Lesson Eight: Anchor Words

What are Anchor Words?

Meditation can help us to relieve symptoms of stress and anxiety and can also help us to focus and concentrate. It helps us to feel calm and peaceful inside and often our emotions can begin to settle down. Meditating can sometimes feel challenging at first and Anchor Words can help. Using a word or phrase linked to the incoming and outgoing breath can help us stay connected.

How does it help me?

Think of Anchor Words to help you stay anchored in the present moment, rather than drifting off into thought!

How do I do it?

- Begin with posture. Keep the back straight. Relax the body, yet keep it alert and awake. Feet are flat on the floor (or sitting crisscross on the floor). Hands gently resting in lap.
- Gently close your eyes and begin to focus on your breath.
- Notice your breath.
- Say your anchor word inside your mind as you breathe in.
- As you breathe out repeat your anchor word.
- If your mind wanders off, simply let go of the thought and return to your anchor words.
- Practice for several minutes.

Note: Use Anchor Words as a support during meditation. It can be used as a tool the entire meditation exercise, or it can be used just for a handful of breaths and let go. Focus on choosing anchor words that are positive and uplifting.

Anchor Word examples:

If you are feeling stressed, you might choose an anchor word like – “calm” with incoming and outgoing breath. Or, if you are feeling worried about something – “let” with incoming breath and “go” with outgoing breath. Also use “I am” with incoming breath and “calm” with outgoing breath. Make them simple!

Discussion Questions

- How did it feel to use Anchor Words?
- Did I notice anything different?
- Did I notice any changes to the way I was feeling?