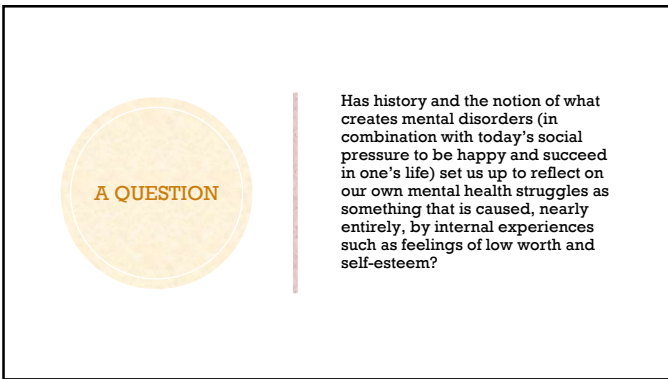


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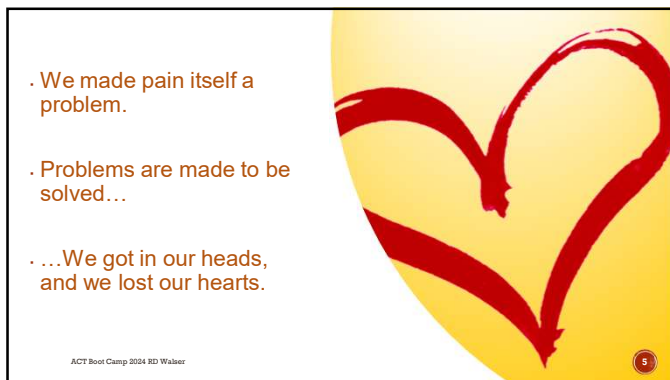
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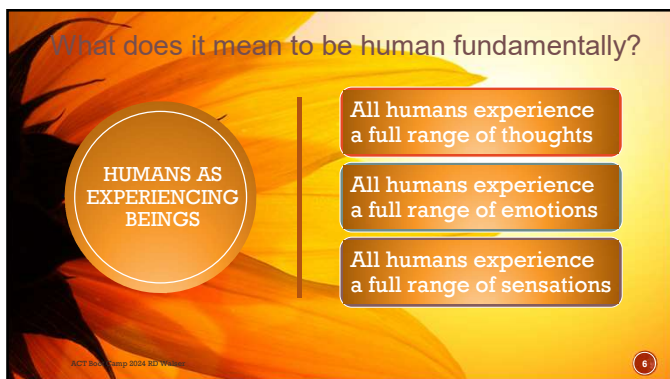
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6

COMING BACK TO BEING HUMAN



7

CONTEXT MATTERS

- A more useful understanding of mental health issues might be that problems arise in the dynamic interaction of people, their learning history, their environments, and physiology.

8

CONSCIOUS LIVING

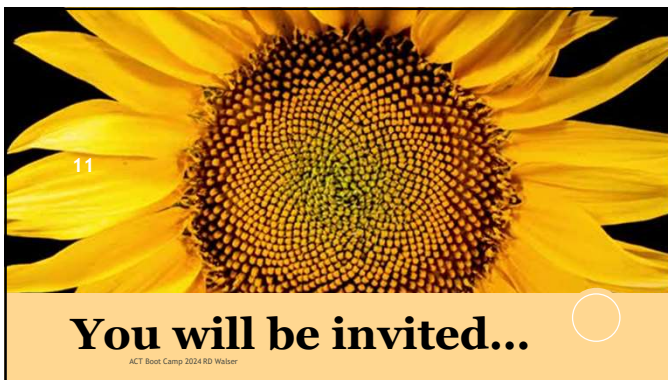
- The work and support needed to **rise** into our own sense of a fulfilling life that is not marred by calls to feel good but linked to personal values requires courage and flexibility.
- Joy and pain will be a part of this growth (but it is what vitality entails).

