

## **BREATHING FOR TENSION RELEASE AND INCREASED AWARENESS**

### **Letting Go of Tension**

1. Inhale diaphragmatically as you say to yourself “breathe in.”
2. Hold your breath a moment before you exhale.
3. Exhale slowly and deeply as you say to yourself “relax.”
4. Pause and wait for your next natural breath.
5. As you inhale slowly and then hold your breath for a moment, notice the parts of your body that tense up.
6. As you exhale, feel the tension naturally leaving your body. With each exhalation, you will feel more and more relaxed, as you let go of more and more tension.
7. When thoughts, feelings, and sensations catch your attention, just notice them and return to your breathing.
8. Practice five to twenty minutes at a time.
9. Once you’ve mastered this exercise, practice using it several times a day in neutral situations, that is non-stressful situations. Finally, start using it in stressful situations to reduce your tension. Simply take several diaphragmatic breaths, say the words “breathe in” and “relax,” and let go of the tension on the exhalation. Focus on the sensations of relaxation.
10. Remember that you may need to exhale before you can breathe in deeply.

SOLACE SHELTER