

## How to Take a Deep Breath

- Deep breathing, is both simple, and complex. It can require more conscious thought than it might seem.
- Practicing deep breathing when you are feeling calm, will help with being able to use this when things are feeling more tricky.
- The information shared here is aimed at helping you practice the technique of a slow deep breath. Please see the Breathing Exercises sheet for a range of breathing exercise to try.

### *So let's start:*

- △ Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. You can practice this standing too if you like.
- △ Place a hand on your tummy. Let your shoulders relax back, head in a neutral position looking straight ahead (e.g. you want an open posture and to try to shift from any tense/hunched over or slumped posture).
- △ Take a slow deep breath in, breathing in through your nose.
- △ As you breathe in imagine that you are slowly filling your lungs from the bottom of your lungs all the way up. Imagine a balloon inflating.
- △ As you breathe in see if you can notice the hand on your tummy rising outward. Also see if you can notice your body expanding outward to the sides as the air fills not just the front of your lungs but the sides as well. (See If you can really notice this as you practice, it can make a difference to experiencing a really deep breath).
- △ As you do this, see if you notice your upper chest stays still so you are breathing from deeper down in your lungs.
- △ Hold the breath for a moment as you have reached the top of your lungs and filled your lungs. Hold for 1, 2, 3 seconds if you can. Whatever feels comfortable.
- △ Slowly let the breath go, breathing you. You can do this through your nose or mouth, whatever feels comfortable.
- △ If possible let that outbreath be longer than the in breath . Imagine that balloon slowly deflating in a controlled way.
- △ Notice as the hand on your tummy slowly sinks back down/inward.
- △ Hold the breath gently at the bottom/end of the breath
- △ Repeat this sequence as you feel comfortable.