

## Acceptance and commitment therapy

Acceptance and commitment therapy (or ACT) is a behavioral treatment that is based in the idea that **suffering comes not from the experience of emotional pain, but from our attempted avoidance of that pain (experiential avoidance).**

ACT's overarching goal is to **help people be open to and willing to have their inner experiences, while focusing attention not on trying to escape or avoid pain (because this is impossible to do) but instead, on living a meaningful life.**

ACT does this by:

Teaching psychological skills to handle painful thoughts and feelings

Helping us clarify what is important and meaningful for us

Mindfulness: Paying attention with flexibility, openness, and curiosity

In contrast to the assumption of 'healthy normality' of Western psychology, (and that abnormality is a disease)--**ACT assumes that the psychological processes of a normal human mind are often destructive and create psychological suffering.** (what ACT calls 'destructive normality')

**Symptom reduction is not a goal of ACT**, based on the view that ongoing attempts to get rid of 'symptoms' can create clinical disorders in the first place.

...goal is to make... "contact with the automatic or direct stimulus functions of events, without acting to reduce or manipulate those functions, and without acting on the basis solely of their derived or verbal functions" Hayes

**The human mind has not evolved to deliver happiness, but to:**

a) **SURVIVE**

**So WORRY! Be on the lookout, problem solve.**

and...

b) **BELONG TO THE GROUP**

**So guard against rejection from group;**

**And COMPARE yourself to others.**

80% of human thoughts have a negative slant.

CBT attempts to change that.

ACT seeks to defuse from thoughts altogether.

Happiness is NOT about feeling good, but about living a rich life.

Happiness Trap: To find happiness, we try to avoid or get rid of bad feelings, but the harder we try, the more bad feelings we create.

Joke: What's the difference between a dog and a human? If you put them both out in the rain for awhile, when you let them back in, only the human continues to whine.

The **Mind's** role according to ACT: the mind can be useful and it can be harmful

The mind is a problem solving marching...environmental problem solving vs. internal problem solving and the role of Language

Using language to solve internal problems can get us into trouble. We use language to dwell on and relive painful events, to scare ourselves by imagining unpleasant futures, and comparing, judging, criticizing ourselves.

Thanks to human language, we can even experience pain on the happiest days of our lives

De-literalization and relational frame theory (RFT)

Language is both our greatest strength and our greatest weakness

We are hyper-attached to our language, our logic, our thinking

Language only 5,000 years old (symbolic stuff 10,000; alphabet 3,500)

All our great achievements are due to language, so too our suffering

We must learn to manage our use of language

Language is a hammer, not the best tool for everything.

World religions have a mystical side that emphasizes a non-verbal relationship to reality.

Some even have non-mystical aspects that still do not rely on logic (like FAITH)

Garden of Eden: In their attempt to know, humans have lost their innocence, and suffering is a natural result.

Language represents reality, but it is NOT reality

Language organizes the past and organizes the future,  
but it does nothing with the present moment.

The great storyteller: This morning, I held a fresh lemon in my hands. I ran my fingers over the bright yellow skin, noting all the little dimples. I lifted it to my nose and inhaled the delicious aroma. Then I placed it on a cutting board and sliced it in half. Picking up one of the pieces, I opened my mouth and squeezed a drop of fresh lemon juice onto the top of my tongue.

The story is not the event itself:

Two different newspaper accounts of the same event.

We know that such stories can be slanted.

And we know we can stop reading at any moment if we so choose.

Some movie stars know how to ignore the tabloids; others get caught up in them.

**Self** is not my private events (thoughts). Just like a house is never the furniture. You are the house. The furniture can never be the house.

**Workability** is the ultimate criterion, not objective truth. Don't change the FORMS of cognitive behavior (as in CBT), instead change their FUNCTION.

**\*\*\*In ACT, our main interest in a thought is not whether it's true or false, but whether it's helpful; that is, if we pay attention to this thought, will it help us create the life we want?**

**Creative Hopelessness** (called Radical Hope in the VA manual). Harris refers to this as Confronting the Agenda of Emotional Control.

Anything we do to try to get rid of bad thoughts or feelings.

What have you tried?

How has it worked?

What has it cost?

Look here:   Distraction  
                  Option out (withdrawal)  
                  Thinking strategies  
                  Substances, Self harm

**Fusion => Inflexibility.** When a hard thing comes up (a stimulus like a thought or a body sensation) we restrict our range of behavioral repertoire.

So the aim is to distance from our thoughts enough to see more richly, so to LIVE more richly.

Defuse: Distance by interacting with it in new, non-avoidant ways.

### **3 parts to the process (from The Happiness Trap):**

1. Learn how you create and get stuck in the Happiness Trap.
2. Rather than trying to avoid or eliminate painful thoughts and feelings, learn how to **make room for them** and experience them in a new way that will reduce their impact, drain away their power, and dramatically decrease their influence over your life.
3. Instead of chasing happy thoughts and feelings, **focus on creating a rich and meaningful life.** This will give rise to a sense of vitality and fulfillment that is both deeply satisfying and long lasting.

