



# ACT

## (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy)

BRIEF INTRODUCTION



# ACT



Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT); is new wave cognitive behavioural therapy. It emphasises the importance of accepting difficult experiences and committing to actions that align with one's values, rather than trying to eliminate negative thoughts and emotions. ACT teaches us to accept them as a normal part of human experiences and to take action towards achieving our values and goal even when it is difficult.

THE 6 CORE PRINCIPLES OF ACT ARE:-

- 1** **ACCEPTANCE** Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings without trying to change or control them.
- 2** **COGNITIVE DIFFUSION** Learn to observe your thoughts without getting caught up in them.
- 3** **BEING PRESENT** Focus on the present moment instead of getting lost in thoughts about the past or future.
- 4** **SELF-AS-CONTEXT** Learn to observe yourself as a whole, rather than identifying with specific thoughts or feelings.
- 5** **VALUES** Clarify what is most important to you in life.
- 6** **COMMITTED ACTION** Take action in line with your values.

# ACT & Roles

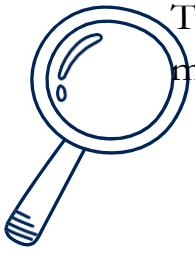


There are three distinct roles that a person can take in ACT: the Discoverer, the Noticer, and the Advisor.

These roles are designed to help individuals identify and clarify their values, observe their thoughts and emotions, and take action towards their goals.

Below is a brief overview of each role:

## 1 THE DISCOVERER



This role is focused on individuals connecting with their sense of purpose and meaning. Helpful questions to explore values include:

- "WHAT DO I WANT MY LIFE TO STAND FOR?"
- "WHAT KIND OF PERSON DO I WANT TO BE?"

## 2 THE NOTICER

This role is focused on developing mindfulness skills, being more present and more aware of their thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. Helpful questions to observe experiences without judgements include:

- "WHAT THOUGHTS ARE COMING UP FOR ME RIGHT NOW?"
- "WHERE IN MY BODY DO I FEEL THAT EMOTION?"



## 3 THE ADVISOR “

This role is focused on taking committed and concrete action towards one's goals and values, even in the face of difficulty or discomfort. Helpful questions include:

- "WHAT SMALL STEPS CAN I TAKE TODAY TO MOVE TOWARDS MY GOAL?"
- "WHAT OBSTACLES MIGHT GET IN THE WAY, AND HOW CAN I OVERCOME THEM?"

NB: these roles are not mutually exclusive and may take on different roles at different times depending on the needs.

# Goal of ACT: Psychological Flexibility



Psychological Flexibility is the ability to adaptively respond to the ever-changing demands. This involves:

**a**

Connecting with what's important to us.

**Our Values**

**b**

Observing experiences without judgement.

**Mindfulness**

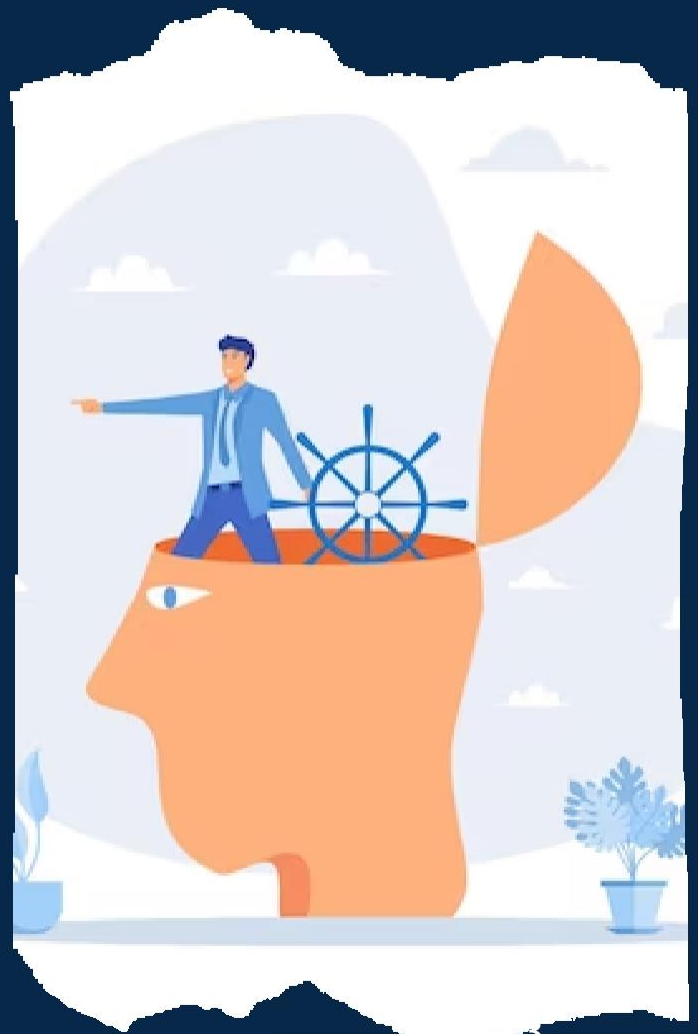
**c**

Taking steps towards our goals in a flexible and adaptive way.

**Actions**

Psychological Flexibility is important because it allows us to respond to the challenges of life in a more effective and meaningful way.

This helps us to learn to be more open, present and engaged in the present moment, while also taking steps towards a more fulfilling future.



# VALUES



In connecting with what's important to us, we identify our values.

Values are the things that are most important to you in life such as:

- Family
- Career
- Personal Growth

Clarifying your values can help you make decisions and take actions that align with what's most important to you.



## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a key component of ACT. It involves paying attention to the present moment without judgment.

Mindfulness can help you become more aware of your thoughts and feelings, which can be helpful in accepting difficult experiences.



- Meditation
- Deep Breathing
- Taking a moment to observe your surroundings (Cognitive Diffusion)

# ACTION



Once you've identified your values, it's important to take actions in line with those values. This involves:

**1**  
**Goal  
setting**

**2**  
**Making  
Plans**

**3**  
**Taking small steps  
towards your goals  
every day.**



Note, any progress has setbacks and is a normal part of the process.



In summary, ACT emphasises mindfulness, acceptance, and taking action in line with one's values.

When practicing ACT you can learn to accept difficult experiences and live a more fulfilling life.

# Helpful Resources:-

If you are interested in learning more about ACT you may want to read these books

[The Thriving Adolescent](#)

[Your Life Your Way](#)

[Get out of your mind and into your life for teens](#)

You may want to watch and listen to Duncan

Gillard on youtube [Developing psychological flexibility in education](#)

Or you might just want a little more detail [here](#)