RISE

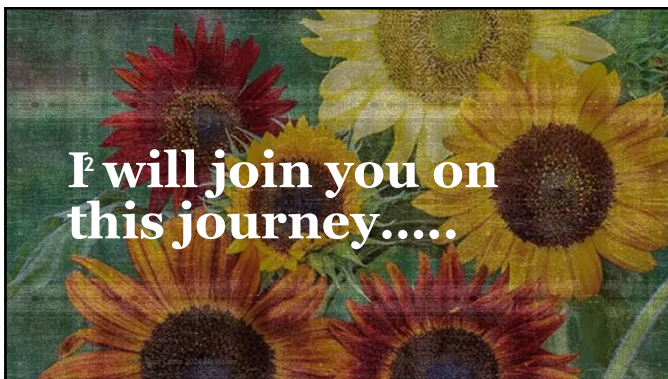
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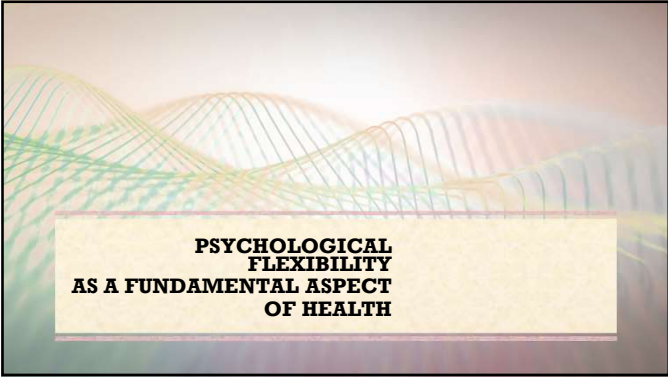


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BUT FIRST....

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**PSYCHOLOGICAL
FLEXIBILITY
AS A FUNDAMENTAL ASPECT
OF HEALTH**

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**CONTEXT
MATTERS**

AS NOTED

- Traditionally, positive emotions and thoughts, strengths, and the satisfaction of basic needs have been seen as the cornerstones of psychological health.
- These fail, however, to capture many of the fluctuating and conflicting forces that are revealed when people navigate the environment and social world and when you look at individual learning histories - idiographic

• (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010)

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Our “Minds” Do Not Always Know What is Good for Us

- As noted, we can verbally construct needs, dangers, and futures and take action based on these constructions
- We struggle for no reason and hold on when we should let go
- We live in a derived, verbally regulated reality rather than to experience the world as it unfolds in the here and now
- Language is overemphasized as a means to achieving well-being

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Context Matters: Verbal Relating

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Did you find yourself making connections based purely on language or your experiences?

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Context Matters: Verbal Relating

Love

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20

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Did you find yourself making connections based purely on language or your experiences?

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Context Matters: Verbal Relating

Fear

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Hiding**Running****Fighting**

**Humans spend
a lot of time**

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Maladaptive Coping Actions

These actions tend to be
values inconsistent and
ineffective in addressing
problems

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Characteristics of Psychological Rigidity



Inflexible Relationship with thinking	Inflexible Relationship with Emotions	Behavioral Rigidity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Sticking" to thoughts, beliefs, and stories • Difficulty shifting viewpoints or considering alternatives • Low curiosity and processes of discovery Inflexible emotional experiencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of feelings and sensations • Struggle to encounter emotions healthily (e.g., can overreact to emotional experience or is seeking happiness as if it were supposed to last) • Unable to move with the flow of "negative" feelings or clings to positive feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeating the same behaviors, even when they are ineffective • Avoidance or resistance leading to "stuckness" in life • Impulsiveness • Behavioral stoppage