### **Myths 1-4**

1. **Happiness is the natural state for all human beings.**
2. **If you're not happy, you're defective**
3. **To create a better life, we must get rid of negative feelings.**
4. **You should be able to control what you think and feel.**

CONTROL as the problem. Control is a reasonable strategy, but it does not work for internal things. WILLINGNESS is the alternative. (Willing is not the same as wanting.)

Though society leads us to believe otherwise, by telling us “stop crying” “get hold of yourself”

Vicious cycles: the “solution” we are trying to create is the problem.

We try to THINK our way out of pain (eczema metaphor)

Temptation: Control strategies sometimes work for awhile; and for unimportant things.

**Acceptance:**

**Noticing private events that are experienced**

**Letting go of efforts to avoid or change those private events**

**Responding to actual events rather than to private experiences elicited by those events**

Rumination = Exposure minus Acceptance

Whatever your attention is on, that's what life is for you at any given moment.

Re-storying: the importance of HAVING self stories  
but also the importance of holding onto those stories LOOSELY

But => And

Come to appreciate ambiguity. There is so much richness and potential in ambiguity even though extremely uncomfortable. If you are an addict who is worried that you might relapse, the only way to stop the ambiguity is to use.

The thing that you like least about yourself is also your stethoscope for hearing human hearts.

Defusion techniques=gimmicks that serve as training wheels

Evaluation vs. Description

Hold a difficult or painful thought for 10 seconds (I am selfish)

Now hold this: I am having the thought that I am selfish.

Now: I notice I am having the thought that I am selfish.

Now sing "I am selfish" to the tune of Happy Birthday.  
Then believe it for 10 seconds.

Now sing it to Joy to the World.  
Then believe it for 10 seconds.

Any change?

Defusion and Willingness

Name Tag Exercise : Write two negative labels you give yourself and wear it around for the day

Willingness: Eyes wide open

Undermining Cognitive Fusion: Taking your mind for a walk

Tag your thoughts, like a biologist tags birds.

Psychological Flexibility=the 6 core principles of the hexaflex.

#### Self as Context:

Pick a time from a year ago; pick a time from teenage years; pick a time from when you were a child. Observe the part that was there witnessing that at that age, and it is the same part that is here now.

**Og Lindsay's dead man rule: Don't have all your treatment outcomes that a dead person could do better. (Don't have only outcomes that pull for lack of behavior).**

Instead, go for outcomes you would want on your tombstone.

#### ACT can be broken down into five goals:

##### **1. Recognizing that trying to escape emotional pain will never work.**

ACT therapists refer to this goal as *creative hopelessness*. This goal is met when a client sees that all the things they have been trying to do to avoid emotional pain do not work, and there likely will never be an effective way of completely eliminating emotional pain from one's life.

##### **2. Control is the problem. (Experiential Avoidance vs. Willingness)**

The realization that problems come not from the emotional pain itself but from attempts to control or avoid that emotional pain is the second goal of ACT. The client may realize that trying to avoid emotional pain is counterproductive. In addition to the pain potentially getting worse, so much time and energy is often spent trying to avoid emotional pain that there is no time for the pursuit of positive things in one's life.

##### **3. Viewing yourself as separate from your thoughts.**

Our thoughts are very believable. A person who has experienced a traumatic event may have thoughts that they are a bad person or that they are "broken" or "damaged." However, while these thoughts may *feel* true, they are only thoughts and not a reflection of what is real. The third goal in ACT is to help the client "take a step back" from their thoughts and not buy into them as truth. A thought is just a thought.

"I am a person who is having the thought that..."

##### **4. Stopping the struggle.**

At this stage in ACT, clients are encouraged to stop their tug-of-war with their thoughts and feelings. The client is to let go of attempts to avoid or control thoughts and feelings and instead practice being open to and willing to experience thoughts and feelings for what they are and not what we think they are (for example, bad or dangerous).

##### **5. Commitment to action**

Avoidance can consume one's life. It takes a tremendous amount of energy, especially for a person who has experienced a traumatic event. As a result, the person may not be placing much time or energy into living a meaningful and rewarding life. Therefore, the final goal of ACT is the identification of areas of importance in a person's life (referred to as "values" in ACT) and increasing the extent with

which a person is doing things that are consistent with those values, regardless of what emotions or thoughts may come up.

For example, a person who has experienced a sexual assault may fear or have anxiety about getting into relationships again despite the fact that they may value closeness and intimacy. In ACT, the person would be encouraged to engage in behaviors consistent with those values (for example, reconnecting with an old friend) while being willing and open to have whatever anxiety may come up as a result. By not avoiding that anxiety, it will not get worse and will be less likely to get in the way of the pursuit of a meaningful life.

