guided visualization. To get the most benefit from these techniques, you will also be introduced to some easy ways to become more aware of your current symptoms, tightness, pain, thoughts and feelings.

Relaxation is something you have control over. The more you practice the various types, the more benefits you will get.

### **Your Relaxation Environment**

Choose a place for your relaxation where you can shut out all disruptions, noises, phone calls, smells, pets and other people. This will be your own special place, just for yourself. If it is a room, you want to have a comfortable chair or bed and the ability to block out extra daylight with blinds or curtains. If it is a part of another room, isolate your relaxation space from the business of the rest of the household or office as much as possible.

### **Caution**

“Also, bear in mind that some people, especially those with very serious psychological issues and a history of abuse, may experience feelings of

emotional discomfort during some relaxation techniques. Although this is rare, if you experience emotional discomfort during relaxation techniques, stop what you're doing and consider talking to your doctor or mental health provider. “ 1

## **Breathing Basics**

Breathing exercises cover a range of techniques such as deep breathing, rhythmic breathing, diaphragmatic breathing and many more. The ability to focus in on specific body sensations like breathing can help the body work efficiently and heal more quickly.



## **Diaphragmatic Breathing**

This exercise helps you become aware of your breath, feeling both the inhalation and the exhalation. It can be done with your eyes either open or closed. Allow your breath to flow, be natural and unforced.

Notice your breathing right now. Observe the movements and sensations that occur in your body as you breathe in and out. Place a hand on your abdomen, and feel the abdomen rise as you inhale and fall as you exhale.

Visualize in your mind's eye, gently drawing the breath into your abdomen and then letting it go easily, not forcing it out, letting go of tension. Take in only as much air as you need in each breath and then let it out.

Feel your inhalation expand your abdomen and lower back, then your chest. Make the breaths very slow and deep, but not to the point of strain. Allow the muscles in your body to soften, to go limp and relax as you feel the rising and falling of the breath and abdomen. Practice during random moments in your day, at home, work or on public transit.

Try diaphragmatic breathing for five or ten minutes. Write down how it felt or any sensations in your body.

## Breathing to a Count

Breathing to a count increases our ability to breathe slower and deeper.

Sit or lie down comfortably. Inhale for a count of two seconds, then exhale for a count of two seconds, saying to yourself inhale one, two, exhale one, two.

Once you get the idea and feel of breathing in rhythm, start an increasing progression; inhale for a count of three seconds and then exhale for three seconds. Next, inhale for a count of four seconds and then exhale for four seconds.

Continue, increasing the number of seconds, until you reach a comfortable limit, then work your way back down. If you got as high as inhaling and exhaling to a count of twelve seconds, go back to eleven, then back to ten, and so on, until you reach a very comfortable pace, maybe five seconds and maintain that pace.

In one or two weeks you will notice measurable increase in the number of seconds you inhale and exhale, and a deeper sense of relaxation each time you practice this.

Try breathing to a count for 5 minutes. Write down how it felt in your body and any thoughts or feelings you had.





## The Flame Meditation

The next time you have a thought or feeling that bothers you, or you have overwhelming pain or nausea, try this quite simple yet powerful meditation.

This works with a candle flame, electronic candle, fireplace flames or campfire flames.

Get a candle or other flame source with a good sized flame and put it down on a table, away from flammable objects such as furniture, papers or curtains, or use the flame from a fireplace or campfire.

Sit close to the flame about 300 to 450 mm (12" to 18") from your face.



Light the candle or turn on the flame of your choice.

Get in a comfortable position either sitting or lying down with your legs, arms and wrists uncrossed.

Take a gentle, deep breath to quiet and center yourself. Imagine yourself surrounded by the loving light of the flame.

Gaze into the flame. Try not to blink.

Imagine that the flame is taking any negative thoughts out of your mind and thoughts, into the flame, and up into the atmosphere.

Gaze into the flame for one to three minutes, until you feel a relief and a release from the thought or feeling.

It only takes a few minutes and the warm, relaxed feeling that comes helps clear the thoughts and feelings from our awareness.

Try the flamed meditation for 3 minutes. Then write down how it felt, any body sensations, thoughts or feelings.