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RIGIDITY PREVAILS WHEN CLIENTS GET LOCKED INTO MIND AND BEHAVIORS

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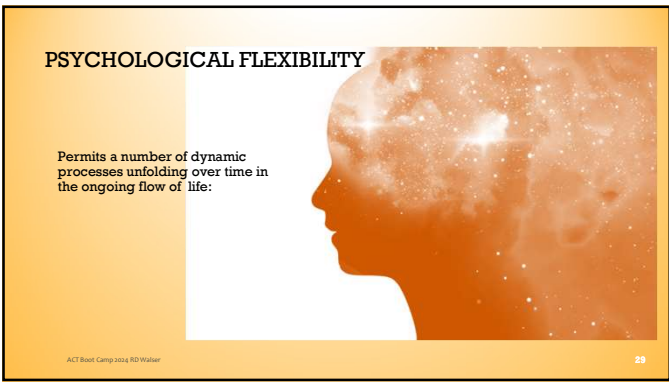
Verbal knowledge vs. Experiential knowledge

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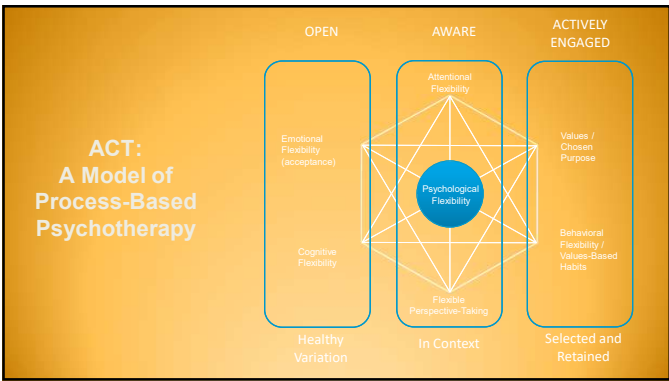
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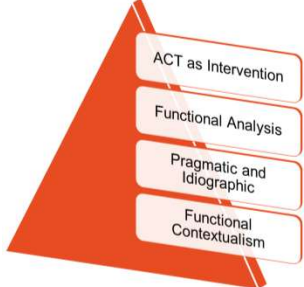
Psychological Flexibility

- Recognize and adapt to various situational demands;
- Shift mindsets or behavioral repertoires when current strategies compromise personal or social functioning;
- Considers the flexible expression of different types of emotional expression (joy, pain, anger, anxiety) as the situation warrants
- Maintain balance among important life domains

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Underlying Philosophy and Principles



ACT as Intervention

Functional Analysis


Pragmatic and Idiographic

Functional Contextualism

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Orienting to ACT's Underlying Philosophy

- Functional Contextualism
 - A philosophical worldview in which any behavior is interpreted as *inseparable* from its current setting or context.
 - The function of a behavior (not the form) is the target of understanding and influence in therapy.
 - As therapists, we seek to influence behavior change in context and with attention to individual learning histories.



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Principles

Idiographic

- Because no two individuals have identical learning histories or situational contexts, every ACT case is subject to adaptation and considerations of individual and cultural influence, including how these influences unfold between client and therapist.

Pragmatic

- Practical consequences and real-world applications
- Dynamic and adaptable, focusing on what works in specific contexts

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ACT starts to look like a cartoon of itself



"My therapy is quite simple: I wag my tail and lick your face until you feel good about yourself again."

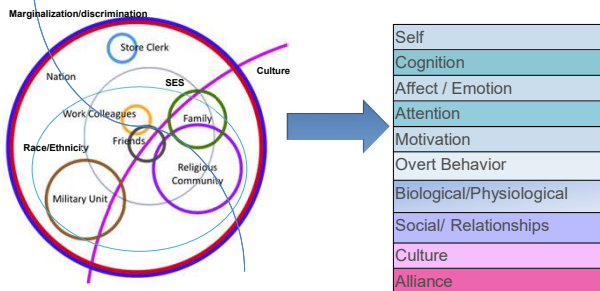
© Kandy Glasbergen, 2007.
E-mail: randyg@horwich.net

GLASBERGEN

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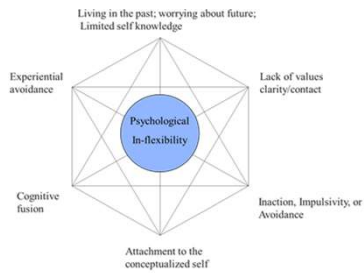
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Behavior in Context



