

The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ-2)

This is perhaps the most commonly used measure of psychological flexibility that you can find. It has been cited over 2000 times in scientific publications, and we generally know what its scores mean. My colleagues and I developed the original AAQ (Hayes et al., 2004) as well as the updated version presented below (Bond et al., 2011). You can use it weekly or biweekly to track how you are doing with applying psychological flexibility skills in your daily life.

Don't worry about trying to get to a "perfect" score. Use this number as a way to keep track of changes in your life over time. As you apply what you learned in *A Liberated Mind*, your psychological flexibility will improve.

AAQ-2

Below you will find a list of statements. Please rate how true each statement is for you by selecting a number next to it. Use the scale below to make your choice.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
never true	very seldom true	seldom true	sometimes true	frequently true	almost always true	always true

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|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | My painful experiences and memories make it difficult for me to live a life that I would value. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2. | I'm afraid of my feelings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3. | I worry about not being able to control my worries and feelings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4. | My painful memories prevent me from having a fulfilling life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5. | Emotions cause problems in my life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6. | It seems like most people are handling their lives better than I am. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7. | Worries get in the way of my success. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

To score the AAQ-2, simply add up your responses for each question. Higher total scores mean less flexibility, while lower total scores mean more flexibility.

I gently encourage you to think about this score in the context of you, and not anyone else. For some people, their scores move quickly (in the matter of a few weeks). For others, it might take longer (a few months). A significant change for one person might not be significant for another. No one is perfect at these skills, so don't expect yourself to be either.

For those of you who would like to anchor your scores to some kind of cutoff, we do think that scores around 24-28 are associated with the cutoffs on measures of symptoms, like depression or anxiety.

References

Bond, F. W., Hayes, S. C., Baer, R. A., Carpenter, K. M., Guenole, N., Orcutt, H. K., Waltz, T., & Zettle, R. D. (2011). Preliminary psychometric properties of the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire – II: A revised measure of psychological inflexibility and experiential avoidance. *Behavior Therapy, 42*, 676–688.

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D., Wilson, K. G., Bissett, R. T., Pistorello, J., Toarmino, D., Polusny, M., A., Dykstra, T. A., Batten, S. V., Bergan, J., Stewart, S. H., Zvolensky, M. J., Eifert, G. H., Bond, F. W., Forsyth J. P., Karekla, M., & McCurry, S. M. (2004). Measuring experiential avoidance: A preliminary test of a working model. *The Psychological Record, 54*, 553-578.