## **Creative Visualization**

Creative visualization or guided imagery uses pictures, memories or scenes created in your mind, similar to a daydream, to place yourself in another time and place. It uses the power of your imagination to significantly reduce stress and physical symptoms. You can visualize or imagine yourself in a relaxed state and imagine relaxation spreading through your whole body.

You can create and record your own script or scene, or use one from one of the many books, tapes or videos on relaxation. Loosen clothing, sit or lie down in a quiet place and close your eyes gently without squinting or tension. Relax tense muscles as much as you can before you start.

With a script, either written by yourself or others, read it over several times to get used to the details or have a family member read it slowly, and try to imagine the scene in your mind. With a recording, play it at a comfortable volume and try to follow the scene in your mind. Include all of your senses, imagine the sights, sounds, smells, texture, temperature, taste and touch. Notice any movement, colours, shapes, or a sense of space.

You want the experience to be pleasant and safe. The location can be real or imaginary. Use positive affirmations, short statements or thoughts that affirm your ability to relax. Avoid negative language and grammar, use “I can relax at will,” instead of “I am not tense.”

Allow 10-20 minutes for a guided imagery exercise. Try to practice three times a day. It is easier first thing in the morning and at night lying in bed.

Once you have practiced the skill, you will be able to do it almost anywhere. Imagery and visualization is a tool that can be used with its full length script or create just one scene for a quick fix at work, in waiting rooms, and before or during a stressful event.

Build your script around scenes that are peaceful, safe, comfortable and calming for you, your very own special place indoors or outdoors. Give your special place a private entry and fill it with detail for all your senses. Choose your strongest sense if you have trouble creating a scene with all the senses. Allow yourself to be creative.

Think of your favourite place. Is it light or dark, indoors or out, warm or cool, wet or dry, a natural or man made place? What does it smell like? Write down what sounds you were aware of while visualizing this place.



## Scenario Writing for Guided Imagery or Creative Visualization

It is helpful to work on 3 different scripts. Pick at least 3 different locations, preferably in nature. Write a word to describe each location on the top of a piece of paper using a separate page for each location. You can add more pages if you need them. This draft is your starting point. It naturally makes you mindful, more aware of your surroundings. Do each of the following steps for each script.

Describe the physical environment. Write the following things down.

- Where are you? What does it look like? Are you inside or outside? What colours do you see? What shapes do you see? What textures do you see? Is it light or dark? Is it a particular time of day or night?
- What do you smell? What would you like to smell? Does the air have a taste? What is the temperature and humidity? What is the weather?
- What sounds do you hear? Are the sounds calming, peaceful, energizing or something else? Do you sense any electrical or magnetic energy?
- What is in your scene? Are there animals, people, trees, flowers, plants, water, sand, rock, soil, grass, buildings, or other structures?
- How does it feel to look at this scene? How does it feel to be in this scene, to enter this place, to leave it?
- When you put yourself in this scene, what thoughts come in to your mind? Do these thoughts bring you an awareness of any sensation in your body? What sensations? Describe them as best you can. Do these thoughts bring any emotions or feelings to your awareness? What feelings?
- Knowing what thoughts and feelings this scene brings to mind, write down anything you want to change. Make a note beside things that you do NOT want to change, things that seem essential.
- What is your overall impression of this scenario?
- Is there anything you need to add to make it more safe, more calm, more peaceful, more energetic, more alive?



- Choose or create a scenario that is personally peaceful to you.

A space that feels comfortable and safe.

Safety is physical, psychological and spiritual.



# USE ALL SENSES

Smell	Odour	Intense	Light	Dark	Bright	Dim	Fog
Taste	Sound	Temperature		Hot	Cold	Cool	Warm
Wet	Dry	Humid		Day	Night	Open	Enclosed
Black	White	Colours	Shade	Sun	Wind	Breeze	Stillness
Nature	Building	Forest	Field	Trees	Flowers	Animals	Meadow
Water	Lake	Ocean	River	Pond	Stream	Brook	Waterfall



## Scenario Spaces or Places

These can be real places that already exist or imaginary places that you create. They can be abstract, whimsical or tangible. The basic essential elements are safety, sight, sound, smell, touch and taste.

Many people develop multiple scenarios. Some examples of different types or themes for scenarios are: peace, relaxing, energizing, restorative, happiness, joy, loving, empowering, quiet, safe, uplifting, supportive and motivating.

