

# **Breathing Space Exercise**

**From The Journey and The Guide, by Maitreyabandhu, London Buddhist Centre**

## **The 3 Stage Breathing Space**

Try and do the breathing space exercise at different times in the day. It can take as little as 3 minutes and you can do it in all kinds of places – on the bus, waiting at the checkout - even on the loo!

Just go through the stages as best you can without any big expectations and without trying to change anything.

All you are doing is experiencing the inner weather of your thoughts, feelings and body sensations.

### **Stage 1. Becoming Aware**

If possible close your eyes.

Notice what thoughts are present. See if you can acknowledge your thoughts 'I am thinking such and such' Are there any qualities to your thoughts? Sluggish or rushing?

How are you feeling right now? Noticing any pleasant or unpleasant feelings. Sometimes we are feeling 'not very much'. What does 'not very much' feel like?

Notice any body sensations that are present. Maybe briefly scan through your body to see what you can experience.

### **Stage 2. Gathering**

Then focus on the physical sensations of breathing. You might especially focus on the breath in your belly. See if you can follow the whole breath in and out. This will help anchor you in the present.

### **Stage 3. Expanding**

Now try expanding your awareness around your breathing to include your body, your posture, even your facial expression. See if you can include more and more of the body while maintaining contact with the breath. If you feel areas of discomfort or tension, see if you can focus in on them and breathe into them.

Now open your eyes.

If possible, try and stay in touch with the mindfulness you've developed as you go about your day.