

Breathing in Gratitude

This simple, deep breathing exercise is a great way to calm and relax the body and mind on its own. If you want to add another dimension try mentally reciting a 'gratitude list' once your breathing is settled and steady. An attitude of gratitude can help to remove feelings of anger. It's difficult to be angry and thankful at the same time.

What is a gratitude list? Well it's anything, no matter how big or small, that you're thankful for in your life (past or present). It doesn't have to be virtuous or grand. Start with the small stuff (chocolate!) and see what happens. Things that we might take for granted like: running water; your favourite food; a good book, favourite CD; a good friend; hot

radiators on a cold night; having a body and mind to appreciate the world around us. The list is as boundless as your imagination and by focusing on what we have, we can develop a more flexible attitude to the challenges that life throws across our path.

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor, a comfortable distance from the bottom. Place your hands on the lower belly.
- For five breaths simply observe how your natural breath moves in and out of your body. Don't try to change or influence it - just notice.
- Begin to breathe in and out

through the nose and imagine breathing into the palms of your hands as they rest on your belly.

- Feel the belly rising under your hands as you breathe in, and then falling again as you breathe out.
- Take it gently and gradually for 10 to 20 breaths. You can't force calmness.
- When you can do the above exercise comfortably, add the gratitude list on the breath.
- As you inhale, in your mind say "I'm thankful for..." and on the out breath say in your mind "person, object, place, idea" - whatever you appreciate having, experiencing or knowing.



“If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is ‘Thank You,’ it will be enough.”

– Meister Eckhart, 1260 - 1328, German Mystic

