

# Week 10: Self-Management and Psychological literacy: Rounding it up

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## ▶ OUTLINE

- Surveys
- Overview of Exam (5 mins)
- Managing feelings and thoughts: ACT & Psychological Flexibility (25 min)
- Mindsets (10 min)
- Psychological literacy, adaptive cognition & psychological flexibility (20 min)
- Student Minds (5 min)
- Boundaries and possibilities of “giving psychology away - Mental Health First Aid (20 min)
- Group work (if time)

## ▶ OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ Engage with opportunities to develop psychological flexibility skills to deal with feelings and thoughts that can distract from acting on values and pursuing goals.
- ▶ Gain an appreciation of how ACT skills can be developed and used by everyone to better self-manage to achieve goals and increase well-being.
- ▶ Gain some sense of how the different components in this course are interrelated
- ▶ Gain some appreciation of how you can “give psychology away”: the boundaries and the possibilities

# Surveys

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- ▶ Please complete 2 x surveys and 1x formative group rating, confidentially, and hand into me.
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# Pre-practical Tasks for Week 10

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1. Socratic Questioning exercise
  2. Read Harris, R. (2006). Embracing your demons: An overview of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 12(4), 2-8.
    1. Try out the Cognitive Defusion and Acceptance tasks by choosing a thought (defusion task) and an experience (acceptance task) that have caused you distress. Write a 200 word reflection on your experience of these exercises, and how you felt during and after them, including any obstacles that you encountered. Submit to Moodle before Week 10.
  3. Read Mindset handout. Print out pages 3-5 and undertake Exercise 1. Post your completed pages (pp3-5) on Moodle. You will also be asked to discuss aspects of the reading in class.
  4. Thinking back on the first three weeks, where we learnt about resilience **as a DV**, how do you think it is related to Kashdan & Rottenberg's "psychological flexibility"? Write a 100 word response on Moodle and bring this to class to discuss.
  5. Values exercise - Choose ONE of the areas, and describe in no more than 100 words how you have behaved in a way that is consistent with your values (within the last 3 months). Post this on Moodle.
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# Exam Information

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- ▶ **19/11/14, 1.45-4pm**
  - ▶ 2 hr exam
  - ▶ Approximately 69 MCQs worth one mark each, and one integrative essay, worth 20 marks.
  - ▶ For each week's topic (which includes pre-practical work and compulsory post-readings/activities), there will be between 4 and 7 questions (average about 6). One exception is Week 1, which has approximately 2 MCQs.
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# Compulsory Exam Readings

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- ▶ Burton, L., Westen, D. & Kowalski, R.M. (2009) Psychology. Milton, Qld : John Wiley & Sons, Chapter 14, pp. 580-594.
  - ▶ Reivich, K. J., Seligman, M.E.P., & McBride, S. (2011). Master resilience training in the U.S.Army. *American Psychologist*, 66, 25–34
  - ▶ Burton et al (2009) Chapter 2. Psychology. Milton, Qld : John Wiley & Sons
  - ▶ Garland, E.L., Fredrickson, B., Kring, A.M., Johnson, D.P., Meyer, P.S., and Penn, D.L. (2010) Upward spirals of positive emotions counter downward spirals of negativity: Insights from the broaden-and-build theory and affective neuroscience on the treatment of emotion dysfunctions and deficits in psychopathology. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30, 849-864, Chapter 2
  - ▶ Gable, S. L., & Haidt, J. (2005). What (and why) is positive psychology? *Review Of General Psychology*, 9, 103–110
  - ▶ Wilson, T.D. (2009) Know Thyself. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 384-388
  - ▶ Sheldon, K. M., Abad, N., Ferguson, Y., Gunz, A., Houser-Marko, L., Nichols, C. P., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2010). Persistent pursuit of need-satisfying goals leads to increased happiness: A 6-month experimental longitudinal study. *Motivation and Emotion*, pp 39-41 ONLY
  - ▶ Ng, J.Y.Y., Ntoumanis, N., Thøgersen-Ntoumani, C., Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., Duda, J., & Williams, G. C. (2012). Self-determination theory applied to health contexts: A metaanalysis. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, pp 326-327 ONLY
  - ▶ Gable, S.L., Reis, H.T., Impett, E.A., and Asher, E.R. (2004). What do you do when things go right? The intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits of sharing positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, pp 228-230, table 2, and study 4 ONLY
  - ▶ Harris, R. (2006). Embracing your demons: An overview of Acceptance and Therapy. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 12(4), 2-8.
  - ▶ Edelman, S. (2013). *Change Your Thinking: positive and practical ways to overcome stress, negative emotions and self-defeating behavior using CBT*. Third Edition. Sydney: Harper Collins Publishers Pty Ltd (pp 27-41)
  - ▶ Handouts: 1) Stress 2) Competencies 3) Mindsets
  - ▶ **PLUS TUTORIAL NOTES – LEARN WELL!!!**
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# Approaches that develop psychological flexibility

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- ▶ Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (implicitly)
- ▶ **Acceptance Commitment Therapy/Training**  
(explicitly)



