

## **Meditate on the breath –Counting the Breath**

This is another ancient meditation, and a great way to gauge the state of your mind – sometimes you might find you can't even count to 4 before the mind is off thinking of something else! This is many people's favourite meditation and is great for concentration and calming the mind.

- Sit in a comfortable, supported position – legs /feet planted, spine/back tall, shoulders/arms relaxed, hands resting comfortably, neck tall, jaw relaxed, eyes gently closed (or a tiny bit open)
- Keeping your awareness/attention on the breath start to count your exhales – eg. On the inhale you might like to think 'and' then on the exhale think '1', on the inhale think 'and,' on the exhale think '2' etc
- Start the practice continually counting 4 breaths for your chosen time, trying not to let distraction take you away. If you do get distracted, that's ok, when you notice the distraction just gently invite the mind to come back again and again to counting the breath, starting back at 1
- Continue in this way for your chosen time (using a timer can help) and when complete slowly bring your awareness back to the environment around you, and slowly come back to yourself, and open your eyes. Rest for a few moments, then resume your day – with a smile 😊

*Quick tip: When you can consciously count 4 breaths repeatedly for a few minutes without distraction, in your next sessions work your way up to 7, later sessions 10, then 15, up to 21(advanced) breaths.*