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The Reason, Purpose, or Motivation for a Behavior



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Opening

Awaring

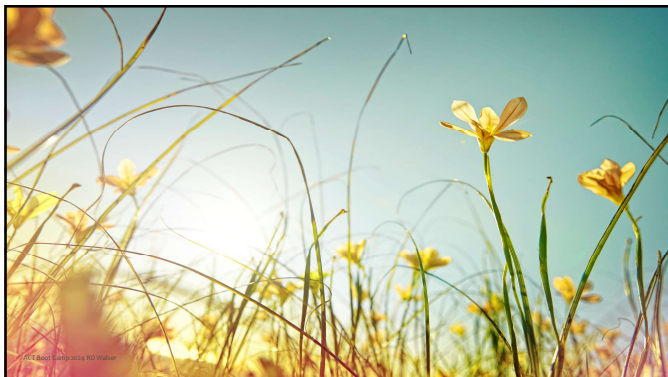
Six Core Processes of ACT

Accepting
Defusing
Present momenting
Self-as-contexting
Valuing
Acting

Engaging



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ACT as Intervention

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Intervention

Psychotherapy

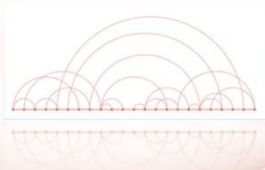
Therapist

Client

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The Arc of Therapy: Holding the Story of ACT



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- The work is contained in its name
- Perhaps not like other therapies
- Let me know what is happening for you
- Perhaps reconsider any impulsive urge to quit – give it time – you will know
- Emotion –thoughts experiencing: openness/flexibility
- Better life vs better feeling

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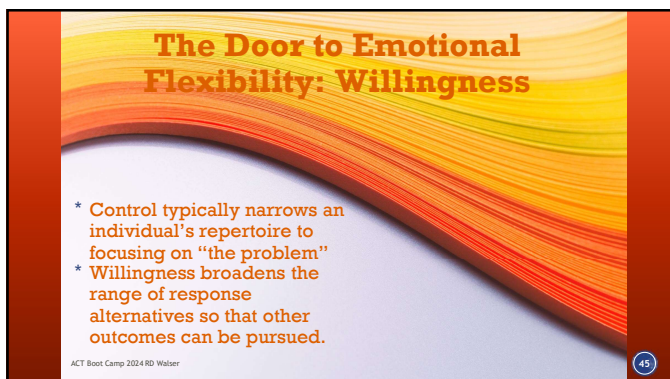


Creative Hopelessness as a Process

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The Door to Emotional Flexibility: Willingness

- * Control typically narrows an individual's repertoire to focusing on "the problem"
- * Willingness broadens the range of response alternatives so that other outcomes can be pursued.

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Emotional Flexibility Willingness as a stance

- The therapist creates a context where the client is given the opportunity to experience ALL private events fully and without defense
- Willingness helps highlight that acceptance involves an active process with a purpose



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ACCEPTANCE

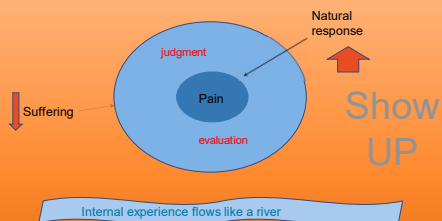
What are you asking the client to accept

Acceptance is lined up with experiencing emotion/exposure

Tin can monster

Noticing the edges

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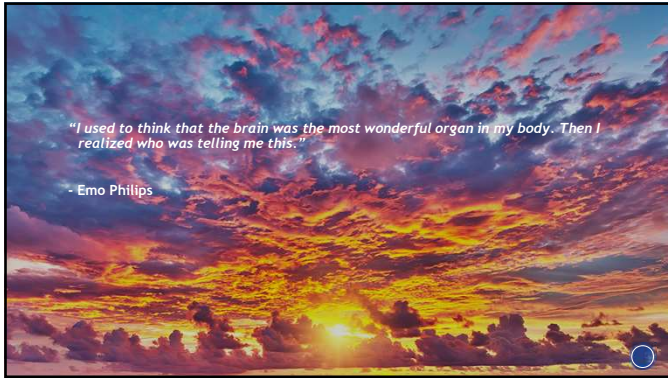


