

## Milestones in Anne's development

### Anne at six months



When Anne is six months old, her mother is persuaded to place her in care at a convent, 'for the baby's own good'. This is a common practice at the time. Anne is quiet and uncomplaining with her mother and with the nuns. The nuns observe what an 'easy' baby she is, but they notice that she also has unexplained rashes on her arms and chest and often regurgitates her food. They also notice that she seems to be sleepy most of the time.



#### **What is the function of Anne's self-protective behaviour at age six months?**

By six months old, Anne has learned that if she cries, she will be ignored or made to feel worse. So Anne inhibits her display of sadness, fear, anger or need for comfort. She becomes a 'good' baby. Nevertheless, her body is still experiencing a great deal of stress and anxiety, due to the neglect she is experiencing, and this is the reason for the rashes and the vomiting. Anne has also developed a strategy of 'going to sleep' to avoid threatening situations, such as when she is being handled brusquely by her mother, or, as pictured here, being placed into the care of the nuns.

## Anne at age eight



Anne is now eight. Her mother visits three times per year for several hours, and during visits they usually go to a play area on the grounds of the convent. Here, Anne sits on a swing and eats a sandwich, while her mother sits on a bench nearby. We notice the distance between them, and the lack of eye contact. During the visits, Sarah asks her daughter about her activities and what she is studying. After that, their conversations have long periods of silence, as neither knows what to say. Sarah is always conscious of keeping to the story that she is Anne's older sister, and as a consequence she avoids all personal topics. Anne soon learns not to ask Sarah any personal questions. When they greet and say goodbye, Anne and Sarah have a brief hug.

From age eight, on Sunday afternoons Anne goes to Sister Margaret's room. Margaret is a retired nun, and Anne helps her with housekeeping and helps to tend her small garden. Here, a smiling Anne is eating one of Sister Margaret's home-made cakes and listening to her stories.



### What is the function of Anne's self-protective behaviour at age eight?

By age eight, Anne is highly compliant to anyone in authority, and she never outwardly expresses any complaint. Inside, she often feels lonely and abandoned, and also a desperate longing to be held and comforted. When she is with her 'older sister' (who is actually her mother), she avoids showing her longing for comfort, because she senses Sarah will be uncomfortable about that and Anne fears she may stop coming for visits altogether.

At age eight, when Anne begins to spend Sunday afternoons with Sister Margaret, she finds that by taking on the role of Sister Margaret's cleaner and assistant gardener she is able to spend time with this older and wiser mother figure who helps her to feel worthwhile and cared for. Sister Margaret is conscious of her 'parental' role for Anne, and tries to help Anne to feel wanted and appreciated. She also sees that Anne is a very lonely girl inside, even when Anne herself does not see it.

## Anne at age 13



At age 13, Anne sees her best friend Clare being beaten with a belt by Father Kelleher, who provides religious instruction in the convent. Anne is aware that he has done this a number of times to Clare since she was seven years old, around the time of her holy communion, and later she becomes aware that Father Kelleher is beating other girls, too.

Clare swears Anne to secrecy, and tells her that the priest told her that the beatings are for her own good because she will 'burn in hell forever' if she does not learn all of the religious instruction. Anne keeps the secret, but feels profound guilt mixed with powerlessness about not being able to protect the other girls. She has never resolved these guilty feelings, nor her guilt at never receiving the beatings herself. (Anne has a privately held notion that she was never singled out for beatings because Father Kelleher was aware of her close friendship with Sister Margaret.) Around this time, Anne develops a series of intestinal complaints, which are anxiety-related.



