FOR CLIENTS AND CLINICIANS

Dropping Anchor: A Grounding Practice

A short Acceptance and Commitment Therapy inspired practice for making room for difficult thoughts and feelings while reconnecting with the present moment.

Important: This worksheet is psychoeducation, not emergency or crisis support and not a replacement for therapy. If you may harm yourself or someone else, call 999 or attend A&E.;

The ACE sequence

Use this gently. The aim is not to make distress disappear. It is to help you notice what is happening, steady your body and choose the next workable action.

1. Acknowledge

Silently name what is here: 'I notice anxiety', 'I am having the thought that...', or 'There is tightness in my chest'. Try to observe without arguing with the experience.

2. Connect

Press your feet into the floor. Notice the support beneath you. Slowly move or stretch. Feel the rhythm of your breathing without forcing it. Look for three neutral physical sensations.

3. Engage

Look around and name five things you can see, three things you can hear and one thing you can feel. Then ask: what small action would help me care for myself or the situation now?

A two-minute practice

- ☐ Pause and name the strongest thought, feeling or body sensation.
- ☐ Ground through your feet, seat or hands.
- ☐ Notice the room and return attention to what matters next.
- ☐ Choose one small, safe action you can take now.

Practice record

Notice, ground, choose

Situation: what was happening?

Acknowledge: what thoughts, feelings or sensations did I notice?

Connect: what helped me feel physically present?

Engage: what did I notice around me?

Next step: what small action did I choose?

Reflection

What changed, even slightly? It is also useful to record when the practice did not help, so that you and your therapist can consider other options.