Decrease suffering by showing up to the natural response and letting it be what it is: a thought, a feeling, a sensation, a memory (be mindfully aware of experience). This must be done *compassionately*...it is not a diminishing of experience, but a presence to and acknowledgment of it – a gentle observing.

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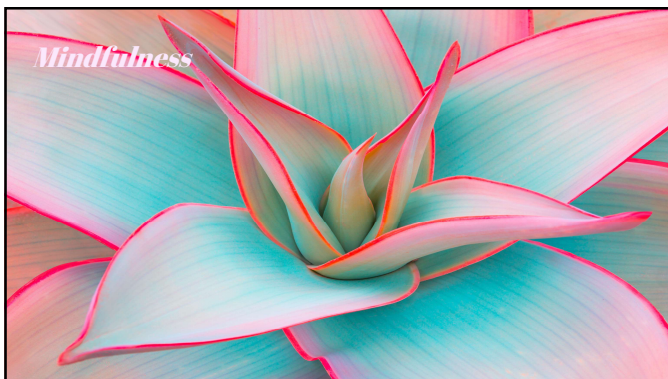
Cognitive Flexibility: Defusion

- Specifically targets and undermines social and contextual supports for thoughts as causes of behavior
- Change in context such that the ongoing process of thinking is more evident
- Provides the opportunity to interact with language in non-literal ways
- Two things
 - The word isn't in the object
 - Thinking is ongoing - flows



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Compassion

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Compassion

- The word "compassion" has its origins in Latin and Middle English. It ultimately derives from the Latin word "compati," which combines "com-" (meaning "with" or "together") and "pati" (meaning "to suffer" or "to endure").
- Over time, the meaning of compassion has evolved to encompass not only empathy and sympathy but also the desire to alleviate or alleviate the suffering of others through acts of kindness, support, and understanding.
 - The distinction between compassion as originally understood and loving kindness

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Distinction in the work

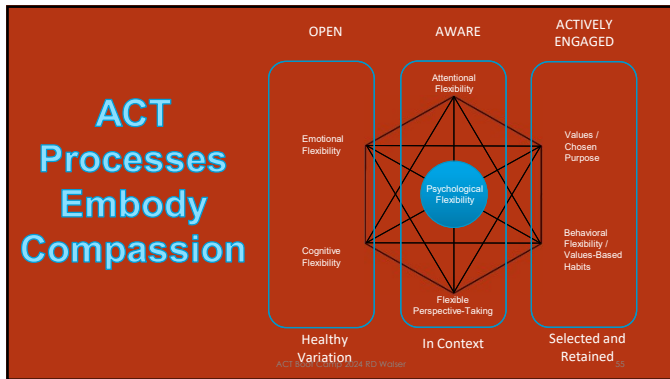
- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves presence to pain • compassion (karuṇā) asks, us to be present to pain (to reduce suffering) • Nonjudgmental | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loving-Kindness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves motivation for happiness • Lovingkindness (mettā) asks us to wish all people and all things well • A judgement for something good |
|--|---|

ACT consistency

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Flexible Perspective: Self-As-Context

- Necessary for flexibility
- Helping clients access a self that is whole and intact (and 100% acceptable)



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Chosen Values



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Meaning: A Human Experience



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***Death is no pretense.
It is as stark a reality,
As complete a presence as life itself,
The other ultimate choice.***
-karen

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Let go of your hopes and dreams

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Freedom and Responsibility

Inside of being able to observe your "hereness" what will you do?