### What is the function of Anne's self-protective behaviour at age 13?

At age 13, Anne has grown very distant from her own true feelings, and begins to think of feelings as being 'off limits' and potentially dangerous for her. When she sees Clare being beaten, Anne is under great strain and uses strategies of silence, compliance and turning her feelings against herself. In this we can see an elaboration of her very early strategy of being a 'good baby' who never makes a fuss and pretends to be asleep. Anne sacrifices her own point of view and increasingly takes on the view of herself as being bad and unworthy. Each evening she is made to say the prayer, 'Please make Anne a good girl'. This prayer is repeated thousands of times over the years, and Anne learns that she must not show any emotion that would be remotely difficult or unacceptable. Such distancing from her own true feelings allows her to survive in a threatening situation of constant fear and suspicion.

However, unbeknown to Anne, her true feelings are given expression in the intestinal illnesses she suffers. Through these somatic symptoms, Anne does at least gain access to care and respite in the infirmary.

## Anne at age 33



When Anne is 33 years old, she suffers another terrifying incident when a man breaks into her room and attempts to sexually assault her. The man is a guest in the building where Anne rents a room. As she tries to struggle and push him away, she screams. Her screams wake someone in the next flat, who shouts and frightens the attacker away. He is never seen again. Anne is so frightened and ashamed that she does not call the police. She never utters a word about the incident to anyone, including the man in the next flat who shouted.



### What is the function of Anne's self-protective behaviour at age 33?

Anne uses her survival instincts to raise the alarm and push away her attacker. After the immediate threat is over, she withdraws, suppresses her terrified feelings, and does not speak about it. Her strategy once again is to disconnect from people who might offer support, and to hide away in isolation. In addition, she is deeply ashamed about the incident, and is so embarrassed about the sexual aspect of the attack that she neither reports the crime, nor tells Malcolm, the man she is dating from the choir. She is afraid of how Malcolm will respond. She is also afraid of being targeted again by her attacker, and afraid of what the police might do or say. Consequently, the trauma of the attack stays with her, and Anne is dimly aware that its terror triggered old and unresolved memories of Father Kelleher at the convent. Anne's relationship with Malcolm begins to falter, and, while they have sexual contact and Anne becomes pregnant, their relationship becomes increasingly distant thereafter.

## Anne at age 35



Anne is now 35 years old, and a single mother. Her daughter, Tess, is five months old, and Anne does not feel confident to look after her. She continually fusses over Tess and checks to make sure everything is right, because she lives in fear that something bad will happen to Tess. However, there are other times, particularly when Tess becomes very upset, that Anne freezes and cannot do anything.



### **What is the function of Anne's self-protective behaviour at age 35?**

Anne knows instinctively that her role is to protect her daughter and to help her to grow and develop. However, she has had virtually no exposure to babies, and had no personal experience of being cared for and comforted when distressed. Therefore, she has minimal information to go on. What she relies on most of all is her unconscious template of how relationships work, ie. that they should be driven by obedience and shame, and that good children are silent children. When Tess does not respond to these rules and continues to be distressed, Anne is at a loss to understand her. She also has a deep-seated belief that Tess hates her. In her escalating distress, Anne begins to shut down, withdraw, and grow more depressed. She feels she has done everything she can, and is near to giving up.

## Anne's interviews

The following section is a verbatim transcript of the audio recording accompanying this guide.

### Anne's first interview – Introduction

#### Voiceover

*The following segment is from an assessment interview with Anne, who is a 35-year-old single parent of a nine-month-old girl. Anne is being interviewed by an adult mental health professional, who is beginning an assessment following a referral from Anne's GP. There are concerns about Anne's ability to care for her daughter, and also concern that she may have postnatal depression.*

*In this segment of the interview, we hear Anne answering questions about her relationship with her mother when she was a child. Just as we heard in the interview with Beth, the interviewer asks attachment-related questions that are intended to prompt Anne to use her semantic memory, her episodic memory and her working memory. There are also several instances of imaged, or sensory, memory, which you may want to listen for. Please read Chapter 2 if you are unclear on the distinction between the memory systems and how questions can be designed to target specific memory systems.*

*We begin about 30 minutes into Anne's second assessment interview. She has already spoken in general terms about her early life, where she lived, who was in her family, and who her key attachment figures were as a child. The interview moves on to consider Anne's early relationship with her mother.*