Creativity enables you to make the scenarios you need. You have no physical limitations in your scenarios. You can do anything you want. This group of scenarios may change from time to time or year to year. This tool changes with you as you grow and heal.

I am loved

Hope

I am powerful

I am trustworthy

Success

I am good

Joy is mine

### Mantras and Affirmations

These are two great tools for achieving success and improving your life. Negative mantras and affirmations can harm you. Choose positive words and statements. The technique may not work for everyone, however it is worth trying and does not cost anything.

Affirmations and mantras are positive words, thoughts or statements that you use to: inspire you, feel special, feel important, feel worthy of love, overcome self sabotaging behaviour, believe in yourself, feel smart or feel intelligent in order to achieve improved self esteem, overcome negative thoughts, manifest positive life changes and to bring a real sense of peace, relaxation or reduced anxiety.

Example: **I love and approve of myself.**

A useful site to get started is [www.louisehay.com/affirmations/](http://www.louisehay.com/affirmations/)

Mantra is a Sanskrit word from an ancient language. It can be a repeated sacred sound, syllable, word or phrase. Mantras are believed to have both psychological and spiritual power. Mantras can be used as affirmations or to enter a deep state of meditation or relaxation. There are many books, web sites, images and music to help you learn to use mantras.



### **Body Awareness and Body Scan**

This is about tuning in or noticing what is going on in your body. It means that you notice you have restricted movement, pain, tension, relaxation, swelling, heat, chills, shallow breathing, rapid heartbeat, slow heartbeat, pins and needles or any other sensation. You let go of thoughts and feelings so that your attention is free to notice the physical state different parts of your body are experiencing.

A body scan is a conscious scan or focus on each part of your body, one part at a time. For example, starting at your head, you notice any tension, pain or relaxation in the top of your head, your forehead, your jaw, your ears, your throat, your neck, etc. and then you move on down your body to the next part and continue observing each part until you have scanned your whole body from head to toe. With some practice you will be able to complete a total body scan in a couple of minutes.

When you first start, try scanning half your body. Write down what you



sense so that you can review it later and see what things have changed. Changes can occur in pain levels, stiffness, relaxation, range of motion and comfort.

There is no right or wrong state, only the state that is. Whatever you sense is what you now are aware of and you can choose to do something about it if you need to change it. For example, if you sensed tension in your hand, you could try a progressive muscle relaxation technique, apply heat or cold, or try moving or exercising it. This is the power of awareness and scanning. It allows you to see what is going on in your body without judgments or thoughts. It can be a helpful tool in your symptom journal for your medical team as well.

A body scan is very useful to do before you do a relaxation technique and then repeating it again afterwards so that you can notice the difference in symptoms and keep a record if that would be helpful to you.

### **Autogenic Relaxation Exercises**

It comes from within you. You repeat words, phrases or suggestions in your mind to help you relax tension in muscles and other soft tissues. Autogenic training is a systematic program to teach your mind and body to react and relax quickly to your thoughts or verbal commands. This allows you to return to a more balanced, relaxed state. You can choose to induce the feelings or sensations of warmth and heaviness whenever you choose.

Try it. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position in a place where you will not be disturbed. Passively concentrate on the words, phrases or suggestions of warmth and heaviness in different parts of your body. Do this exercise for about 3 minutes.

Before you start, check that your whole body is comfortably supported. Do not cross your arms, legs, wrists or ankle. Scan your body to make sure your position is free of tension. Add pillows, rolled up towels or other supports under your arms, legs, knees, neck or head to make sure your body feels well supported. Choose 5 or 6 lines or statements for each session.

There are two themes, heaviness and warmth/coolness.

Example 1:

- My right arm is heavy and warm.
- My left arm is heavy and warm.
- Both of my arms are heavy and warm.
- My right leg is heavy and warm.
- My left leg is heavy and warm.
- Both of my legs are heavy and warm.

Example 2:

- My arms and legs are heavy and warm.
- My heart beat is calm and regular.
- It breathes me.
- My solar plexus is warm.
- My forehead is cool.

Example 3:

- My whole body is heavy and warm.
- Pain leaves me, melts away.
- My heart beat is calm and regular.
- My mind is calm and quiet.
- It restores me.

