ACT in a Nutshell

An illustrated companion to *A Liberated Mind* by Steven C. Hayes, PhD

By Esther Hayes
The Dictator Within
“Whether the voice is positive or negative is not as important as whether it dominates us... When we learn to tame it, it can be very useful.”
“For the longest time I felt as though I was in a tug-of-war with a gigantic anxiety monster who was trying to pull me into a bottomless pit. I fought and pulled, but no matter how hard I tried I could not win, but neither could I give up and be cast into oblivion.
It was very hard for me to realize that I did not need to win this war. Life was not asking that of me. It was asking me to drop the rope. Once I did that, I could use my arms and hands for more interesting things.”
Attention is Like a Flashlight
Avoidance Causes Pain

“It is actually safer to increase contact with what is feared, rather than struggling to ‘get away.’”

PG. 200
"As you emerge behind your eyes, you begin to see behind the eyes of others. You notice people noticing you; you notice people noticing you noticing them. You sense a kind of awareness that binds us all together."
Imagine that you are watching a quietly flowing brook with large leaves on it floating by. Each thought that comes into your mind, place it on a leaf and watch it float downstream... The goal is to stay by the stream, watching your thoughts.

If you discover you’ve stopped doing the exercise and your mind has gone elsewhere, which is common, try to catch what led your mind astray... After noting how the “fusion trigger” worked, get right back to watching the brook and begin again.”
“There is no yearning more important to human beings than to freely pick and pursue our life direction. A clear sense of self-directed meaning provides us with an essentially inexhaustible supply of motivation. But we can easily lose sight of what is actually meaningful to us.”
“Then, in the darkest of dark hours, the hero comes to a pivotal moment in which she discovers inner resources she did not know she had... Passion without perseverance is a tragedy; persistence without purpose is a mockery.”

PG. 252-253
“The true joy of learning the flexibility skills comes from combining them in an ongoing way to rise to the daily challenges of our lives—to pivot toward what matters... to us.”

PG. 263

The Dance of Flexibility