## Interview transcript – Anne's first interview

**Interviewer:** [Step one: *Listening to the story*] **Thank you for that, Anne. Now, can you think of three words or phrases to describe your early relationship with your mother, when you were a child?**

**Anne:** .....Well of course I saw her only on the *visits*, three times a year, ehh, that was Easter, Christmas and ... once in August. And ... I was told all through my childhood that Sarah – that's, that's my mother – that she was my *older sister* and that my mother was dead – emm, [very brief laugh] – that's the story they made her keep, in order to see me, eh, otherwise she'd not see me at the convent, *ever*. [clears throat] But I know now she was my mother all along, and I'd say in answer to your question – she was, she was *very very loving*; she wanted the best for me; and when she came to *visit* me, sure she always brought me things, and she dressed up to see me.

**Interviewer:** [Step one: *Listening to the story*] **Okay. So the words and phrases I have written down are 'very very loving', 'wanted the best for you', and when she came to visit you she 'always brought you things and dressed up to see you'. Let's start with the first phrase. Can you think of a particular time when the relationship was 'very very loving'?**

**Anne:** Emm ... Well, like I have no memories before seven, none at all. I can remember a little older than that, though, because she'd visit the convent, she'd make a grand effort to come and see me, and if it wasn't raining, emm, the two of us would go down to the orchard which was in the grounds of the convent. And, as we walked, sure, the pair of us, would lean down, and and she'd lean down with me, like a spy and she'd say [strong accent] 'Let's hide from the nuns!' [delighted, conspiratorial laugh]. I'd say it was less than a three-minute walk from the back door of the convent, down to the orchard. There were six lines of, of, of trees. I remember because I used to count them. So there were 36 of them in all. And so when we went down to the orchard, Sarah – ehh, that's my mother – she'd sit with me on the bench and I was on the swing, which was over to the side, at a right angle. And there was just this loving feeling when we were together. And she sat there peaceful and contented with me, and she'd just watch me. There was like a, like a joyfulness or a peacefulness about her. And if you would swing higher and higher, sure mother would just let you swing. And I remember one day in particular, I think this must have been around Easter – we saw a baby bird that had fallen from its nest in one of the hedges, and

my mother, she picked up the bird and she placed it so softly back into the nest. Sure she showed me the other eggs in the nest – they were – bright blue. I think they were – robins' eggs. And in that way she was she was, she was very, very loving.

**Interviewer:** [Step two: *Exploring the story*] **What else do you remember about that day?**

**Anne:** Emm ... Well, like I can't think, really. I think she would have been eating her sandwiches – she always brought her sandwiches.

**Interviewer:** [Step two: *Exploring the story*] **I was wondering what you and your mum talked about that day, and how you felt?**

**Anne:** Umm, Oh you know, sure, this and that – the usual. I remember she always used to tell me to be sure to eat apples. I was never one for eating vegetables, I was so cheeky, I was always after the chips! But em, I mean, she never spoke harshly to me about it, though, no, never.

## **Anne's first interview – Commentary, Part One**

### **Voiceover**

*What have you noticed so far about Anne's speech patterns, about how she structures her thinking and how she regulates her emotions? Does she tend to focus on her internal world or on the external surroundings, time, place, sequence and objects? If so, what might this protect her from? Which topics does she talk about and which does she avoid? How would you characterise the interaction between Anne and the interviewer?*

*We will pause here to give you time to consider these questions. You may wish to use the discourse marking sheet or the Interviewing Guide to help you. You can pause the audio playback while you do this.*

[Pause for reflection.]

