

Sophrology

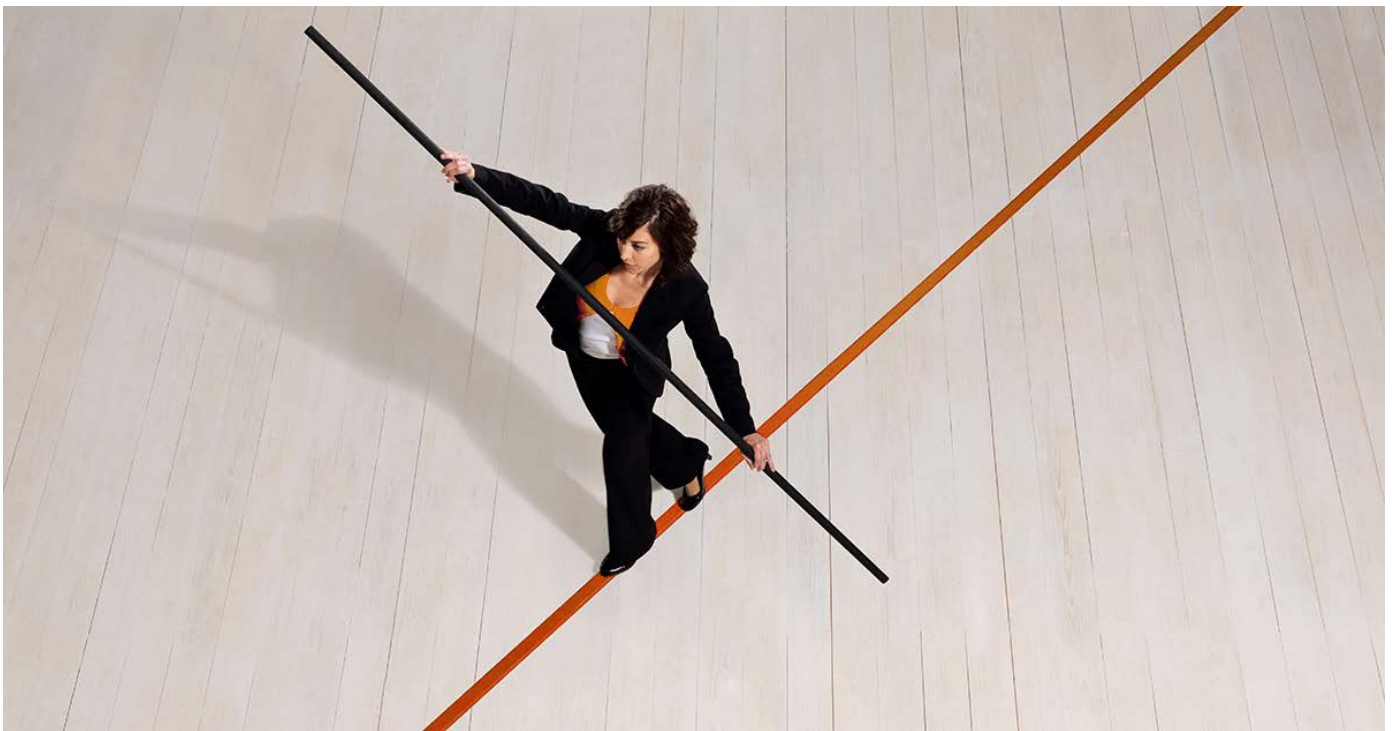
Sophrology is a method of relaxation and personal development that aims to harmonize the body and mind. It was developed in the 1960s by the neuropsychiatrist Alfonso Caycedo. This approach is based on breathing, relaxation of the body and mind, as well as on positive visualizations, just like other disciplines that are quite similar to it, such as yoga, Zen and meditation. This practice is used in various fields, such as health, education, sports or personal development. We present the basic principles, the steps to follow and the benefits of sophrology sessions.

Principles of sophrology:

Sophrology is based on fundamental principles that allow one to relax physically and mentally, and to reach a modified state of consciousness:

- **Breathing:** breathing is a key element of sophrology. By concentrating on our breathing, deepening it and lengthening it, we can relax and refocus on ourselves.
- **Muscle relaxation:** by focusing on gradually relaxing the muscles of our body, we are able to physically relax and reduce our stress level.
- **Visualization:** visualization consists in mentally representing positive images, places, people or memories that are precious to us, which will help us to relax and feel positive emotions.

These positive thoughts and emotions help build self-esteem, self-confidence and anticipate events in a more optimistic way.

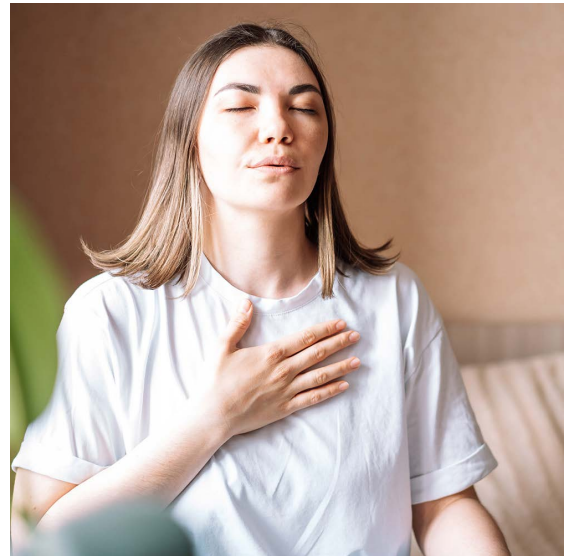


Stages of sophrology:

Sophrology is practiced in individual or group sessions, guided by a sophrologist. The sessions are structured in several steps which allow to reach a state of relaxation and well-being which is generalized thanks to their repetition.