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Qualities of Values: Doing and Being

- Complex
- Emotion and history
- Daily behaviors
- Small versus large
- Persistence

- Presence
- Intentionality
- Courage – leaning in
- Curiosity
- Trust
- Letting go

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You are alive and here

You are conscious

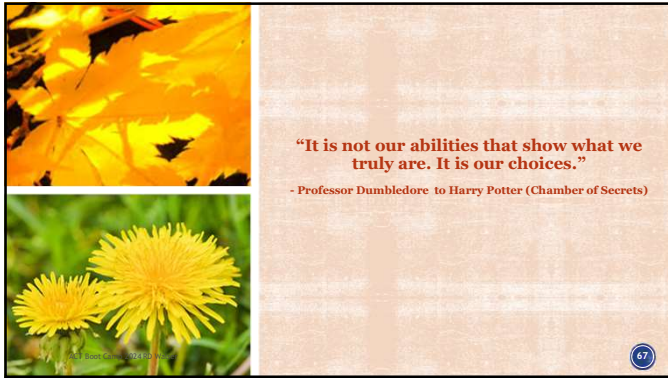


You are Here

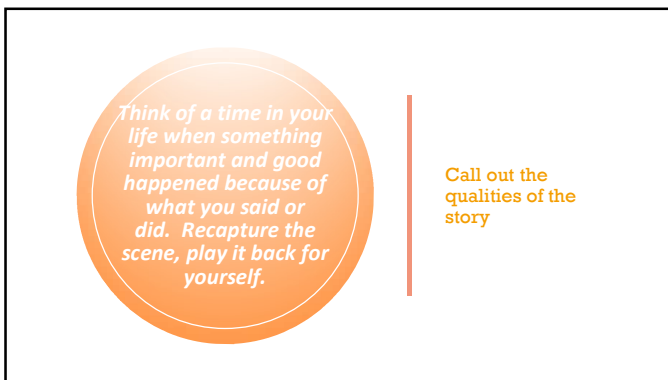
And all the fun stuff is over here.

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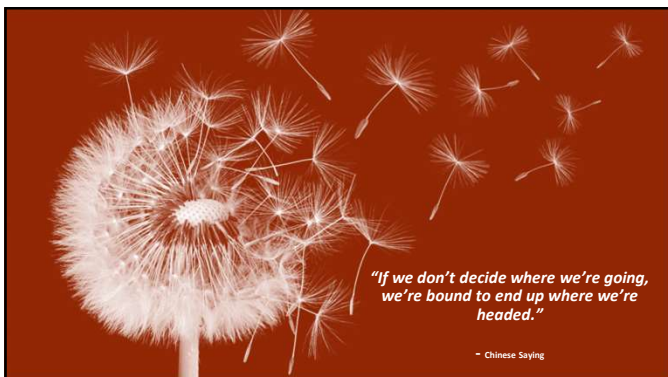
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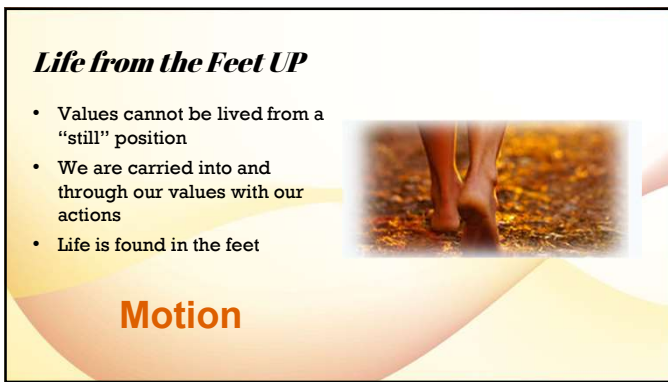
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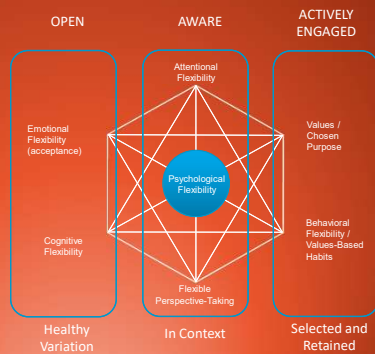
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ACT and the Therapeutic Relationship

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ACT: A Model of Process-Based Psychotherapy



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Setting a Therapeutic Intention

- Whole and intact
- Capable: Growth is possible
- Includes respect, deep listening, and empathy inside of a safely vulnerable and developing relationship



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Genuine, Authentic, Vulnerable

Such authentic modeling nurtures a safe space for growth and change, fostering a deep, empathic connection.