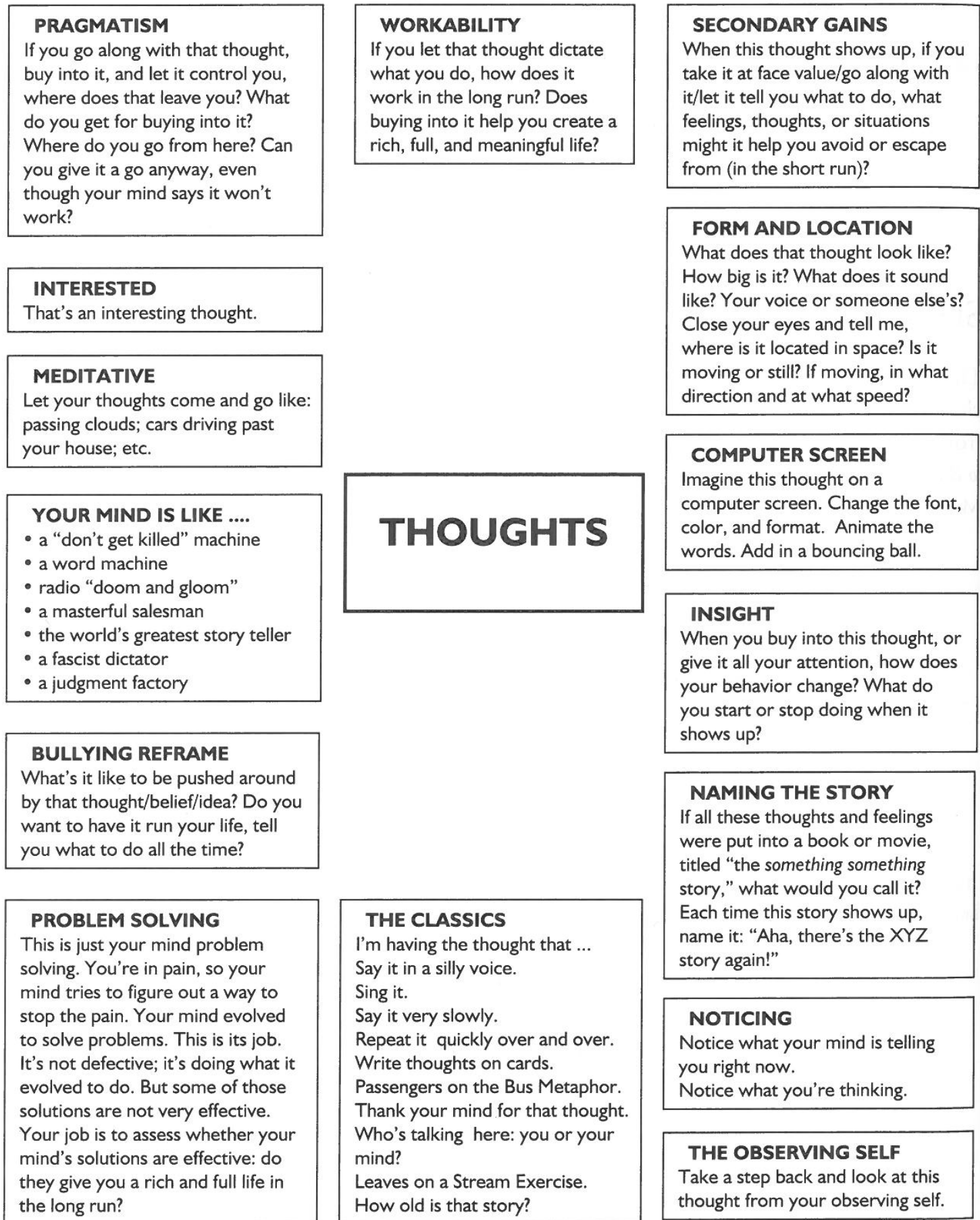


Figure 7.1 Summary of Defusion Techniques

### HEALING HAND

Lay a hand on the part of your body where you feel this most intensely. Imagine this is a healing hand--the hand of a loving nurse or parent or partner. Send some warmth into this area--not to get rid of the feeling, but to open up around it, make room for it, hold it gently.

### SOFTENING

See if you can soften up around the feeling, loosen up, and hold it gently.

### ALLOWING

See if you can allow this feeling to be there. You don't have to like it or want it--just allow it.

### EXPANSION

See if you can open up and expand around the feeling. It's as if, in some magical way, all this space opens up inside you.

### THE OBSERVING SELF

Take a step back and look at this feeling from your observing self.

### THE CURIOUS SCIENTIST

Notice where this feeling is in your body. Zoom in on it. Observe it as if you are a curious scientist who has never encountered anything like this. Where are the edges? Where does it start and stop? Is it moving or still? Is it at the surface or inside you? Hot or cold? Light or heavy?