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## **Anne's first interview – Commentary, Part Two**

### **Voiceover**

*In the interview so far, Anne offers the semantic phrase 'very, very loving' to describe her early relationship with her mother. To support this phrase, she describes not a specific visit but more a general description of the visits. She also puts a good deal of emphasis on time, place and proximity (for instance, the number of trees, the position of the swing and the bench, her age, the time of year, the position of the bird's nest and even the colour of the eggs). Because closeness and intimacy have been so problematic for Anne since she was born, it is easier and safer for her to focus on physical surroundings and objects, rather than her relationships. She idealises her relationship with her mother as loving, even though she only saw her mother three times per year and had little conversation or interaction with her when she did visit. Even with two follow-up questions from the interviewer, Anne is unable to find a specific episode when the relationship was loving. Indeed, when we look more closely, we see that the clearest episode that emerges to support the phrase 'very, very loving' is about the little bird saved by Anne's mother. Perhaps Anne receives some vicarious love in this episode, when she witnesses her mother's tenderness and care for the bird. This memory sticks in Anne's mind, perhaps because of the degree of tenderness her mother shows, and the peril faced by the little bird.*

## Anne's second interview – Introduction

*We re-join Anne one month later, after she has had several sessions with the adult mental health professional. Anne has been keen to continue with the sessions, and she has said on several occasions that this is the first time she has ever felt safe enough to look back over her life and see it for what it is, rather than seeing her childhood as somehow 'off limits'. She has attended sessions once per week, and she has also been receiving intensive support from a family nurse, who visits her home most days and offers practical and emotional support to Anne.*

*Thinking now about the **LEARN Model**, thus far the interviewer has **listened** carefully to Anne's story and she has asked questions to help Anne **explore** her story. In the following sequence, the interviewer asks questions that **access** hidden parts of Anne's story, and questions that help Anne to **revise** her story. The interviewer also **names** the process between her and Anne, as a way of helping Anne to, first of all, notice what it is like to trust someone and to receive comfort and understanding, and then to help Anne to link this experience with her care for Tess. As we pick up the interview, Anne is describing how she witnessed her friend Clare being beaten.*

## Interview transcript – Anne's second interview

**Interviewer:** [Step two: *Exploring the story*] **Anne, I remember in our last session that you were talking about Father Kelleher and how he abused your friend, and other girls at the convent.**

**Anne:** [slight laugh] It's funny how I remember that. [slight laugh] I remember that because it was just after Holy Communion – and it was – the first time that I had seen Clare, [**Interviewer: Hmm hmm**] you know my friend Clare? Being, uh ... like being beaten by Father Kelleher. And, uh, yeah that was the first time I had ever seen anything like that. [looks down, shifts posture, then sits up, clears throat] Ah, yeah. [smiles, slight laugh, nods head.]

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story*] **What were your feelings when you were seeing that happen to Clare?**

**Anne:** ... Emmm .. I mean it was just one of those things, really. You know you put up with it, you kept your mouth shut. You were silent because if you tell, then you burn in hell for eternity .. – I mean that's what we understood. Like you learn your catechism for Holy Communion; otherwise you deserve what's coming to you, that's hellfire. [**Interviewer: Hmm hmm**] And, eh, like the nuns told us this thing every day, and that is that 'polite children are quiet children'.

**Interviewer:** [Step three: *Accessing hidden parts of the story – by trying to identify blocks to understanding*] **If you look back now, .. what do you think of that message, about having to keep silent, and that you mustn't tell anyone, even if something's hurting you?**

**Anne:** ... Uhh, like, you know, it's just one of those things. Like, these things happen.

**Interviewer:** [Step three: *Accessing hidden parts of the story – by trying to identify blocks to understanding*] **How much do you still believe that it's dangerous to talk about what happened and how you felt about it?**

**Anne:** I still feel like I should be punished. I mean after all these years, like, it IS still with me.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by looking for a possible witness*] **Did anyone else know about this?**

**Anne:** Um, umm, umm [purse lips tightly, bites lips] I don't know...umm, the nuns? .. Look, Father Kelleher was God, [fear in her voice, slight trembling] you know? I mean ... In truth, he was like God to, to all of us. I remember him saying, like, 'Let's say a special prayer for the little orphans'.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by offering an integrative, reflective statement*]