Maintaining this complex, developing, and changing connection requires therapists to tailor their responses to specific aspects of clients' needs and relational styles.

Therapist as context matters.

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Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

In ACT, the relationship between therapist and client is a vehicle for change.

The dynamic interplay between client and therapist, guided by behavioral principles, supports values-based transformation designed to support positive outcomes.

Transcending mere techniques, the relationship thrives on the therapist's ability to engage with ACT processes, embodying psychological flexibility, openness, engagement, and compassion.

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Two things to hold

- ACT Model and Principles

- ACT Therapeutic Stance

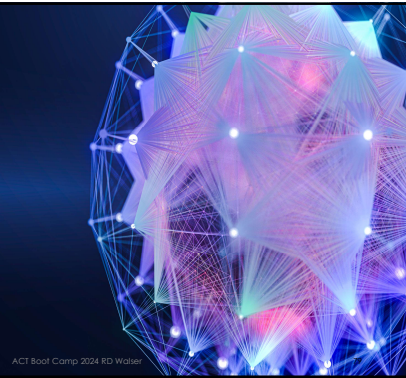
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Remember: Why Ongoing FA?

- Within the operant model, it has been established that the value of a given consequence as a type of reinforcement or punishment is in constant flux, as is the probability of behavior occurring that has previously been associated with such consequences.
- This requires similarly fluid, ongoing clinical assessment and adaptation.
- FA is also how an intervention's effectiveness is determined.



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Stance

Defined in Two Ways
Both are Relevant

As an adopted position with respect to experiencing mental or emotional events
As a "position of the feet."

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The 'adopted' stance

1. Requires Awareness
2. Is Intimately linked to the ACT Core Competencies for the Therapeutic Relationship



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The "position of the feet"

1. Is explored through being bold
- taking action, stepping forward even when difficult
2. Is about speaking from the heart
- connecting to self and other at the level of feeling with an authentic, simple, and sincere presence



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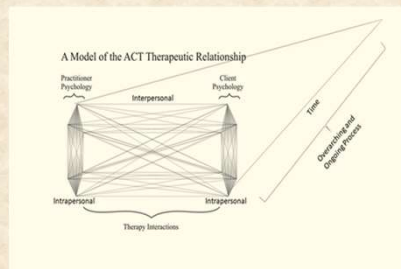
Attunement



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The therapeutic relationship as a triad

- Two sides (therapist and client) and an overarching purpose, instantiated by ACT theory, that binds them together.
- The three elements of this triad are interdependent and mutually influential.
- When the work inside the triad flows, a "togetherness" arises.



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ACT

The therapeutic relationship is a process of mutual influence

- The therapeutic relationship is a process of mutual shaping and learning (Follette, et al., 1990; Lejuez, et al., 2008).
- The interaction is fundamental, with both therapist and client evoking responses, including helpful (supportive behavior) and, at times, unhelpful (inflexible behavior), in one another (Walser, 2019).
- Each momentary interaction is a new iteration, building on each interaction of the past (Sandoz, 2019).

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Key features: The field of mutual

- This means that the clinician's behavior is entirely a part of the analysis.
- The client's behaviors are not only viewed in terms of their topography but also in terms of their relation to the interpersonal context and the behavior's function (on the therapist as well).
- The six core processes of ACT are "tucked" inside of this field.