Managing feelings and thoughts: ACT and Psychological Flexibility

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# Introduction to ACT (Harris, 2006)

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- ▶ Western Psychology is based on assumption of healthy normality (ie psychological suffering seen as abnormal)
- ▶ **ACT assumes that the psychological processes of a normal human mind creates psychological suffering sooner or later**
- ▶ Aim = transform our relationship with our difficult thoughts and feelings, so that **we no longer perceive them as ‘symptoms’**, but as harmless, if uncomfortable, transient psychological events
- ▶ Goal = “create a rich and **meaningful life**, while **accepting the pain that inevitably goes with it**” “only through mindful action that we can create a meaningful life”.
- ▶ “major emphasis on **values**, forgiveness, **acceptance**, compassion, living in the **present** moment, and accessing a transcendent sense of self”
- ▶ It is through this process that ACT actually achieves symptom reduction, as a **by-product** and not the goal

*“Ironically, by being flexible and living in service of our deepest values instead of being narrowly focused on achieving happiness, we end up experiencing more frequent joy and meaning in life and less distress (Hayes et al., 1999, 2004)” (Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010, p. 868)*

- ▶ described as an “existential humanistic cognitive behavioural therapy”, created by Steve Hayes in 1986
  - ▶ individuals or groups, short or long, effective with a broad range of conditions
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# Revisiting Psychological flexibility

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## **Building blocks:**

- ▶ ***Executive functioning*** – prioritising and integrating cognitive functioning (working memory, attention, information processing speed, inhibition, shifting mental and behavioural sets [eg learning from mistakes], planning)
- ▶ ***Overriding stereotyping and habits*** – ie capacity to combat fallacies and biases
- ▶ Self-control (up to a point)
- ▶ Personality (some dimensions good/bad/neutral)

(see Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010)

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# Psychological Flexibility & ACT

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Acceptance and Commitment Therapy/Training (**ACT**; Hayes et al, 2006, Harris, 2007) provides useful insights for understanding, managing, and getting beyond unhelpful negative emotions.

Harris (2007): to manage distracting urges you need to:

A = Accept your internal experience, thoughts and feelings, and be present

C = Connect with your values, choose a valued direction

T = Take action in accordance with your values (rather than distracting momentary urges to act otherwise)

Distractions from pursuing your values often come in the form of unhelpful, negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, resentment, self-doubt, sadness, or frustration.

“therapy is about taking effective action guided by our deepest values and in which we are fully present and engaged.” (Harris, 2007, p2)

ie Whether you will act in accordance with your values or a momentary impulse to take negative action will be largely a function of your mindfulness at the point of choice, your clarity about your values, and your ability to use your values to guide your actions.

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# Psychological (in)flexibility (Hayes et al., 2005)

## - Inflexibility (“inflexahex”)

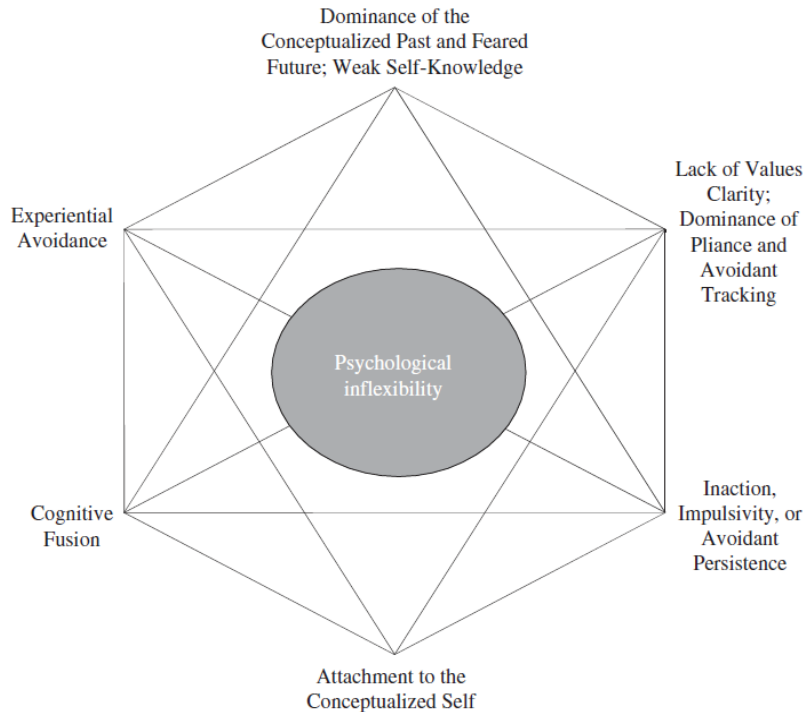


Fig. 1. An ACT/RFT model of psychopathology.

