

### **4-5-6 Self-Compassion Pause with Soothing Touch**

Return to center, clarity and calm by practicing our focused 4-5-6 Compassion Breath exercise with Soothing Touch. Intentional relaxation techniques including focused breathing and touch activate the parasympathetic nervous system increasing positive emotion, balancing heart rate, lowering sense of stress and provide more control over the body's inner landscape.

Get comfortable in your seat and find a soft gaze or close your eyes.

Breathe in through your nose for a count of **four**.

Hold your breath for a count of **five**.

Breathe out for a count of **six**.

**Repeat two to three times.**

As you exhale, gently place your hand over your heart, feeling the gentle pressure and warmth of your hand.

If you wish, place both hands on your chest, noticing the difference between one and two hands.

Feel the touch of your hand on your chest.

Deepen your sensation of touch by making small circles with your hands on your chest.

Feel the natural rising and falling of your breath as you inhale and exhale.

Linger with the feeling as long as you like exploring other possible soothing gestures that work for you;

touching your neck,

touching your cheek,

making circles on the top of your hand,

putting a hand on your abdomen,

or, crossing your arms and giving yourself a gentle squeeze.

Physical comfort activates our parasympathetic nervous system and quickly returns us to calm.

Take advantage of this surprisingly simple and straightforward way to be kind to ourselves.