

# DROPPING ANCHOR

HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT INNER EXPERIENCES

## WHAT IS DROPPING ANCHOR?

*Dropping anchor* is an exceptionally useful skill to handle difficult thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, urges, and sensations more effectively. It enables you to ground yourself and engage in the present moment. It acts as a circuit-breaker for impulsive behavior.

Dropping anchor was developed and popularized by the ACT therapist Russ Harris.

WE REMEMBER HOW TO DROP ANCHOR BY THIS SIMPLE ACRONYM: **ACE**.

- **A:** Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings
- **C:** Connect with your body
- **E:** Engage in what you are doing

## HOW TO DROP ANCHOR?

### A: ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

Adopt a stance of a curious child or a scientist. Silently and kindly acknowledge what is present inside of you: thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, urges, and sensations. Observe what is going on in your inner world. Silently put into words what you notice. Label it, using the phrase 'I'm noticing.' For example, silently acknowledge "I'm noticing anxiety."

*While you keep acknowledging your thoughts and feelings...*

### B: CONNECT WITH YOUR BODY

Connect with your physical body. Move your arms and legs deliberately. For example, slowly pushing your feet into the floor, slowly straightening up and stretching, or slowly breathing.

*And while you keep acknowledging your inner experience and connecting to your body...*

### E: ENGAGE WITH WHAT YOU ARE DOING

Get a sense of where you are and focus your attention on what you are doing right now.

## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF DROPPING ANCHOR

- It is crucial to keep acknowledging our thoughts and feelings. Remember Step **A**.
- We are not trying to avoid or distract ourselves from painful experiences.
- You can do the activity for just 30 seconds or for 5 – 10 minutes.
- If you have the time, cycle through ACE slowly, repeatedly, over and over.
- You find a recording of a Dropping Anchor meditation on [danceoflife.space](https://danceoflife.space).