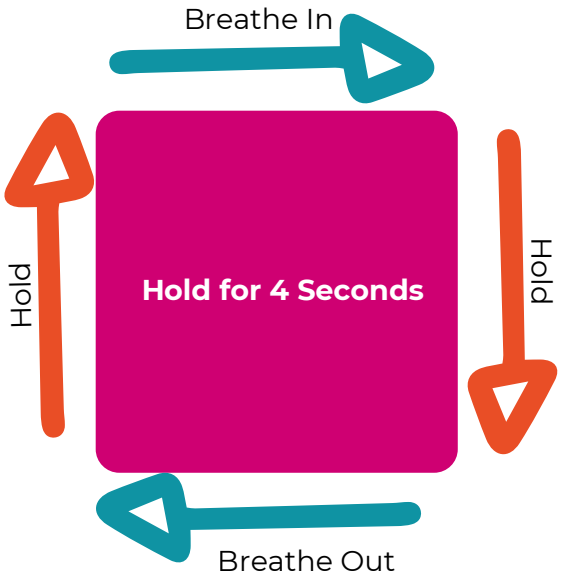
# Breathing Techniques

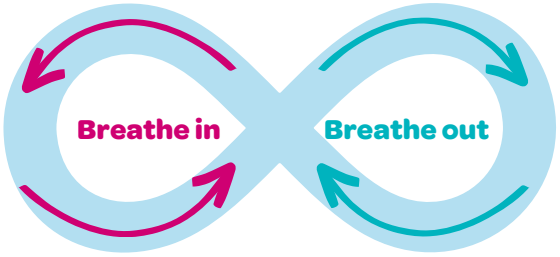
Scottish Action for Mental Health

## Box Breathing



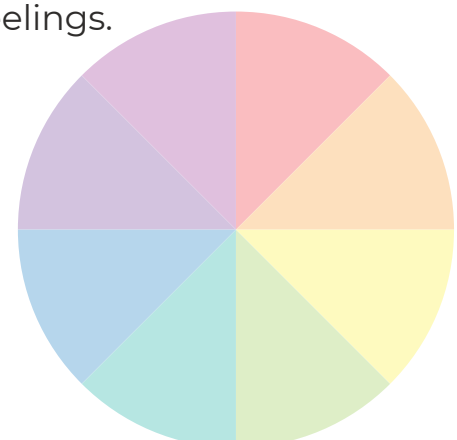

## Figure of 8 Breathing

Make a lying down number 8 shape with your finger starting in the middle.
Move your finger around to one side taking a deep breath in until your finger returns to the middle.
Breath out as your finger traces around the other side until you reach the middle again.



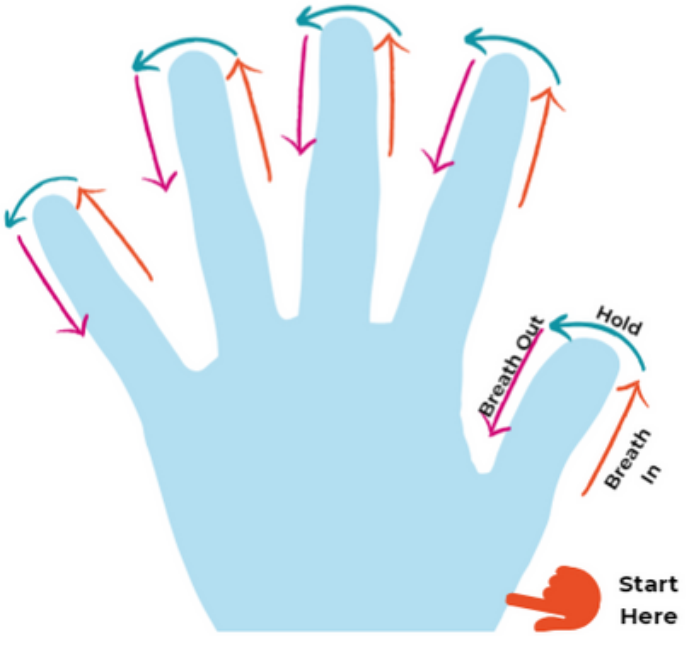

## Colour Breathing

Close your eyes and think of a colour for all the good feelings in your head.
Breathe in, and think of that colour filling up your body.
Think of another colour for all your not-so-good feelings.
As you breathe out imagine blowing that colour out of your mouth, along with your not-so-good feelings.
Breathe in your good colour and good feelings, breathe out your not-so-good colour and not-so-good feelings.



## Finger Breathing

Hold a hand out in front of you.
Use your pointer finger from your other hand to trace up and down each finger in turn.
As you slowly trace up your fingers take a deep breath in, hold your breath as you go round the top and breathe out as you trace down.



# Grounding Exercises

## 5 Senses Grounding


## Visualise a Safe Space

Visualise somewhere you feel calm, happy, and secure.

It could be a childhood home, a peaceful beach, or even a fictional place.

It helps to imagine your safe space before you're in the midst of a moment of tension or anxiety.

Identify what you can see around you, what sounds you hear and how it makes you feel.

## Tense & Release

This technique allows you to feel and then release tension physically.

Pick a part of your body and tense it as much as you can hold for a few seconds and then release. Repeat as many times as you need.

You can use your fists only, or try moving through your entire body starting at your toes and moving up to your neck and shoulders.

## Butterfly Hug

Cross your arms over your chest, resting your hands on your upper arms.

Gently tap each hand on your arms, left–right–left, in a steady rhythm.

Breathe slowly: in for 4, hold for 4, out for 4.

Focus on the soothing rhythm and the feeling of self-comfort.

If your mind drifts, return your focus to the tapping and your breathing