### THE CHOICE TO FEEL

Suppose I could give you a choice:  
(a) you never have to have this feeling ever again, but it means you lose all capacity to love and care, or  
(b) you get to love and care, but when there's a gap between what you want and what you've got, feelings like this one show up.  
Which do you choose?

## FEELINGS

### PHYSICALIZING

Imagine this feeling is an object. Is it liquid, solid, or gaseous? How big is it? Is it light or heavy? What temperature is it? Is it at the surface or inside you? What shape does it have? What color? Is it transparent or opaque? What does the surface feel like--hot or cold, rough or smooth, wet or dry?

### COMPASSION

Hold this feeling gently as if it's a crying baby or a whimpering puppy.

### THE STRUGGLE SWITCH

Is the struggle switch on, off, or at the halfway point we call "tolerating it"?  
If the switch was like a dial with a scale of 0 to 10, and 10 is full on struggle, and 0 no struggle at all, then right now, what level are you? Are you willing to see if we can bring it down a notch or two?

### NORMALIZING

This feeling tells you that you're a normal human being who has a heart and who cares. This is what humans feel when there's a gap between what we want and what we've got.

### METAPHORS

Quicksand  
Passengers on the Bus  
Demons on the Boat  
Wade Through the Swamp  
Pushing Against a Clipboard

### BREATHE INTO IT

Breathe into this feeling. It's as if your breath flows into and around it.

### NOTICING

Notice where this feeling is. Notice where it's most intense. Notice the hot spots and cold spots. Notice the different sensations within the feeling.

Figure 8.1 Common Acceptance Techniques



**SPEECHES**

Imagine your eightieth birthday (or twenty-first or fiftieth or retirement party, and so on). Two or three people make speeches about what you stand for, what you mean to them, the role you played in their life. In the IDEAL world, where you have lived your life as the person you want to be, what would you hear them saying?

**LIFE AND DEATH**

- a. Imagine your own funeral: imagine what you would like to hear people saying about you.
- b. Act out your own funeral--psychodrama style
- c. Write your obituary or fill in a blank tombstone.
- d. Imagine you somehow know you only have twenty-four hours to live, but you can't tell anyone: who would you visit, and what would you do?

**WEALTH**

You inherit a fortune. What would you do with it? Who would be there to share those activities or appreciate the things you buy? How would you act toward all those people who share your new life?

**EXPLORING YOUR PAIN**

- a. Pain As Your Ally: What does this pain tell you about what really matters, what you truly care about?
- b. Pain As Your Teacher: How can this pain help you to grow or learn or develop new skills and strengths? How can it help you better relate to others?
- c. From Worrying to Caring: What do your fears, worries and anxieties show you that you care about? What do they remind you is very important?

**CHARACTER STRENGTHS**

What personal strengths and qualities do you already have? Which new ones would you like to develop? How would you like to apply them?

**IF ... THEN ...**

If you achieved that goal, then how would you change as a result? What would you do differently from there on? How would you behave differently with friends, family, colleagues, customers, and others?

**MIND-READING MACHINE**

Imagine I place a mind-reading machine on your head, and I tune it into the mind of someone very important to you, so you can now hear their every thought. As you tune in, they're thinking about YOU--about what you stand for, what your strengths are, what you mean to them, and the role you play in their life. In the IDEAL world, where you have lived your life as the person you want to be, what would you hear them thinking?

**Clarifying  
Values**

**MAGIC WAND**

- a. I wave this magic wand and you have the total approval of everyone on the planet--no matter what you do, they love, respect, and admire you--whether you become a surgeon or a serial killer. What would you then do with your life? How would you treat others?
- b. I wave this magic wand, and all these painful thoughts, feelings, and memories no longer have any impact on you. What would you do with your life? What would you start, stop, do more of, or less of? How would you behave differently? If we watched you on a video, what would we see and hear that would show us magic had happened?

**WHAT MATTERS?**

What do you really want? What matters to you in the big picture? What do you want to stand for? Is there anything in your life right now that gives you a sense of meaning, purpose, vitality?

**THE SWEET SPOT**

Vividly recall a rich, "sweet" memory and get in touch with the emotions. What is meaningful about this memory?

**DISAPPROVAL**

What do you disapprove of, or dislike, in the actions of others? How would you act differently, if you were in their shoes?

**MISSING OUT**

What important areas of life have you given up or missed out on for lack of willingness?

**FORMS AND WORKSHEETS**

- Valued Living Questionnaire
- Bull's Eye
- Life Compass
- Valued Actions Inventory
- List of Common Values

**CHILDHOOD DREAMS**

As a child, what sort of life did you imagine for the future?

**ARTISTIC METHODS**

Paint, draw, or sculpt your values.

**LIKES**

What do you like to do?

**ROLE MODELS**

Who do you look up to? Who inspires you? What personal strengths or qualities do they have that you admire?