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Ultimately

- Collaborative process of mutual influence that is co-created in the interpersonal field.
- Each member of the alliance is invited to participate in a (1) open, (2) aware, and (3) engaged experience.



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INTRA-PERSONAL PROCESS

- What is happening and flowing within yourself
- Being awake, alive and curious about your internal states - your senses, your emotions, your mind
- Being awake to your body language
- Aware of your stance
- Practice self-knowledge



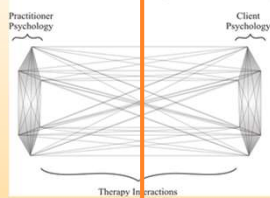
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YOU →

A Model of the ACT Therapeutic Relationship



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INTERPERSONAL PROCESS

- The unique, operative (a person engaged), and dynamic quality of the relationship between two people working together in therapy in efforts designed to promote change, growth, evolution, or whatever movement is desired and agreed upon by the two.

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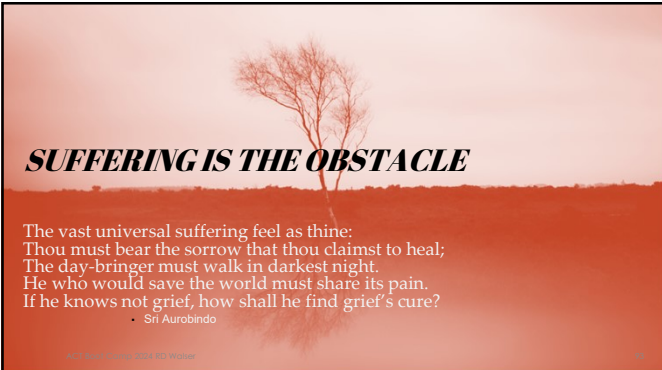
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Discovery exercise

When I see others suffering, what breaks my heart is	What I find hard in the work I do is....	When I think of what my legacy is, it looks like...
I am sometimes reluctant to share my pain because...	When I recognize my own passing, what potentially breaks my heart is....	I feel the most joy when....

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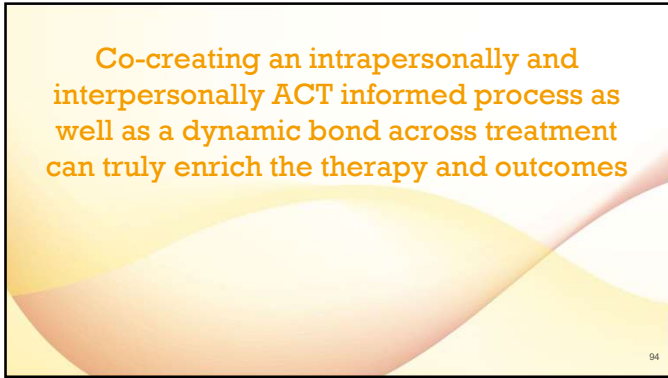
SUFFERING IS THE OBSTACLE

The vast universal suffering feel as thine;
Thou must bear the sorrow that thou claimst to heal;
The day-bringer must walk in darkest night.
He who would save the world must share its pain.
If he knows not grief, how shall he find grief's cure?

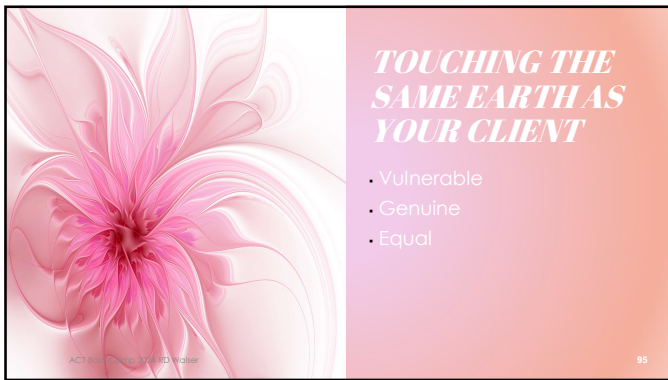
• Sri Aurobindo

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