You would repeat each phrase 3 times and then go to the next phrase.

## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation is a technique of systematically tensing and releasing your muscles, skin and fascia to create whole body relaxation.

Dr. Edmund Jacobson described this technique in his 1930's book titled Progressive Relaxation. It is based on the fact and premise that complete physical relaxation is the absence of tension.

Get in a comfortable position. Loosen any tight or restrictive clothing. Take off your shoes. It is most effective lying down, however, you can practice this progressive muscle relaxation anywhere.

- Awareness: concentrate on an area of your body, notice any tension, a sensation of tightness, cramping or pain.
- Tense the muscles and hold the tension for a few seconds.
- Let go of the tension.
- Awareness: notice any relaxation or lowered tension in that area of your body. You are learning to recognize the feeling of relaxation.

Here are some areas of your body to practice with, focusing on the tension and then the relaxation.

- Each forearm, first the right, then the left.
- Each upper arm.
- Forehead, then eyes, upper cheeks and nose, followed by your lower face, jaw and cheeks.
- Neck.
- Chest, shoulder and upper back.
- Abdomen and lower back.
- Each upper leg, then each calf.
- Each foot.

Use all or some body parts at any time during the day or before you fall asleep. With practice you can do progressive relaxation quickly.



## Hypnosis

“During hypnosis, the conscious part of the brain is temporarily tuned out as the person focuses on relaxation and lets go of distracting thoughts.”<sup>2</sup>

Self hypnosis skills can help you be less aware of pain messages, slow racing or obsessive thoughts, lower anxiety and help you relax your entire body. Many psychologists teach individuals and groups how to fine tune self hypnosis for their specific conditions. There are also several self help books on hypnosis. As with other skills, the more you practice hypnosis, the greater relief you will get.

Inductions are things you do to start a hypnosis session. They often use a focal point which can be inside your mind if your eyes are closed or a physical point such a particular spot on a wall, ceiling or floor if your eyes are open. An object, photo or artwork can also be a focal point for induction.

Self hypnosis is a great tool that you can use anywhere for a minute or two, or for longer when you have the time.

## Massage

Massage utilizes pressure to act on the body with fingers, hands, elbows, knees, forearms, feet or a device. Most professional massage is done lying down on a massage table or on a mat on the floor, sitting in a massage chair or in a warm water therapy pool. Massage is used to release contracted soft tissue, increase lymphatic drainage, increase blood circulation and balance energy.

There are many different kinds of massage including acupressure, Anma massage, aquatic bodywork, ashitsu, Balinese massage, Bowen technique, Breema, Biodynamic massage, Champissage massage, craniosacral therapy, Esalen massage, foot massage, Hilot massage, infant massage, Kum Nye, Lomilomi and indigenous massage of Oceania, lymphatic drainage, massage, metamorphic technique, myofascial release, pediatric massage, postural integration, prostrate massage, reflexology, shitsu, sports massage, stone massage, structural integration, Swedish massage, Tantric massage, Thai massage, traditional Chinese massage, Trager approach, trigger point therapy, Tui na and Watsu.



Some types of massage are covered by extended health care plans. Each has its own requirements for the information they require on their referral forms. Check with your insurance company before asking your doctor for a referral.

## Biofeedback

This teaches you to have a greater awareness of your physiological activity or body functions. You learn to control your body's functions using the electromyograph, electrodermograph, electroencephalograph, electrocardiogram and others. You learn to control these functions while connected to the electrical sensors that measure heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tightness, when you start to sweat, when your breathing quickens, brainwaves, skin conductance and pain perception.

Biofeedback gives you information (the feedback) about measureable changes in your body (the bio) hence the term biofeedback. It helps you to use the power of your brain, use your thoughts to control your body by making subtle changes and seeing the results.

If you have not tried any relaxation techniques, it can be helpful to start them in a clinic that can show you how to use biofeedback to monitor your progress for a few sessions until you start to master the techniques.



## Art Therapy

This can help you identify thoughts, feelings or core beliefs that may prevent you from relaxing, sleeping or thinking well.

A registered art therapist (RCAT) will have you draw, paint, sculpt or use some other art form to show what you think or feel. Often things are revealed to the art therapist through this process that you are not even aware of thinking or feeling. This then allows you to work on things that are on your mind so that you can relax and function better.

