

### **3. Breathe hold and release**

Breathing exercises are a basic way of learning to relax. In this breathing exercise you will be guided to breathe in, hold the breath, and then release the breath.

The most important part of this exercise is to allow the breath to release all in one go – there should be a sound like a “whoosh” when the air rushes out of the body. Don’t try to sound elegant or refined – it is important to let the breath be expelled all at once!

Take a deep breath – breathing in fully and as deeply as you can.

Hold the breath for a count of 5 – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

On the count of 5, release the breath all at once.

As you continue to do this exercise you can slow down the counting a little bit each time so that the holding of the breath becomes progressively a little longer.

In between breaths that you hold you may wish to take a couple of normal breaths.

Remember that no matter how long you hold the in-breath that you let the out-breath escape in a “whoosh”, releasing all the breath at once.

After a while you should notice that your breathing has slowed down. You may also notice that your muscles feel looser and more relaxed, especially after each sudden out-breath when your body may even go floppy for a few seconds.