**I was thinking how hard it must have been to see your friend being beaten and not being able to tell anyone or to make it stop, Anne.**

**Anne:** [rubs her own arms, as if shivering] .... No, I, I didn't tell anyone, I mean not my mother especially. Like, we didn't go in for that stuff, like the, the hugging and the mollycoddling, you know, I mean, like, all of that, you know all the – touchy feely – nonsense. I tried to tell her once. [**Interviewer: Hmm hmm**] Actually, I remember drawing this picture in a card and I gave it to her but, uh, .. like she didn't, you know ... Emmm – [rubs hands together, as if cold. Changes topic.] Did I mention, I had a friend, ehh. I had a mother figure, [rubs hands together vigorously] really, like. Umm, Sister Margaret. She was, she was a really, really, really special woman, that woman. She was retired and she lived in the convent after, [**Interviewer: Hmm hmm**] like, she had been abroad, you know, working in the missionary work, she'd been like, over in Africa and, em, she'd been in the Far East as well – like all of these really, really exotic places ... [**Interviewer: Hmm hmm**] Yeah. I still have two ornamental masks she gave me, they're beautiful. ... And I always remember her saying to me that visits from family – they could be the nicest and they could be the hardest of days.

**Interviewer:** [Step four question: *Revising the story – using another person's perspective*] **What do you think she meant by that?**

**Anne:** Well, like, I suppose that, you can be happy, you can be sad and you can be angry, maybe ... all at the same time.

**Interviewer:** [Step three: *Accessing hidden parts of the story – by acknowledging Sister Margaret as a source of strength for Anne*] **It sounds like she was a really, really important person for you, gave you some comfort.**

**Anne:** [glowing] She was, like, absolutely. Like, she really, really was, that woman, absolutely. I used to go to her on a Sunday. Every Sunday, in fact. And we'd – I'd help her with the garden, or, like, with cleaning. [**Interviewer: Hmm hmm**] She always said I was a great worker. I think it's because of her I've been cleaning rooms all of my life [brief shared laugh between Anne and interviewer]. I cleaned her room well enough, sure I did, I absolutely did.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – again emphasising Margaret's different perspective*] **I wonder if she ever saw that you were happy, sad and angry all at the same time.**

**Anne:** .... Well I think maybe she might have, yeah. I suppose she might have, yeah.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration and expression of feelings*] **So, thinking back to that time, Anne, when you were aware that Clare was being beaten, and when your mum came for a visit, and you tried to tell her what was happening, I was wondering if there was some of each of those feelings inside of you? Feeling happy, feeling sad, feeling angry, all at the same time?**

**Anne:** .... I was happy that my mother was there, I mean .. oh, absolutely, like, absolutely, that she'd come to visit. Like, even if I thought she was my sister, I really really really really really was happy to have her to visit. Definitely. ... Ehmmmmmm .... Uhhhh ... [voice trembling] I suppose sad was that ummm... You know, like, sad was... emm, .. emm, that I only saw her, I suppose, that I only saw her like maybe a few times a year, and that she couldn't keep me [weeping]... **[Interviewer: Hmm hmm. It's OK.]** Oh, I've never thought of me being sad before. ... [taking tissue] Oh, God, look at me, look at me blubbing my eyes out! [crying, trying to catch breath] ... You know, [cries out] they said that, em – do you know what they said about her? They said that she was 'defective' in her mind, [crying] not in her mind, like, in her, in her intelligence, in her intelligence. **[Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.]** Yeah. But like you don't think that about your own

flesh and blood, like, do you? **[Interviewer: No.]** I mean you don't, like. They always said she couldn't look after me because of, [catching breath] because of how she was.