These different phases are:

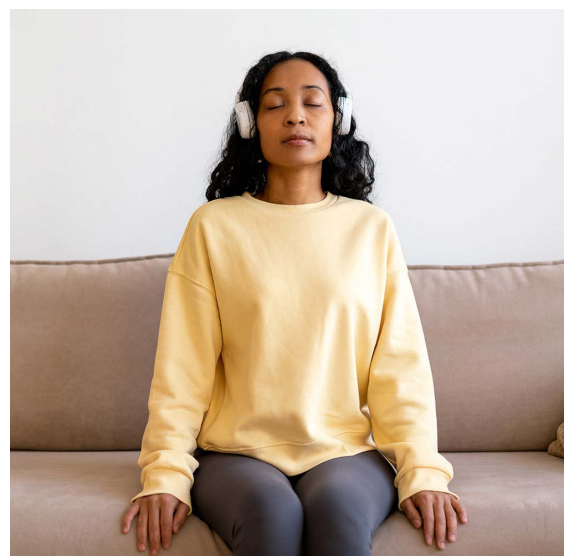
- **The preparation:** before starting the session of sophrology, it is well to prepare mentally and physically, in particular by settling comfortably in a calm and pleasant place, favourable with the relaxation.
- **Anchoring:** once we have chosen our position, sitting, standing, lying down, we will take the time to appreciate this position, to feel our body in this pose, which allows us to stabilize, to anchor ourselves and to begin to relax.
- **Breathing:** before starting the muscular relaxation, we will concentrate on our breathing, by breathing progressively more and more slowly, deeply.
We can help ourselves with our hands placed on our belly and our chest, in order to better perceive our breathing movements.
- **Muscular relaxation:** then, we will concentrate on each part of our body, from the head to the feet, to progressively relax each muscle, to the rhythm of our calm and quiet breathing.
- **The negative release:** allows us to become aware of all the tensions and/or annoyances that occupy us and to let them go, to chase them away from us, while breathing out.
- **Visualization:** visualization allows us to mentally represent positive images, such as a place of calm and serenity, or a positive situation, a memory, or a project that we hold dear. This allows us to concentrate on positive events and therefore to remember and activate the pleasant sensations that these images bring.
Using our 5 senses during these visualizations allows us to feel emotions more intensely, but also to adapt to the sensitivity of each person.
- **Reinforcement by positive:** by helping us with our positive thoughts and emotions and by focusing on our skills, qualities, abilities, a positive thought, such as "love", "gratitude", or by repeating positive phrases, we will gradually strengthen ourselves, improve our self-esteem, confidence in ourselves.



Benefits of sophrology:

Sophrology has many advantages in daily life, the search for well-being and fulfillment. Indeed, to follow sessions of sophrology regularly offers many advantages, among which:

- **Reduction of stress and anxiety:** relaxation and breathing techniques help to better manage stress and reduce anxiety levels on a daily basis.
- **Improving sleep:** sophrology helps to find a better balance between sleep and wakefulness, to prepare oneself to sleep at the right time, to promote relaxation and to regulate one's biological rhythm.
- **The development of self-confidence:** positive visualizations help to reinforce self-esteem, confidence in one's abilities, positive feelings.
- **Pain management:** sophrology offers tools to better manage pain, discomfort and promote muscle relaxation.
- **Improving concentration and creativity:** relaxation and visualization exercises help develop concentration,



creativity and mental clarity.

- **Support during life changes:** Sophrology can support individuals during periods of transition, such as pregnancy, retirement or a professional change.
- **Preparation for specific events:** Sophrology can help prepare mentally and emotionally for important events, such as exams, sports competitions or surgery.

Are there any contraindications to the practice of sophrology?

Sophrology is a gentle, natural and safe method that can be practiced at any age and regardless of the physical condition of the participants. However, as with any personal development practice, it may have certain limitations:

- Sophrology may not be suitable for everyone: although Sophrology is a gentle method, some people may feel uncomfortable or have difficulty relaxing during sessions.
- The results may vary from one person to another, as we are all different, but this method is evolving and adapts to each person and situation.
- Although turned towards the positive, a session of sophrology can lead to feel strong emotions which can destabilize.
- Bringing relaxation, it allows a real relaxation, which can be assimilated to fatigue. The ideal is to be able to grant this time of pause to integrate the benefits of the lived session.
- Sophrology cannot replace a medical treatment, it can be a support during a follow-up, but cannot replace a recommended medical treatment.

Sophrology is much more than a simple relaxation method

It is a practice that allows us to connect with ourselves, to become aware of our emotions and sensations, and to discover our own resources for better living.

Whether we are looking to manage our stress, improve our sleep, strengthen our self-confidence or reach our personal goals, sophrology can help us achieve these goals by bringing us a state of well-being and serenity.

Also, do not hesitate to discover the benefits of sophrology for yourself, let yourself be guided towards a more serene and harmonious life!