You can find a qualified art therapist near you by contacting the Canadian Art Therapy Association at [www.candianarttherapy.org/find-an-art-therapist](http://www.candianarttherapy.org/find-an-art-therapist).

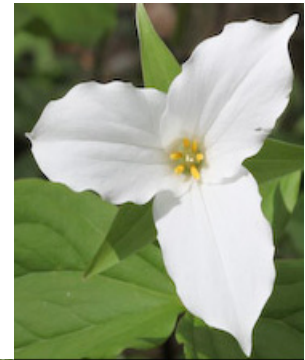
## Garden Therapy

The garden therapist uses the activities of gardening to help a client to get in touch with thoughts and emotions through contact with the soil, seeds, living plants and the acts of planting, watering, cultivating and harvesting plants. This is often a way to lift depression, work out anger and frustration and to generally improve mood.

Correctional Services Canada uses garden therapy in federal prisons and has noticed an improvement in the aggressive behaviour of inmates.

At the very least, gardening unleashes your creativity, while producing flowers, vegetables or landscapes for you to enjoy.

Whether you choose pots on a patio or a larger area of land, being in touch with nature provides you with exercise and joy. You might even make new friends at a garden center or horticultural club.



## Mindfulness

It is being aware, seeing things more clearly, moment to moment. Mindfulness is the awareness you find when paying attention to the present moment, with non-judgement, and bringing yourself back to the present moment. It is a simple, gentle training that is free from any particular faith or religious belief.

*“the present is the only time that any of us have to be alive—to know anything—to perceive—to learn—to act—to change—to heal.”*

*John Kabat-Zin*

There are many MBSR Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Workshops by teachers trained in the 8 week program created by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zin at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1979. Mindfulness courses are offered by psychologists, counsellors, therapists, colleges, universities, medical clinics, service clubs, employers and specific disease associations. Some are covered by provincial health care plans or employer extended health care plans. Check where you live or work for a course or workshop near you.

Mindfulness practices can help you relieve psychological and spiritual stress which can then help you manage your physical stressors.

**In the moment  
no judgements**



## Resources

### Books

The Wellness Workbook 3rd edition by John W. Travis and Regina Sara Ryan ©C2004 Celestial Arts ISBN 978-1-58761-213-8

The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook 6<sup>th</sup> Edition by Martha Davis PhD, Elizabeth Robbins Eshelman MSW, Matthew McKay PhD ©2008 New Harbinger Publications Inc. ISBN 978-1-57224-549-5

Full Catastrophe Living 2nd Edition by Jon Kabat-Zin ©2013 Bantam/Random House ISBN 978-0-345-53693-8

The Power Is Within You by Louise Hay ISBN 978-1561700233

### CD/DVD

Relaxation Training (CD) by Dr. Brian Doan <http://briandoan.ca>

Outer Stress Inner Calm by Eli Bay (10 video programs, 10 audio programs and guidebook) [www.elibay.com](http://www.elibay.com)

Letting Go of Stress 35th Anniversary Edition (CD) by Steven Halpern and Emmett Miller ASIN B00009N1WZ

### Web Sites

[onthemind.ca](http://onthemind.ca) (articles, videos, live web sessions, research)

WebMed 9 Things You Can Do To Avoid Fibromyalgia Pain and Fatigue Slideshow <http://www.webmd.com/fibromyalgia/fibromyalgia-pain-10/slideshow-pain-fatigue>

[www.drmartinrappeport.com](http://www.drmartinrappeport.com) and [www.mindfuljourney.org](http://www.mindfuljourney.org)

<http://londonmindfulness.ca/stress-facts.html>

[www.briandoan.ca](http://www.briandoan.ca)

[Www.louisehay.com/affirmations](http://www.louisehay.com/affirmations)