## Dissecting The Problem

This form is to help gather information about the nature of the main challenge, issue, or problem facing you. First, please summarize, in 1 or 2 sentences, what the main issue or problem is:

Second, please describe, in 1 or 2 sentences, how it affects your life, and what it stops you from doing or being:

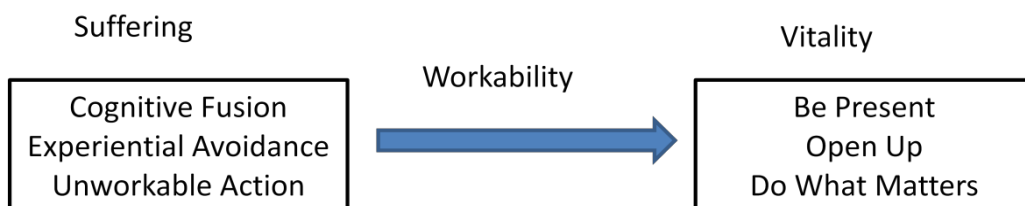
Regardless of what your problem is – whether it is a physical illness, a difficult relationship, a work situation, a financial crisis, a performance issue, the loss of a loved one, a severe injury, or a clinical disorder such as depression - when we dissect the problem, we usually find four major elements that contribute significantly to the issue. These are represented in the boxes below. Please write as much as you can in each box, about the thoughts, feelings and actions that contribute to or worsen the challenge, problem or issue facing you.

<p><b>Entanglement With Thoughts</b> What memories, worries, fears, self-criticisms, or other unhelpful thoughts do you dwell on, or get “caught up” in, related to this issue? What thoughts do you allow to hold you back or push you around or bring you down?</p>	<p><b>Life-draining Actions:</b> What are you currently doing that makes your life worse in the long term: keeps you stuck; wastes your time or money; drains your energy; restricts your life, impacts negatively on your health, work or relationships; maintains or worsens the problems you are dealing with?</p>
<p><b>Struggle With Feelings</b> What emotions, feelings, urges, impulses, or sensations (associated with this issue) do you fight with, avoid, suppress, try to get rid of, or otherwise struggle with?</p>	<p><b>Avoiding Challenging Situations:</b> What situations, activities, people or places are you avoiding or staying away from? What have you quit, withdrawn from, dropped out of? What do you keep “putting off” until later?</p>

## A QUICK GUIDE TO ACT CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION

1. What valued direction does the client want to move in?  
*(What domain of life and what values seem most important to this client? Does she have any values-congruent goals or ongoing valued activities?)*
  
2. What stands in the **client's way**?  
*(Identify the barriers to valued living: fusion, avoidance, and unworkable action.)*
  - a) What is he fusing with?  
*(Identify problematic fusion, including reasons, rules, judgments, past, future, and self-description.)*
  
  - b) What is she avoiding?  
*(Identify thoughts, feelings, memories, urges, sensations, and emotions that this client is trying to avoid or get rid of.)*
  
  - c) What unworkable actions is he taking?  
*(What is the client doing that makes his life worse or keeps him stuck?)*[END  
OUT1]

You can use the diagram below to help you plan your next session. Write down any metaphors, exercises, questions, techniques, or worksheets that you could use in the next session to help your client make a workable shift.



## ***Assessing Psychological Inflexibility: Six Core Processes***

1. *Dominance of the conceptualized past or future; limited self-knowledge:* How much time does your client spend dwelling on the past or fantasizing/worrying about the future? What elements of the past or future does she dwell on? To what extent is she disconnected from or lacking awareness of her own thoughts, feelings and actions?

2. *Fusion:* What sort of unhelpful cognitive content is your client fusing with—rigid rules or expectations, self-limiting beliefs, criticisms and judgments, reason-giving, being right, ideas of hopelessness or worthlessness, or others?

3. *Experiential avoidance:* What private experiences (thoughts, feelings, memories, and so on) is your client avoiding? How is he doing that? How pervasive is experiential avoidance in her life?

4. *Attachment to the conceptualized self:* What is your client's "conceptualized self"? For example, does he see himself as broken/damaged/unlovable/weak/stupid, and so on, or does she perhaps see herself as strong/superior/successful? How fused is he with this self-image? Does she define herself in terms of her body, or a character trait, or a particular role, occupation, or diagnosis?

5. *Lack of values clarity/contact:* What core values is your client unclear about, neglecting or acting inconsistently with? (For example, commonly neglected values include connection, caring, contribution, authenticity, openness, self-care, self-compassion, loving, nurturing, living in the presents.)

6. *Unworkable Action:* What impulsive, avoidant or self-defeating actions is your client taking? Does she fail to persist when persistent action is required? Or does she inappropriately continue when such action is ineffective? What people, places, situations, and activities is he avoiding or withdrawing from?

## Simple Ways to Get Present

### *Take Ten Breaths*

This is a simple exercise to center yourself and connect with your environment. Practice it throughout the day, especially any time you find yourself getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings.