**Interviewer: Take your time, Anne.**

**Anne:** ...I'm okay. [crying] I'm okay ...

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **What about anger?**

**Anne:** ... [stronger voice] Yeah, yeah, I am angry about that, actually. About what they said about my mother. **[Interviewer: Sure]** [said with some anger] I am angry that they, that they took me away from her and that they, you know, yeah – I'm angry that they made her tell this story about me being – about being my sister. ... And, em, you know, em, I AM angry about what happened to Clare. I mean I wasn't angry then, like. It didn't even *enter your brain* to get angry, then, you know. I mean, [anger and tears together] but yeah, it was wrong, like, and, do you know like, he should have stopped.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **Absolutely, Anne... But I'm also thinking about you, being afraid and unable to tell anyone, and I'm wondering who was there to protect you and hold you, Anne? And I was just remembering that little bird**

**you mentioned in our second session, that your mother saved and put back in the nest so tenderly. And it's making me wonder whether anyone ever showed you that kind of care and tenderness?**

**Anne:** ...Yeah, that's a good question, alright ... There was no one ... No, not my mother, no. And I had no father, well, like [laughs] you know what I mean, I had a father like, but you know, **[Interviewer: Yeah]** you know what I mean, don't you? **[Interviewer: Yeah]** ... Emmm .. I remember, eh, I remember Sister Margaret, she let me sit in her, in her armchair, **[Interviewer: Hmm hmm]** and, umm, and she tucked the quilted blanket over my knees, and a blanket, you know, that she had quilted herself, like with these beautiful patterns in it, like really different colours. It was really, really special. It was a really special feeling.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **Anne, so far in our sessions together, you've talked about lots of experiences in your life, and some of the powerful feelings that you've had to keep hidden inside – like your anger, your sadness, your fear. You've also talked to me about how, since Tess was born, you have often felt that she hates you and she'd be better off with another mother. I'm just thinking about**

**what connection you can make between your own experience of being placed into care by your mother when you were six months old, and Tess now being about that same age, just a few months older?**

**Anne:** Emmm... [sighs] That's a big question. I never thought about us being the same age before... Like I feel like I'm not coping. I've never had a mother to respond to me **[Interviewer: Hmm hmm]** and I just worry I'm going to get it wrong for her. **[Interviewer: Sure]** What if I don't know what she needs? Like she looks at me and, uh, [tearfully] I just crumble inside. I'm completely scared and I just can't move. And inside in my brain I'm screaming. Like what if she does grow up hating me? Like, I think she hates me *now* already.

**Interviewer:** [Step one: *Listening to the story – by clarifying*] **Okay, now let's think about that, Anne. You notice that Tess is crying or upset, and when she cries you think that might be because she hates you?**

**Anne:** That's it, exactly.

**Interviewer:** [Step five: *Naming the process – in the here and now*] **Let's think about what's happening right here, between us, if that's okay with you?**

**Anne:** Okay.

**Interviewer:** [Step five: *Naming the process – in the here and now*] **There have been times**

**in this session when you have been tearful – you've been upset – but I didn't sense you were doing that because you hated me.**

**Anne:** No, no, no, no of course not. That would be ridiculous!

**Interviewer:** [Step five: *Naming the process – in the here and now*] **So when you cried in today's session, that was because ...**

**Anne:** [co-operatively – not cutting off interviewer] That was because I was sad. And I was angry about what was happening to Clare, and that I had been put into care.

**Interviewer:** [Step five: *Naming the process – in the here and now*] **Not because you hated me?**

**Anne:** No, no not at all.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **Okay. So, thinking about Tess, when she cries or is upset, what do you think she is trying to say?**

**Anne:** I suppose she's trying to say, maybe, that she's upset. Or sad, [Interviewer: **Hmm hmm**] yeah, or wet, or hungry or, or something like that.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **And what is she NOT trying to say?**

**Anne:** ... [small laughter of recognition – a light bulb moment] That she's NOT, that she's not angry with me – she doesn't hate me.