## Flexibility

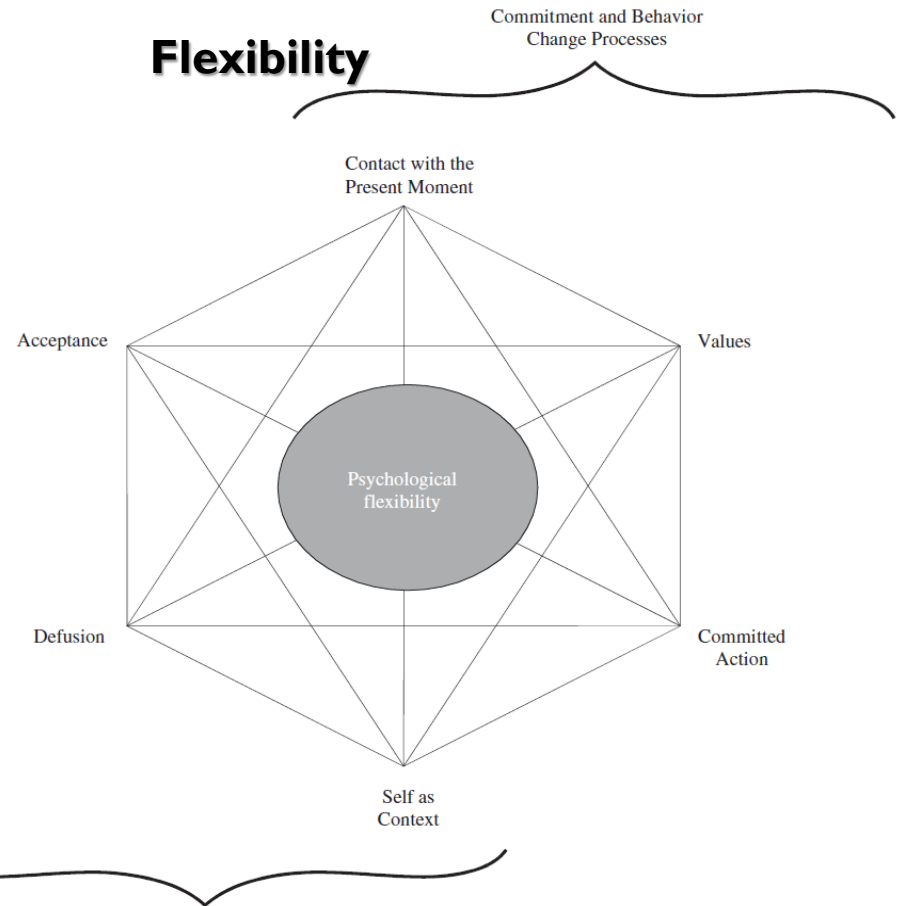


Fig. 2. A model of the positive psychological processes ACT seeks to strengthen.

- ▶ **FEAR:** Fusion with unhelpful thoughts; Expectations that are unrealistic, Avoidance of discomfort, Remoteness from values (Harris, 2007)
- ▶ NB “weak self-knowledge” and “lack of values clarity”

# ACT (Harris, 2006):

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Six core principles for developing psychological flexibility:

1. *Cognitive Defusion*
2. *Acceptance/Expansion*
3. *Connection/Contact with the present moment*
4. *The Observing Self\**
5. *Values (remember from Week 2!)*
6. *Committed Action*

**Psychological Flexibility = Mindfulness + Values + Action**

\* Similar to Hayes et al (2006) “Self as Context”

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# Mindfulness & ACT

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*Mindfulness is a key component of ACT* - adopting an open, receptive, and curious attitude towards negative emotions.

- ▶ When we are mindful, we pay **close attention** to what is happening within and around ourselves
  - ▶ We intentionally act on unexpected signals in accordance with our **values** and objectives.
  - ▶ Deliberately paying attention to what is going on– **without judging** or trying to struggle, resist, or avoid our unwanted emotions.
  - ▶ Being mindful helps prevent unwanted emotions from distracting us from our **objectives** (eg to study, sleep, work effectively), and generally **enjoy life**.
  - ▶ **cf Fusion** – people view themselves as not just experiencing emotions (e.g., I feel depressed), but being “fused” with their emotions (e.g., I am depressed) – this makes negative emotions linger and is particularly distracting and disruptive.
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# Experiential avoidance

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- ▶ Remember the “**milk**” activity from Week 8:
- ▶ Language helps give us the capacity to anticipate and solve problems
- ▶ Evolutionarily, we solved problems through figuring out how to **get rid of OR avoid** something
  - ▶ Works for physical objects eg getting rid of cockroaches in your house, or moving out!
- ▶ Language teaches us to substitute a ‘real’ event for a mental event, and in so doing to treat the mental event as real
- ▶ *Cognitive fusion* – our thoughts seem to be the literal truth, or rules that must be obeyed, or important events that require our full attention, or threatening events that we must get rid of.
  - ▶ When we fuse with our thoughts, they have enormous influence over our behaviour.
- ▶ Language enables us to generalise to other contexts, so we start to avoid ‘negative’ thoughts and emotions in many different contexts – ie, **experiential avoidance**
- ▶ the more time and energy spent trying to avoid or get rid of unwanted private experiences (eg anxieties), the more we are likely to suffer psychologically in the long term (eg being anxious about our anxieties = panic)
- ▶ [downward spiral]

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(adapted from Harris, 2006)

# ACT core principles

(Harris, 2006; David, 2010):

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Core principles for developing psychological flexibility:

**1. Cognitive Defusion** = learning to perceive thoughts, images, memories and other cognitions as what they are (ie nothing more than language, words and pictures) rather than as what they can appear to be (ie threatening events, rules that must be obeyed, objective truths).

