



## Toolkit 1 - Learning Unit 1 Pre intervention

### Activity 4 Drop an ANCHOR

*Before taking part of a psychological first aid intervention, it may be useful to learn about the anchoring process to help you or to help others to stabilise when needed : Before, during and after the intervention.*

**Anchor is formed through repetition and association.** Referring with Ivan Pavlov's infamous experiment with dogs when he rang the bell (stimulus) at the same time he fed the dogs. the dogs' mouths would salivate simply by hearing the bell, after a while. the dogs' mouths would salivate simply by hearing the bell ... association between the bell ringing and mealtime..

**Anchoring is a natural process that usually occurs without our awareness. Studies show that it can be build on purpose . When you choose an anchor you are able to access it at a later time when it is useful.**





## YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MENTAL ANCHORING

Think back to a moment when you felt extremely calm and relaxed, a moment when you were completely at peace and connected to the present moment.



Now, immerse yourself in the memory. What did you see? What did you hear? What were you feeling? The goal is to relive the memory until you start to experience the same feelings of calmness and relaxation.

Now, here's where the mental anchoring comes in. As soon as you've reached your peak relaxation state, **breathe in slowly and deeply. This anchors you into the positive feeling.**

To test the anchor's effectiveness, and see if you can still experience a relaxing state.

**Keep in mind this could take several times before you start to see results. Repetition is essential to the anchoring process.**

Repeat, repeat, repeat. The anchor should be fired in exactly the same way each time you link it to the calming and relaxing experience.

Over time, it will become ingrained in your mind.

**Most importantly, be patient. Any time you are tempted to react in the same way, remind yourself that mental anchoring is a process and you may not see results right away.**

### 5 Types of Anchors



## ANCHORING EXEMPLE : THE SAFE PLACE



### *Here is the text to help you :*

Start by getting comfortable in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed, and take a couple of minutes to focus on your breathing, close your eyes, become aware of any tension in your body, and let that tension go with each out-breath.

Imagine a place where you can feel calm, peaceful and safe. It may be a place you've been to before, somewhere you've dreamed about going to, somewhere you've seen a picture of, or just a peaceful place you can create in your mind's eye.

Look around you in that place, notice the colours and shapes. What else do you notice?

Now notice the sounds that are around you, or perhaps the silence. Sounds far away and those nearer to you. Those that are more noticeable, and those that are more subtle.

Think about any smells you notice there.

Then focus on any skin sensations - the earth beneath you or whatever is supporting you in that place, the temperature, any movement of air, anything else you can touch.

Notice the pleasant physical sensations in your body whilst you enjoy this safe place.

Now whilst you're in your peaceful and safe place, you might choose to give it a name, whether one word or a phrase that you can use to bring that image back, anytime you need to.

You can choose to linger there a while, just enjoying the peacefulness and serenity. You can leave whenever you want to, just by opening your eyes and being aware of where you are now, and bringing yourself back to alertness in the 'here and now'.