Breathing Space Group Exercise Script

I invite you now to get comfortable in your chair, let you shoulders drop and gently push your feet onto the floor…and get a sense of the ground beneath you…and you can either soften your gaze on a particular spot in front of you or close your eyes, whichever you prefer. Just take a moment to notice how you are sitting….(*pause*) And notice how you are breathing…(*pause*) Notice what you see, even if your eyes are closed…(*pause*) And notice what you can hear…(*pause*) Notice what you can feel against your skin and the way your body presses into the chair…(*pause*)

And notice what you can taste of sense in your mouth…(*pause*) Notice what you can smell or sense with your nostrils…(*pause*) By settling into the moment and

into your body, you are inviting your mind and your ability to recognize into the present moment with you…(*pause*)

Take a moment to become aware of your breath and the gentle movement in and out as air is exchanged in your nose, mouth, and lungs. Noting the sensation in your belly or chest as the gentle movement of air creates a rise and fall. (*pause*) Simply allowing yourself to notice of sensations as a curious scientist that has never encountered breathing before. (*pause*)

As now see if you can notice the movement of your mind as you’re observing these sensations, with no need to change or do anything about them. See if you can observe the activity of the mind becoming more evident as you notice yourself noticing your sensations. (*pause*)

You will find this hard because your mind is a masterful storyteller. It will tell you all sorts of interesting things to grab your attention and pull you away from what you are doing. (*pause*) See if you can let those thoughts come and go, as if they are merely trains passing through a train station- just passing through as you observe the station itself. (*pause*) Keeping your attention on the breath. Noticing your breath flowing in and out. (*pause*)

When a new thought arises, see if you can notice the thought as just another train passing through. Simply noticing-without judgment- as it goes by as you continue to feel the rise and fall of your chest. (*pause*) From time to time, your mind will succeed in distracting you with a new and interesting thought, and you’ll lose track of your breathing. This is normal, natural, and will happen repeatedly. Once you notice this has happened, take a moment to note with curiosity what hooked you and gently return back to focusing on your breathing. (*pause*)

Now allow yourself to come back to your breath. Notice the movement of air in your chest and belly. Allowing the sensation of breathing in to become the focus of your attention. Noticing the coolness of the air as you breathe in and the warmth as you breathe out. (*pause*) Noticing the sensations in your feet as they

touch the ground and in your body where it touches the chair. (*pause*) As you prepare to bring your awareness back to this room, offer yourself some gratitude, perhaps for taking time today to be present with your thoughts, for practicing recognition, for choosing to take steps towards living your life more fully. And when you’re ready, take one more, deeper than normal breath, opening your eyes as you exhale.