- ▶ Mindfulness is the antidote to *fusion* - two broad strategies (Hayes & Smith, 2005) for fostering defusion and having a mindful approach to unwanted emotions are to:
  - ▶ **Go to emotions** – by being willing to have and fully experience negative emotions without struggling, judging, or trying to banish them.
  - ▶ **Go through emotions** – by taking action in the direction of your values, regardless of what you are feeling. People go *through* emotions eg when they feel like staying in bed but get up and go for a walk because they value the fresh start to the day that they experience as a result.
  - ▶ The strategies for *going to* or *going through* unhelpful emotions is not to eradicate unpleasant thoughts and feelings, but to disentangle your self from distracting, unhelpful thoughts and feelings, and to focus on more important and useful matters
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# Cognitive Defusion (Harris, 2006)

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Defusion is the main difference between ACT & CBT – CBT is about challenging and restructuring thoughts, whereas ACT is not about controlling the thought but noticing the control that the thought has over us, and changing the relationship we have with that thought – creating some psychological perspective

- ▶ *Cognitive defusion* means we ‘step back’ and observe language, without being caught up in it
  - ▶ We recognise that our thoughts are nothing more or less than transient private events
  - ▶ As we defuse our thoughts, they don’t go away, but they have much less impact and influence – we acknowledge they are just a thought, which gives us space to act
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# Cognitive Defusion Activity

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- ▶ Close your eyes
  - ▶ Take a few deep breaths
  - ▶ Come up with something you say to yourself in the words “I am x” eg I’m disorganised/boring/fat/stupid/stressed
  - ▶ For a minute, hook into that thought and let it run around in your mind, notice any physical sensations that emerge
  - ▶ Now say to yourself – I’m having the thought X
  - ▶ Now say I notice I’m having the thought X
  - ▶ Allow your eyes to open and come back into the room
  
  - ▶ What did you notice happened in that exercise?
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# Cognitive Defusion: Labelling your Thoughts and Feelings

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*Labelling* your experiences can prevent them from pushing you places you don't want to go.

Examples of labelling are:

- ▶ *I am having the thought that ...* (describe your thought) eg “I am having the thought that I'm going to make a fool of myself”
- ▶ *I am having the feeling of ...* (describe your feeling) eg “I am having the feeling that I am depressed”
- ▶ *I am feeling the bodily sensation of ...* (describe the nature and location of your bodily sensation) eg “I have a sensation that my heart is racing”
- ▶ *I am noticing the tendency to ...* (describe your behaviour urge) eg “I am noticing the urge to shut down”.

These strategies foster detachment, compassion, and curiosity about what led to a particular thought, feeling, or inclination.

Seeing the bigger picture, rather than being hijacked by a disruptive emotional state, is enabled by putting our momentary thoughts and emotions in the context of being only one part of ourselves (like noticing that you are the sky, not the clouds)

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# OPTIONAL: Some useful ACT activities

## (Harris, 2006)

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**1. Play musical thoughts:** Think of an upsetting or distracting thought (e.g., “I am such an idiot”, or “She is so unkind”) and believe it as intently as you can for about 10 seconds. Now: Sing that thought to yourself to the tune of “Happy Birthday”, and then notice what happens. Notice how you feel. Now hold it in mind in its original form and see how it affects you. Doing this helps you to not take unhelpful thoughts so seriously, by helping yourself realise the thought or idea is just one reality and that you can choose to focus on other thoughts that work better for helping you to attain your objectives (Harris, 2008).

**2. Name your stories:** Learn to identify and name the unhelpful stories you tend to tell yourself. For instance, you might have an “I can’t do it” story. When these stories begin to play in your mind, just acknowledge them by name, eg “Aha! Here’s come my old “I can’t do it” story again”. Mindfully letting your stories come and go as they please can help you to smoothly refocus your mind onto more productive topics.

**3. Urge surf:** Whenever feeling that an uncomfortable emotion (i.e., anxiety, anger, betrayal, resentment, or sadness) is urging you to take a particular action, ask yourself: “If I act on this urge, will I be acting like the person I want to be? Will it take my life in the direction I want to go?” If not, Harris (2008) recommends treating our urges like waves that we “surf” until they dissipate. This involves silently acknowledging your urge: “I am having the urge to ...X”, perhaps rating the strength of the urge on a scale of 1-10, breathing into it and make room for it, rather than trying to suppress or get rid of it, and watching the urge as it rises, peaks, and then eventually falls (like a wave). However large and overwhelming the urge, it will inevitably subside, often much faster than we imagine.

Ask yourself: “What action can I take right that will enhance my life in the long term?” Then whatever the answer is, go ahead and do it!

**4. Play or pass:** Next time you hear a comment that might be construed as insulting or offensive, will you choose to “play” (dwell, rant, complain, get upset) or “pass”? By choosing to pass, you can avoid becoming distracted and exhausted by fighting needless battles and redirect your time and energy into thinking and doing something you value (Harris, 2008).

