



Training yourself to “come back to your breath” is not only a useful way to gain mastery over the mind by developing the ability to place your mind where you choose to place it, it is a very useful skill to develop because regulating our breathing is about the most immediate way to calm a nervous system down. So that’s a good thing.

But *remembering* to come back to your breath is easier said than done in the flurry of the day, let alone the heat of the moment. Therefore, this week’s activity takes the remembering part out of the equation so you can focus on just getting the feel of taking a few moments to come back to your breath. (Or come back home as I like to think of it, eye roll-y as that may sound. I can’t help it; it’s just how it feels to me. I’ve given up resisting “being that person.”)

So now the high-tech strategy for remembering: **3 sticky notes**. Write this down on each sticky note:

1. Breath in for the count of 4
2. Hold for 2
3. Breathe out for 4
4. Hold for 2

Every day you will stick these 3 sticky notes in places you are guaranteed to see them. When you do see one, you will breathe slow and deep according to the instructions for a total of 5 rounds. As you breathe, pay attention to what the breath feels like as it passes through your nose, then as it fills up your chest and belly and then deflates on its way back out. As you breathe in this deliberate, slow, deep way, feel yourself anchored by the simple fact of being fully and **physically** right there in that present moment. (Not in your head panicking, for instance.) The whole cycle of 5 rounds will take roughly 1 minute if you are pretty faithful to the actual speed of a second.

Now, the exciting part: once you’ve “done a sticky note” You Get To Take It Down! This is ridiculously rewarding so don’t cheat yourself of this thrice daily reward. And then, also exciting, the next day you get to plant the sticky notes somewhere new all over again.\*

When you make notes in the log, include an estimate of the percentage of the week you were able to do all three sticky notes a day.

\*If you master doing 3 in a day and want to take it to the next level, add a sticky note the following day. And so on and so forth.