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **And I wonder if she might even be saying that she trusts and needs you.**

**Anne:** [smiles] You know, it's a funny thing about her – she is much better at saying what she needs than I am, and she's not even a year old!

[They both laugh].

**Interviewer:** [Step four: *Revising the story – by promoting integration*] **I'm hearing, Anne, that although you are really worried about whether you can give Tess what she needs, I have a strong sense that you want to succeed with her, and that you love her. I also feel that it took a lot of courage for you to tell me how difficult you have been finding it to respond to Tess. I'm wondering whether you think with some help, you could learn to give her what you know she needs?**

**Anne:** I just want Tess to grow up knowing I did try my hardest to be a good mum for her.

## Anne's second interview – Commentary

### Voiceover

*Thinking about this last sequence and applying the LEARN Model, we see that the interviewer asks questions using all five steps of the model. The interviewer moves back and forth among the steps in order to help Anne to fill in the details of the episodes, to acknowledge and experience her truly felt emotion in relation to the story, and to have those feelings validated.*

*On the whole, we can see that during this interview, Anne uses what might be called a moderate, or perhaps 'concerning', 'A' strategy. This is a milder form of the endangering 'A' pattern that we see in Adam's transcript in Chapter 6. When recalling the childhood episodes, Anne focuses on external details and facts, and she has more difficulty with details of relationships and what she felt at the time. However, with strategic prompting and encouragement from the interviewer, Anne is able to reflect, for example, when she becomes tearful and observes that she had never considered that she had been sad as a child, and when she speaks about the link between the lack of maternal role modelling that she received and how she struggles to know what to do as a mother.*

*It is also important to note what is happening in the relationship between Anne and the interviewer. Anne experiences an attuned response from the interviewer, and allows herself to become open and vulnerable with the interviewer. In the interviewer's calm, tolerant and predictable presence, Anne shows some signs of re-organising her mind to become more in tune with her feelings. This is particularly notable when she has the moment of insight about what Tess's tears might mean – that Tess is not saying, 'Mum, I hate you,' but instead, 'Mum, I need you and I trust you.' This insight emerges when the interviewer draws Anne's attention to the here and now of their interaction, and asks Anne to consider what she herself tried to communicate with her own tears earlier in the session. This shows how beneficial it can be to help clients draw connections between their own personal life story and their behaviour in the present day – even in the present moment of the interview.*

*So Anne is developing a greater awareness and understanding of her personal story, and how the past is affecting her connection to her baby, Tess. As Anne rediscovers her own perspective and her own authentic thoughts and feelings – within the context of an attuned, listening relationship with her key worker – she is more likely to be able to resolve the unfinished traumas and losses of her past and also to experience a more spontaneous, loving and attuned connection to Tess in the present.*

## Further work

- What questions would you ask next in this interview? Why?
- How could you use the LEARN Model to encourage Anne to more fully integrate all aspects of her history, including her thoughts as well as her feelings?
- How could you use the LEARN Model to help Anne to process and work through the memories of witnessing the other children being beaten, and being unable to tell?
- Consider what further questions you would ask if you wanted to help Anne become more hopeful and internally stronger and more resilient. Looking back over the interview, what strengths – or potential strengths – were mentioned or hinted at?



### Activity: Bells that rang

1. Did 'Anne' remind you of any of your current clients?
2. If so, what speech patterns or discourse markers were similar?
3. What other discourse markers does your client use? (You can use the discourse marking sheet as a reference.)
4. What areas would be helpful to explore in more depth with your client in order to understand their attachment strategy more fully?
5. What questions might be helpful (look at the *Interviewing Guide*)?
6. What are the implications of your client's attachment patterns for the client, and for anyone that s/he cares for/looks after?
7. What do the attachment patterns you have identified suggest about your client's approach to relationships, and in particular their responses when they feel threatened in any way?
8. Who else is involved with or has information about your client that it would be helpful to talk with?

For ideas about how you might work on these issues, take a look at Chapter 9 and the *Interviewing Guide*.