**5. Monster on the bus:** Uncomfortable internal events can be treated like monsters on a bus that you are driving - it is OK to just keep driving rather than doing what they say, being distracted by them, or trying to get them to leave. They will eventually leave of their own accord – often more smoothly and permanently than if you engage in a struggle to kick them off.

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## ACT Core principles (cont.)

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2. **Acceptance** = making room for unpleasant feelings, sensations, urges, and other private experiences; allowing them to come and go without struggling with them, running from them, or giving them undue attention.

3. **Contact with the present moment** = bringing full awareness to your here-and-now experience, with openness, interest, and receptiveness; focusing on, and engaging fully in whatever you are doing.

4. **The Observing Self** = accessing a transcendent sense of self; a continuity of consciousness that is unchanging, ever-present, and impervious to harm. From this perspective, it is possible to experience directly that you are not your thoughts, feelings, memories, urges, sensations, images, roles, or physical body. These phenomena change constantly and are peripheral aspects of you, but they are not the essence of who you are.

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## ACT core principles (cont.)

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**5. *Values*:** clarifying what is most important, deep in your heart; what sort of person you want to be; what is significant and meaningful to you; and what you want to stand for in this life.

**6. *Committed Action*:** setting goals, guided by your values, and taking effective action to achieve them.

Optional:

See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQTvFdbjlxw>

For Russ Harris talk re ACT... and look for other YouTube videos by Steve Hayes...

Also see “ACT made simple” (Harris, 2009)

# Values (NB Homework activity)

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- ▶ Values reflect who we want to be in the world
  - ▶ Values are not rules, they are qualities we choose freely.
  - ▶ Values are about *my* behaviour not what I want to get from others.
  - ▶ ACT uses a variety of exercises to help people choose life directions in various domains (e.g., family, career, spirituality) while undermining verbal processes that might lead to choices based on avoidance, social compliance, or fusion (e.g., “I should value X” or “A good person would value Y” or “My mother wants me to value Z”).
  - ▶ In ACT, acceptance, defusion, mindfulness etc are not ends in themselves, but enable one to move towards a life that is more consistent with one’s values
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## OPTIONAL: Which values underpin these decisions?

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- ▶ Pete told his friend Brett about a problem he was having. Dan wanted to know what Pete had told Brett, but Brett decided to keep Pete's problem private.
  - ▶ Miranda joined her classmates in picking up rubbish on the library lawn.
  - ▶ Whenever they go to a fast-food restaurant, Jackie usually chooses yogurt and a tossed salad.
  - ▶ Lauren always contacts her friends on a Wednesday to make arrangements to see them on the weekend.
  - ▶ A student in the Tuesday tutorial offered to share answers to the test with Craig, who is in a Wednesday tutorial. Craig said he wasn't interested.
  - ▶ Daniel does volunteer work at the local soup kitchen every Tuesday
  - ▶ Colleen found a \$50.00 note in the stairwell between Level 9 and 10 of the Mathews building, and turned it into the Psych office.
  - ▶ Sharon always hands assignments in on time
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# Mindsets Handout (10 min)

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- ▶ In your table groups, each discuss one useful point you acquired from the Mindsets handout (5 min)
  - ▶ Decide on which point you will feed back to the class.
  - ▶ **CLASS FEEDBACK** (4 min)
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# Psychological literacy, adaptive cognition, and resilience/psychological flexibility

