#### RENEWU MIND: ACCEPTANCE & COMMITMENT THERAPY



# **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy**

## Are you registered on RenewU?

If not, please register now so you can provide feedback at the end of this session.



## Areas of psychological flexibility and how they promote increased flexibility

Engagement practices	Awareness practices	Openness practices
Connect practitioners with their own personal values (e.g. kindness, creativity, intimacy)	Mindfulness practice to build skills in noticing one's thoughts, feelings and urges.	Practice stepping back from unhelpful entanglement with thoughts, to help disengage with patterns of thinking that get in the way of meaningful activity.
Example practices		
Reflect on the qualities of people you do and do not admire	Mindfulness	Cognitive diffusion tasks

Source: Prudenzi et al., 2021 <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2021.07.084">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2021.07.084</a>

### What is the Evidence for ACT and Health Promotion?

#### Prudenzi, et al., 2021.-

- ACT intervention effectiveness increases over time.
- Studies with a higher number of treatment sessions were associated with larger effect sizes for general stress.
- *Improvement* in work-related distress may necessitate more time to improve than what is needed to reduce general distress.

#### Towey-Swift, et al., 2022.

- ACT *significantly reduced* burnout in people-oriented professions (health and social care professionals)
- ACT-based interventions using a wide range of formats that decrease burnout across a range of health and social care professionals. Nine studies reported a statistically significant improvement in burnout compared to controls from baseline to post-intervention or follow-up.

#### Frögéli, et al., 2015.

- Increased mindful awareness Increasing awareness of thoughts and feelings, paying attention in the present moment non-judgmentally.
- Decreased Experiential avoidance The avoidance of stressful thoughts, feelings, and sensations related to the experience of human suffering, including burnout.





#### **RENEWU MIND: ACCEPTANCE & COMMITMENT THERAPY**

#### What are the Mechanisms for the Health Effects of ACT?

- ACT Balances the Response of the Limbic System
- Restructures the Response of the Amygdala

## **Small Group Activity, ACT Engagement Practices**



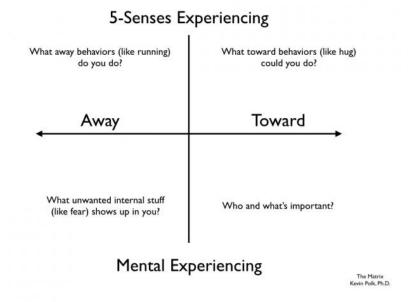
**ACT Matrix: Perspective-taking exercise** 

Watch the following video (Time: 7:11):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQ1sVPqwxgw

Prompt: After watching the video, use the ACT matrix to identify and guide you to decisions and behaviors that will help you increase your psychological flexibility around a topic of your choosing.

- Consider a situation that is currently causing you anxiety, stress or burnout.
- Use the ACT matrix on the following page to guide you through other perspectives you can use to navigate the scenario.



Source: Polk, K. (N.D.). The ACT Matrix. Association for Contextual Behavioral Science. https://contextualscience.org/act\_matrix





#### RENEWU MIND: ACCEPTANCE & COMMITMENT THERAPY

#### References

Ackerman, C. E. (2017, March 1). Mindfulness: How does acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) work? Positivepsychology.com. <a href="https://positivepsychology.com/act-acceptance-and-commitment-therapy/">https://positivepsychology.com/act-acceptance-and-commitment-therapy/</a>

Bond, F. W., & Bunce, D. (2000). Mediators of change in emotion-focused and problem-focused worksite stress management interventions. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5(1), 156-163. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1037//1076-8998.5.1.156">https://doi.org/10.1037//1076-8998.5.1.156</a>

Bond, F. W., & Hayes, S. C. (2002). ACT at Work. In F. W. Bond & W. Dryden (Eds.), The Handbook of Brief Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (pp. 117-140). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470713020.ch7

Frögéli, E., Djordjevic, A., Rudman, A., Livheim, F., & Gustavsson, P. (2016). A randomized controlled pilot trial of acceptance and commitment training (ACT) for preventing stress-related ill health among future nurses. Anxiety, Stress & Coping, 29(2), 202-218. https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2015.1025765

Månsson, K., Salami, A., Frick, A. et al. Neuroplasticity in response to cognitive behavior therapy for social anxiety disorder. Transl Psychiatry 6, e727 (2016). https://doi.org/10.1038/tp.2015.218

McCracken, L. M. (2013). Committed action: An application of the psychological flexibility model to activity patterns in chronic pain. The Journal of Pain: Official Journal of the American Pain Society, 14(8), 828-835. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpain.2013.02.009">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpain.2013.02.009</a>

Noone, S. J., & Hastings, R. P. (2009). Building psychological resilience in support staff caring for people with intellectual disabilities: Pilot evaluation of an acceptance-based intervention. Journal of Intellectual Disabilities: JOID, 13(1), 43-53. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1744629509103519">https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1744629509103519</a>

Prudenzi, A., Graham, C. D., Clancy, F., Hill, D., O'Driscoll, R., Day, F., & O'Connor, D. B. (2021). Group-based acceptance and commitment therapy interventions for improving general distress and work-related distress in healthcare professionals: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Journal of Affective Disorders, 295, 192-202. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/i.jad.2021.07.084">https://doi.org/10.1016/i.jad.2021.07.084</a>

Towey-Swift, K. D., Lauvrud, C., & Whittington, R. (2022). Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) for professional staff burnout: A systematic review and narrative synthesis of controlled trials. Journal of Mental Health, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2021.2022628">https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2021.2022628</a>

Please provide your feedback for this session by using the link below.



#### Thank you for your feedback!

Visit RenewU to explore more evidence-based resilience resources for individuals, teams, organizations, and students!