1. Take ten slow, deep breaths. Focus on breathing out as slowly as possible until the lungs are completely empty—and then allow them to refill by themselves.
2. Notice the sensations of your lungs emptying. Notice them refilling. Notice your rib cage rising and falling. Notice the gentle rise and fall of your shoulders.
3. See if you can let your thoughts come and go as if they're just passing cars, driving past outside your house.
4. Expand your awareness: simultaneously notice your breathing and your body. Then look around the room and notice what you can see, hear, smell, touch, and feel.

### *Drop Anchor*

This is another simple exercise to center yourself and connect with the world around you. Practice it throughout the day, especially any time you find yourself getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings.

1. Plant your feet into the floor.
2. Push them down—notice the floor beneath you, supporting you.
3. Notice the muscle tension in your legs as you push your feet down.
4. Notice your entire body—and the feeling of gravity flowing down through your head, spine, and legs into your feet.
5. Now look around and notice what you can see and hear around you. Notice where you are and what you're doing.

### *Notice Five Things*

This is yet another simple exercise to center yourself and engage with your environment. Practice it throughout the day, especially any time you find yourself getting caught up in your thoughts and feelings.

1. Pause for a moment
2. Look around and notice five things that you can see.
3. Listen carefully and notice five things that you can hear.
4. Notice five things that you can feel in contact with your body (for example, your watch against your wrist, your trousers against your legs, the air on your face, your feet upon the floor, your back against the chair).
5. Finally, do all of the above simultaneously

# Informal Mindfulness Practice

## *1. Mindfulness in Your Morning Routine*

Pick an activity that constitutes part of your daily morning routine, such as brushing your teeth, shaving, making the bed, or taking a shower. When you do it, totally focus attention on what you're doing: the body movements, the taste, the touch, the smell, the sight, the sound, and so on. Notice what's happening with an attitude of openness and curiosity.

For example, when you're in the shower, notice the sounds of the water as it sprays out of the nozzle, as it hits your body, and as it gurgles down the drain. Notice the temperature of the water, and the feel of it in your hair, and on your shoulders, and running down your legs. Notice the smell of the soap and shampoo, and the feel of them against your skin. Notice the sight of the water droplets on the walls or shower curtain, the water dripping down your body and the steam rising upward. Notice the movements of your arms as you wash or scrub or shampoo.

When thoughts arise, acknowledge them, and let them come and go like passing cars. Again and again, you'll get caught up in your thoughts. As soon as you realize this has happened, gently acknowledge it, note what the thought was that distracted you, and bring your attention back to the shower.

## *2. Mindfulness of Domestic Chores*

Pick an activity such as ironing clothes, washing dishes, vacuuming floors—something mundane that you have to do to make your life work—and do it mindfully. For example, when ironing clothes, notice the color and shape of the clothing, and the pattern made by the creases, and the new pattern as the creases disappear. Notice the hiss of the steam, the creak of the ironing board, the faint sound of the iron moving over the material. Notice the grip of your hand on the iron, and the movement of your arm and your shoulder.

If boredom or frustration arises, simply acknowledge it, and bring your attention back to the task at hand. When thoughts arise, acknowledge them, let them be, and bring your attention back to what you're doing. Again and again, your attention will wander. As soon as you realize this has happened, gently acknowledge it, note what distracted you, and bring your attention back to your current activity.

## *3. Mindfulness of Pleasant Activities*

Pick an activity you enjoy such as cuddling with a loved one, eating lunch, stroking the cat, playing with the dog, walking in the park, listening to music, having a soothing hot bath, and so on. Do this activity mindfully: engage in it fully, using all five of your senses, and savor every moment. If and when your attention wanders, as soon as you realize it, note what distracted you, and re-engage in whatever you're doing.

## Clean Versus Dirty Discomfort Diary

Instructions: Each time you run into a situation in which you feel “stuck” or in which you are struggling with your thoughts or feelings, please complete each column here.

Situation	(Clean Stuff) My first reactions	Suffering Level	(Dirty Stuff) What I did about my reactions	New Suffering
What happened to start this?	What immediately “showed up” in the way of thoughts, feelings, memories, or physical sensations?	Rate your immediate distress level on a 1-100 scale (1= no suffering, 100 = extreme suffering).	Did I struggle with things I didn’t like? Did I criticize myself? Did I try to shove my reactions back in, or pretend they weren’t there?	Rate your new suffering level on the 1-100 scale.