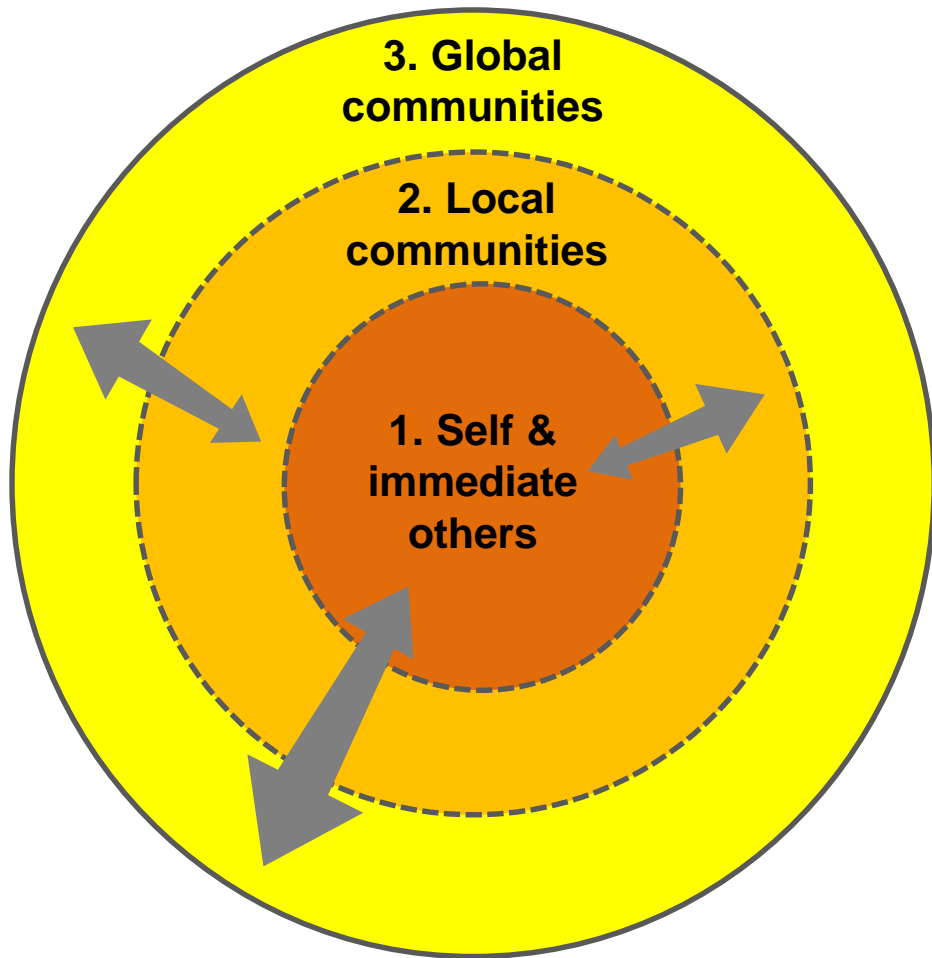
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- ▶ What is psychological literacy?
  - ▶ What is adaptive cognition? (see Cranney & Morris, 2011)
  - ▶ ...and how do they relate to this course????
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**Psychological Literacy:** “the capacity to adaptively and intentionally apply psychological science to meet personal, professional, and societal needs” (Cranney & Dunn, 2011)

[www.psychologicalliteracy.com](http://www.psychologicalliteracy.com)



**WHERE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES ARE APPLIED (domains or levels):**


**Level 1:** application of psychological principles adaptively to **oneself** and one’s immediate set of **family** members and **friends**. (self-knowledge)

**Level 2:** application of psychological principles in a way that is adaptive for one’s **local community** (local leaders)



**Level 3:** applying psychological principles in local, national or global contexts, in a way that reflects an **awareness of global issues**, and where it is highly likely that one would need to play a leadership role (global citizens)

(Cranney & Morris, 2011)



1. Self &  
immediate  
others

**Level 1:** application of psychological principles adaptively to oneself and one's immediate set of family members and friends.

**Wilson (2009).** Know thyself.

*Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 384-389.



Self-Knowledge

“One might think that “know thyself” would be the central theme in psychological science. Certainly the average person on the street thinks of it as the sine qua non topic of psychology. A desire to figure themselves out is what draws many college students to our introductory–level courses.” (p.384).

**Three ways:**


- be objective observers of our own behaviour  
(strengths... and weaknesses)
- see ourselves through the eyes of other people
- apply findings from psychological science to ourselves



THIS COURSE

**Table 2**  
**Structure of the Knowledge Dimension**  
**of the Revised Taxonomy**

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- A. *Factual Knowledge*** – The basic elements that students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems in it.
  - Aa. Knowledge of terminology**
  - Ab. Knowledge of specific details and elements**
- B. *Conceptual Knowledge*** – The interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure that enable them to function together.
  - Ba. Knowledge of classifications and categories**
  - Bb. Knowledge of principles and generalizations**
  - Bc. Knowledge of theories, models, and structures**
- C. *Procedural Knowledge*** – How to do something; methods of inquiry, and criteria for using skills, algorithms, techniques, and methods.
  - Ca. Knowledge of subject-specific skills and algorithms**
  - Cb. Knowledge of subject-specific techniques and methods**
  - Cc. Knowledge of criteria for determining when to use appropriate procedures**
- **D. *Metacognitive Knowledge*** – Knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition.
  - Da. Strategic knowledge**
  - Db. Knowledge about cognitive tasks, including appropriate contextual and conditional knowledge**
  - Dc. Self-knowledge**

Krathwohl  
(2002):  
metacognition  
is a high level  
of knowledge,  
with self-  
knowledge the  
highest level of  
metacognition