## Footnotes

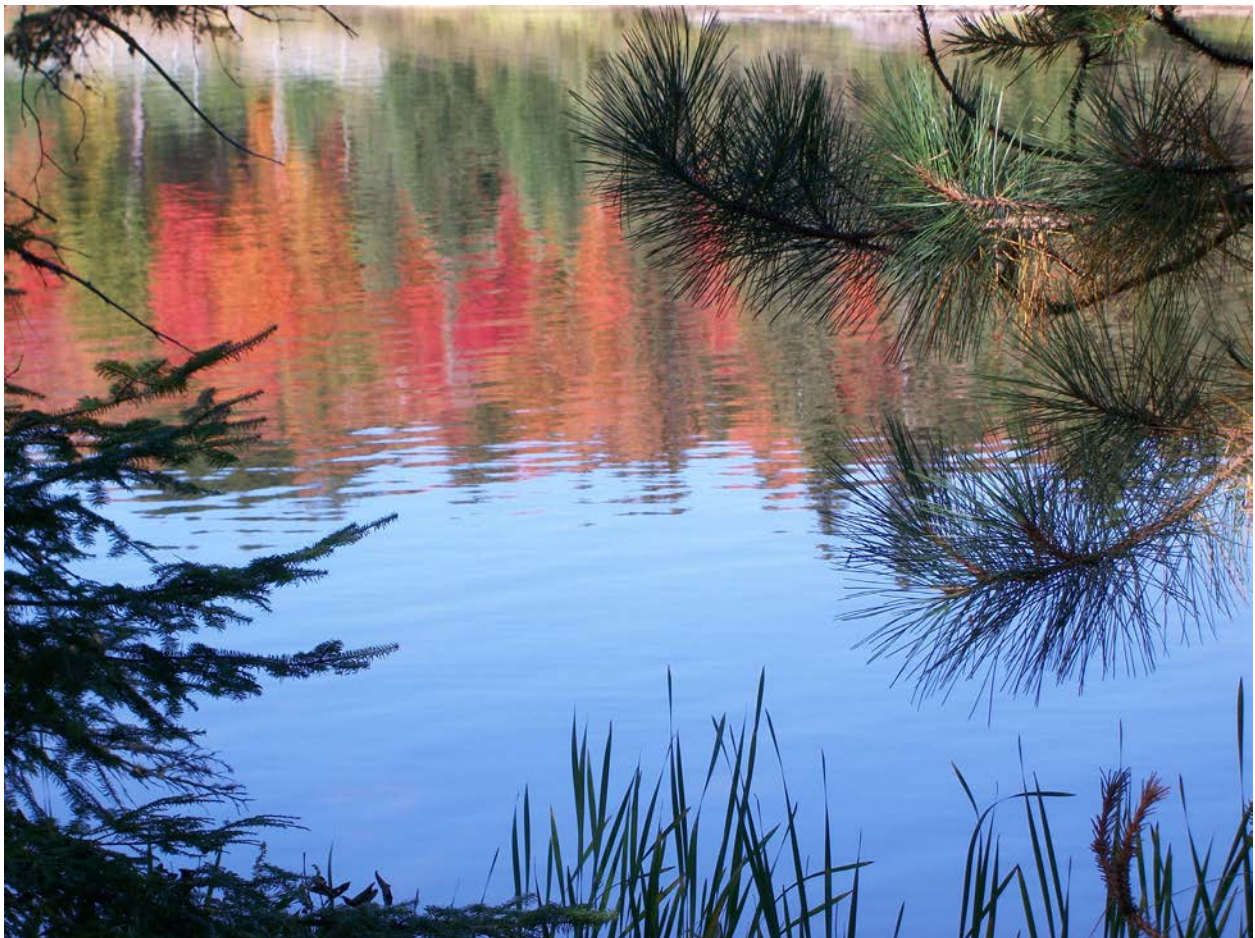
<sup>1</sup> Mayo Clinic “Healthy Lifestyle Stress Management” Available:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/relaxation-technique/art-20045368?pg=2>

<sup>2</sup> WebMed “Hypnosis, Meditation, and Relaxation For Pain Treatment”

Available: <http://www.webmd.com/pain-management/hypnosis-meditation-and-relaxation-for-pain-treatment>

# Restoration



## About The Author

Cathy Ferren RHN MAATO is a registered holistic nutritionist, life skills and health coach and instructor, certified Personality Dimensions® instructor, relaxation techniques coach and prayer minister working across Canada. She incorporates her over 35 years of experience in architectural technology into barrier free design consultations for her clients to help them meet their mobility needs.

As a lifelong volunteer in many non-profit organizations, she brings her experience, compassion and focus to her clients. She is passionate about helping people improve their wellness in all areas: body, mind and spirit.



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