

ACT Dialectically – Assessment and Change Exercise

This exercise will help you to work through and identify a healthy alternative response to emotionally distressing situations that typically lead to unhelpful reactions. Work through each question with compassion, curiosity and flexibility:

1. What is the problematic situation, scenario or trigger that you want to work on?

2. What situational factors make this more likely or intense?

3. When you are triggered, what distressing thoughts and feelings come up?

4. How can you validate these thoughts and feelings with compassion, insight and sensitivity?

5. What personal values and standards do you want to stand up for in the face of this distress?

6. What is a more helpful, workable and sustainable way to think about the situation?

7. What alternative action can you choose to take in this situation?

8. What feelings are you willing to make room for to support this?

9. How will this bring you closer to your personal values?

10. What can you sensibly change in future to pre-emptively limit the influence of situational factors, without avoiding or disengaging from what is important?