# 1. Self & immediate others

Immediate others

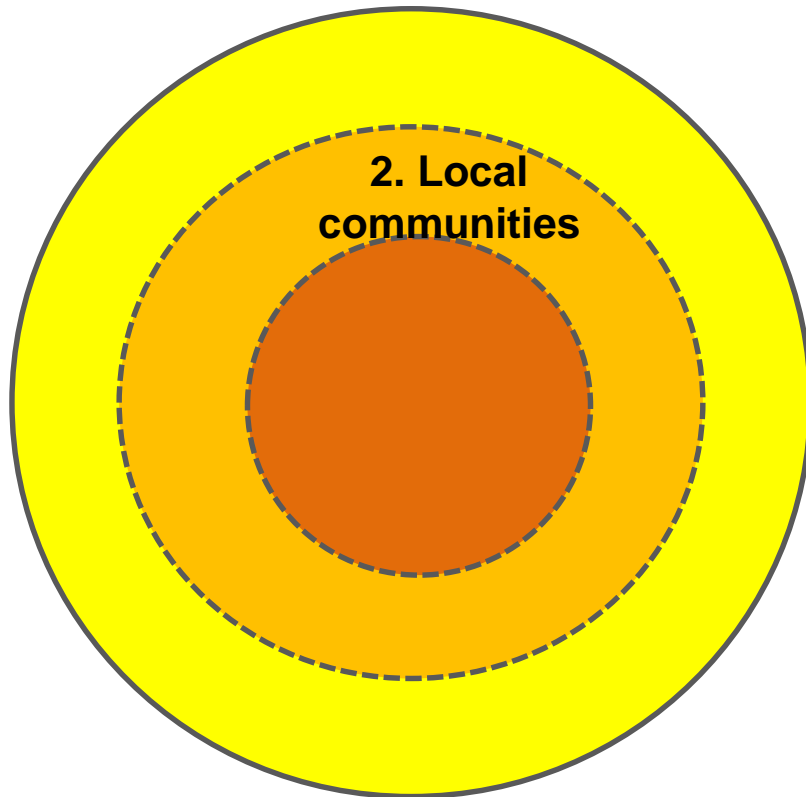
= family

= friends

Connectedness



- Culturally determined roles, responsibilities, rights
- Early **identity** defined by close relationships
- Psychology of interpersonal relationships...



**Level 2:** application of psychological principles in a way that is adaptive for one's **local community** (local leaders)

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## **Level/Domain 2: Local communities =**

- University or Employment related
- Non-employment related: eg religious or recreational communities
  - people who are not so “close”
  - varying degrees of in-group/out-group
  - different roles/responsibilities/rights [ethics, values]
  - professional identity, context-dependent identities
  - capacity to take multiple perspectives
  - often involves taking a leadership role

Psychological theory, methods and practice in:  
interpersonal relationships, work, religion, sport...

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**Student Minds @ UNSW**

Students Helping Students

UNSW ADVANTAGE PROGRAM – AHEGS

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## Peer to Peer Engagement

**FACEBOOK: *Student Minds @ UNSW***

Opening minds

Creating understanding

Connecting self and others with the resources to thrive

Student Community Volunteer Program: UNSW pilot

**Student-led communication & events**

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# Student Minds @ UNSW

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Provides an opportunity for students to develop valuable real-world skills, contribute to a very important cause, meet like-minded individuals and leave a valued and important legacy on campus.

▶ **Designed to respond to community need**

- Crucial growth period – first incidence of mental illness occurs often between 18-25.
- Recent research into mental illness and psychological distress amongst students
  - 83.9% experiencing elevated distress levels (compared with 29% in the rest of the population)
  - 64.7% mild-moderate mental illness
  - 19.2% serious mental illness
- ▶ *(figures taken from Stallman, Helen M.(2010) 'Psychological distress in university students:A comparison with general population data',Australian Psychologist, 45: 4, 249 — 257)*





# Student Minds Program Aims

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- ▶ **Goal: To improve the mental health and wellbeing of students at UNSW**
  
- ▶ Core aims :
  1. Increase understanding and knowledge of mental health amongst the student community.
  2. Help spread a positive attitude about mental health and skills that sustain a sense of wellbeing.
  3. Increase early help-seeking behavior amongst students experiencing psychological distress.
  
- ▶ Student Minds will achieve this by:
  - Focus on prevention and early intervention
  - Staging student-run activities and campaigns on campus
  - Promoting support services to students
  - Drawing on university resources



# Student Minds Volunteers

## Generating a supportive peer – peer community

Culture of Wellbeing

### Volunteer Benefit

Build knowledge

Psychological literacy ←

Grow resilience skills ←

Raise awareness

Reduce stigma

Encourage early help seeking

Experience and Confidence in graduate attributes

Strategise - Prepare - Organise initiatives, activities, events



Training: Diplomats: 20 hours training plus 20 hours minimum of volunteer activity

Attaches: 12 hours training plus 20 Hours minimum of volunteer activity

**Mental Health First Aid** - 12 hour accredited course (more later...)

# OPTIONAL: Benefits for volunteers

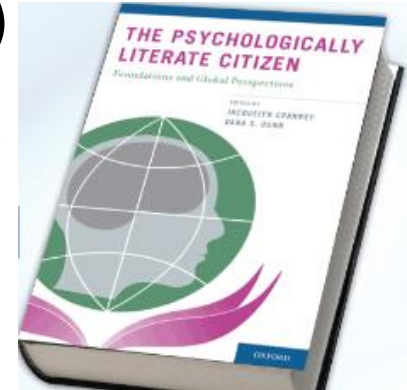
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- ▶ An **in-depth engagement with the relevant disciplinary knowledge** including an **awareness of cultural differences** in the experiences that define **mental ill-health and treatment** approaches.
  - ▶ Development of **skills in reflective thinking and creative problem solving**.
  - ▶ **Orientation to workplace culture and working within a structured work environment.**
  - ▶ Develop and use **skills applicable for leadership, working in teams, cross-profession communication, and project management, planning, budgeting and fund raising.**
  - ▶ Develop and use various communication methods and approaches for the purposes of: **working collaboratively in a team, resolving interpersonal differences in a professionally focused context, communicating with others of culturally diverse backgrounds, proposing and locating, planning and strategising and evaluating initiatives/outcomes.**
  - ▶ UNSW Graduate Attributes: Leadership, Professional Capacity, Citizenship
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3. Global  
communities

**Level 3:** applying psychological principles in local, national or global contexts, in a way that reflects an **awareness of global issues**, and where it is highly likely that one would need to play a leadership role (global citizens)

= ***“psychologically literate global citizen”***



## LEVEL/DOMAIN 3: Global communities...

--cultural awareness... cultural competence

--many/all humans = *potential* in-group(s)?