**YOUR VALUES:** *What really matters to you, deep in your heart? What do you want to do with your time on this planet? What sort of person do you want to be? What personal strengths or qualities do you want to develop?*

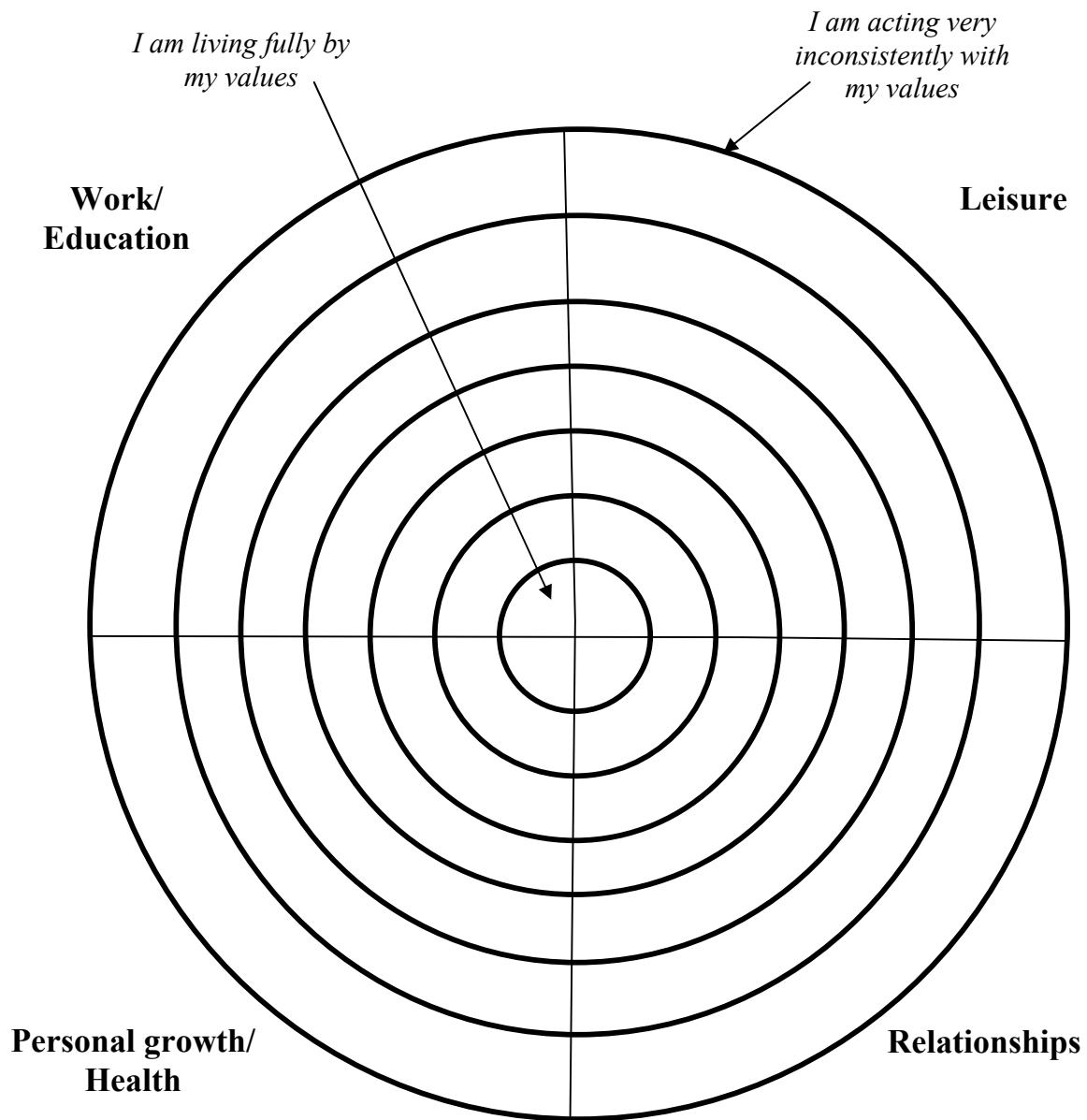
**1. Work/Education:** includes workplace, career, education, skills development, etc.

**2. Relationships:** includes your partner, children, parents, relatives, friends, co-workers, and other social contacts.

**3. Personal Growth/Health:** may include religion, spirituality, creativity, life skills, meditation, yoga, nature; exercise, nutrition, and/or addressing health risk factors like smoking, alcohol, drugs or overeating etc

