

Relaxation Breathing Exercise

An exercise to help you focus on your breathing is a useful relaxation tool which can help to calm and comfort us when we feel anxious or stressed. Some people find having something to focus on can help them concentrate on how to breathe more effectively.

When we are stressed our breathing can become shallow and adds to feelings of agitation. The following Breathing exercises help calm the mind and help you feel in control again.

Start by reading through the script to get familiar with the steps and then over time and with practise you will get familiar with it all.

- Allow yourself to get comfortable in your chair.
- When ready just gently close your eyes.
- Relax the muscles around your eyes and forehead.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Bring your attention to your unique breath, just flowing in and out. Breathe in through your nose and out through your nose or mouth, whatever feels comfortable for you.
- Gently breathe in while counting up to 4 then gently breathe out to the count of 5. If it feels comfortable to do so, pause for 1 second before breathing out.
- Repeat 3 times, then just let your breath come in and out at its own rhythm which will have got deeper during this exercise.
- Again, repeat breathing in for the count of 3 then gently breathing out to the count of 5 another 3 times.
- Allow your breath just to flow in and out like the waves on a sea shore, with its own rhythm.
- Then when you breathe in again, imagine breathing in the colour of calmness, whatever colour that would be for you.
- And with each outbreath imagine breathing out tension or anxious thoughts. These thoughts or tension might also be a colour or just a feeling of release.
- Just breathe them out.
- Continue to breathe in calmness and breathe out worry for **5 minutes** or as long as you feel able

Then in your own time, just be aware of sitting in your chair and follow by gently opening your eyes. Sit for a moment and notice how relaxed you feel.