--diverse/global roles, responsibilities and rights [ethics, values]

--interrelated context-dependent identities

--*advanced* capacity to take multiple perspectives

--psychology of place: whole of earth = habitat

Draw on psychological theory, methods and evidence-based practice in:

- cultural psychology
  - cross-cultural psychology
  - community psychology
  - environmental psychology
  - evolutionary psychology...
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# Why is psychological literacy important?

***Most problems*** in society today (eg terrorism, obesity, depression, climate change) are ***caused by human behavior***—thus the relevance of the scientific study of behavior.

**= the need for psychological literacy.**

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# What is Adaptive cognition?

**= *global ways of thinking (and consequently behaving) that are beneficial to one's (and others') survival and wellbeing.***

*(Cranney & Morris, 2011)*

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We are in the *privileged* position of being able to *choose* to utilise strategies that we know will improve our chances of achieving the goals of living a purposeful and fulfilling life.

In doing so, we need to consider how we can also improve the chances of our fellow human beings achieving the same ends.



Why?

Simply because our capacity to adapt and survive as a species is very much dependent on our social nature.

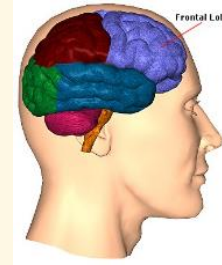
And our social “in group” is *no longer just local...*

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B.F. Skinner stated that current behaviour is determined by:

- genetics
- developmental history, and
- the current situation.



The **adaptive cognition** perspective proposes that our current thoughts, feelings and behaviour—i.e. our current psychological status—is determined by ***all*** of those factors, as well as our knowledge of this (metacognition).

...seeing the big picture, in the long term, from an *evolutionary* point of view...

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# Giving Psychology away: Boundaries and Possibilities (10 mins)

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- ▶ This course is partly designed to encourage you to play a part in “giving psychology away” (George Miller, 1969) — to the general public ie your friends, family, colleagues.
  - ▶ **Class Discussion:**
  - ▶ What are the pros and cons of giving psychology away?
  - ▶ What are the professional/ethical boundaries of “helping people”?
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# Barriers to help-seeking behaviour (10 mins)

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- ▶ In your groups, try and come up with as many barriers to help-seeking behaviour that you can (5 mins)
  - ▶ Feedback to class (5 mins)
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# What is the best way to encourage people to seek help??

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- ▶ Your group projects!!!
  - ▶ Mental Health First Aid
  - ▶ Online resources
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# MHFA Activity Example

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- ▶ You are meeting today with Claire, one of your group members to discuss your upcoming group assignment. You find out that she has not completed her agreed-upon portion of the task. Her usual happy, enthusiastic nature has become quiet and serious. You noticed she looked a bit teary in the previous class and she was keeping to herself much more than usual. You are wondering what is wrong with Claire and you decide to take this opportunity to have a private chat with her about how she is feeling.
- ▶ In your groups, apply ALGEE to help Claire:
  - A**pproach the person, assess and assist with any crises—**how?**
  - L**isten non-judgementally—**how?**
  - G**ive support and information—how, **what?**
  - E**ncourage the person to get appropriate professional help—how, **who?**
  - E**ncourage other supports—what, **who?**

# Online Resources (10 mins)

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- ▶ In pairs, brainstorm pros and cons of using online self-help resources to deal with distress (5 mins)
  - ▶ Class discussion (5 mins)
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# Psychological Disorders

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- ▶ Mental Health vs Mental Illness
  - ▶ This course is about “normal thriving” – there is overlap
  - ▶ See PSYC1011 textbook – much more to know re Mental illness (Chapters 15 & 16)
  - ▶ (Little explicit information about Mental Health or Wellbeing)
  - ▶ Anxiety – 1 in 10 young adults between 18 & 25 suffer from anxiety disorders (Beyond Blue)
  - ▶ Depression – around 160,000 people aged between 16-24 suffer depression (Beyond Blue)
  - ▶ Personality disorders (antisocial, avoidant, borderline, narcissistic, obsessive-compulsive, schizotypal)
  - ▶ Learn more about this (“Abnormal” Psychology course, online resources)
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# LOOKING AHEAD

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- ▶ Week 11: MEET to work on your presentations
  - ▶ Week 12: Presentations (see Moodle for criteria)
  
  - ▶ Now: GROUP work...
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