



Resilience

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Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is an eastern technique originating from Buddhism, but is not religious.
- The term “mindfulness” directs attention to experience as it unfolds, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance (Kabat-Zinn, 1996).
- Mindfulness contrasts with the state of mindlessness, moving through experience rarely noticing the present moment, ruminating on the past or worrying about the future and making premature and unhelpful judgements coloured by ingrained preconceptions and mental patterns.
- Living mindlessly is often accompanied by a sense of stress as one’s experiences constantly fall short of one’s expectations, and joys and pleasures are ephemeral (Williams and Penman, 2011).



The benefits of Mindfulness

- Over time people who practise Mindfulness report that they learn to sustain and focus their attention for longer periods and accept their experiences in a more curious, interested and open-minded rather than a judgemental way.
- They discover how to use felt physical sensations of the breath and the body as “anchors” to return to when their minds wander and ruminating repetitive thoughts take over.
- They come to see that thoughts are mental events rather than facts and can be allowed to come and go, rather than turning into distractions that preoccupy the attention. This realisation helps loosen the grip of habitual, mindless activity and produces less reactivity and impulsiveness, and a greater ability to examine thoughts more rationally and experience greater acceptance and kindness.
- This gradually modifies habitual mental and behavioural patterns, which otherwise create and maintain negative mental states, such as rumination, stress, anxiety and depression, and makes for greater mental stability, calm, acceptance, appreciation of what is rather than hankering after what is not and higher levels of happiness and well-being.



Mindfulness

- