



Dropping Anchor

(Adapted from Russ Harris, Ph.D.)

When there is something very painful “showing up” for you, it can feel as if there is an emotional storm inside you. While you are being swept away from the storm, there’s nothing effective you can do about the issues you’re dealing with. So, the first thing we need to do is drop an anchor. The anchor won’t make the storm inside of you go away - the storm passes in its own time. What the anchor will do is hold you steady.

- Push your feet hard into the floor
- Straighten your back, sit forward in your chair
- Push your fingertips together, move your arms and hands
- Say to yourself, “I’m noticing (or here is) a thought/feeling/memory”
- Again, push those feet, straighten up, move arms/hands
- Say to yourself “I’m noticing (or here is) a thought/feeling/memory of a time when X happened”
- Notice what is happening in your body – what do you feel?
- Look around – notice 5 things you can see
- Notice 3 or 4 things you can hear
- Notice the other people nearby, in this very moment
- Again, say to yourself “I’m having a thought/feeling/memory of a time when X happened”
- And notice that in addition to this memory, you have a body, in the chair; move it; feel it move
- And notice, around your body, there’s a room
- And notice who is with you in this space and who you have in your life for support
- So, there’s a thought/feeling/ memory here, and a body that you’re moving, and people who are on your side, supporting you
- Notice how dropping anchor has now held you steady. You are steady