**4. Leisure:** how you play, relax, stimulate, or enjoy yourself; activities for rest, recreation, fun and creativity.

**THE BULL'S EYE:** make an X in each area of the dart board, to represent where you stand today.





### The Life Compass

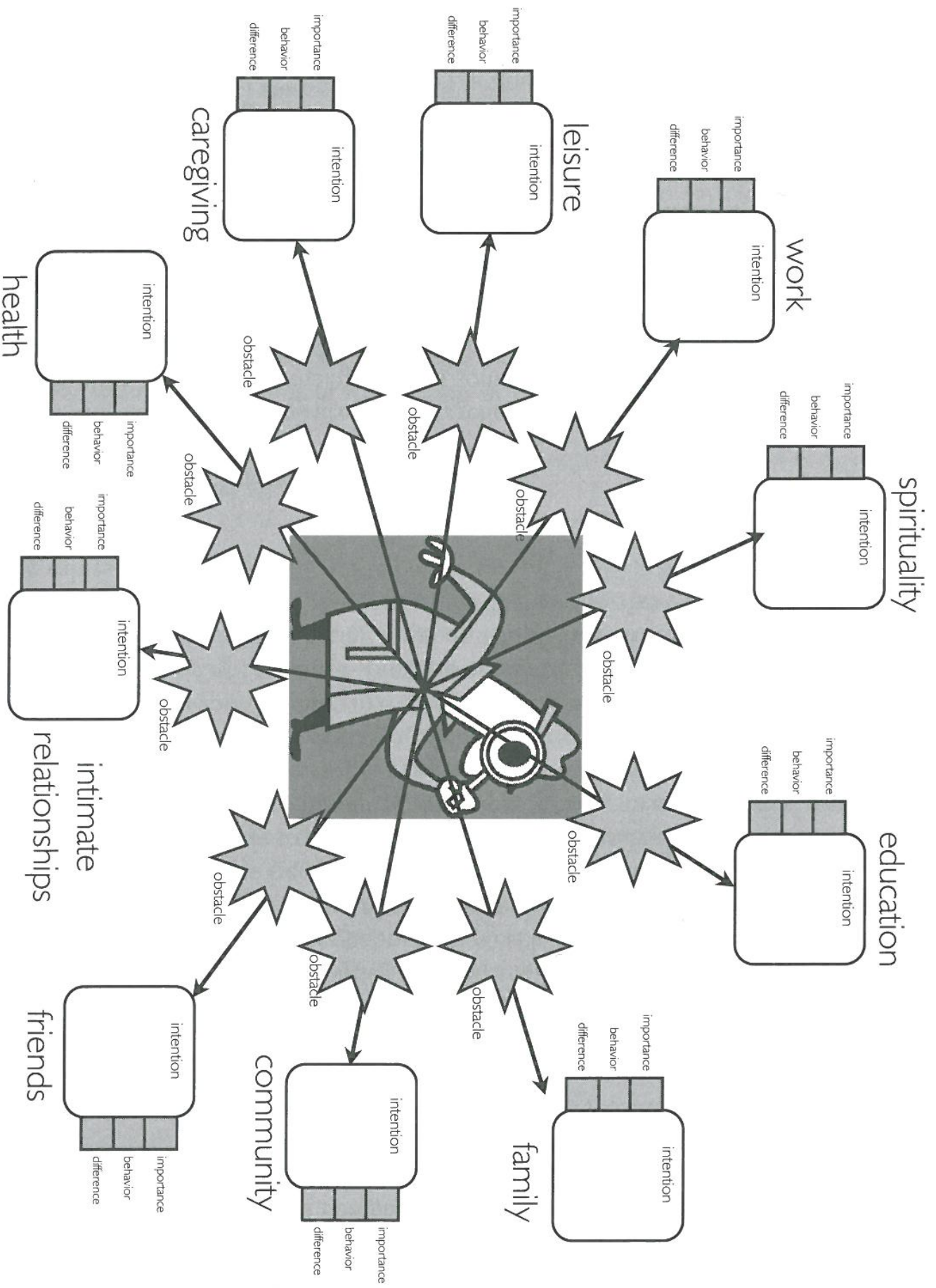
In the main part of each large box, write a few key words about what is important or meaningful to you in this domain of life: What sort of person do you want to be? What sort of personal strengths and qualities do you want to cultivate? What you want to stand for? What do you want to do? How do you ideally want to behave? (If a box seems irrelevant to you, that's okay: just leave it blank. If you get stuck on a box, then skip it, and come back to it later. And it's okay if the same words appear in several or all boxes: this helps you identify core values that cut through many domains of life.)

Once you've done that for all boxes, go through them and in the upper small square inside each box, mark on a scale of 0-10 how important these values are to you, at this point in your life: 0= no importance, 10= extremely important. (It's okay if several squares all have the same score.)

Finally, in the lower small square inside each box, mark on a scale of 0-10 how effectively you are living by these values right now. 0= not at all 10= living by them fully (Again, it's okay if several squares all have the same score.)

Finally have a good look at what you've written. What does this tell you about: a) What is important in your life? b) What you are currently neglecting?

<b>Parenting</b>	<b>Personal Growth</b>	<b>Leisure</b>	<b>Spirituality</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Community &amp; Environment</b>	
<b>Family Relationships</b>	<b>Intimate Relationships</b>	<b>Social Relationships</b>	



## **The Willingness and Action Plan**

My goal is to (be specific):

The values underlying my goal are:

The actions I will take to achieve that goal are (be specific):

The thoughts/memories, feelings, sensations, urges I'm willing to make room for (in order to achieve this goal):-

- Thoughts/memories:

- Feelings:

- Sensations:

- Urges:

- It would be useful to remind myself that:

- If necessary, I can break this goal down into smaller steps, such as:

- The smallest, easiest step I can begin with is:

- The time, day and date that I will take that first step, is: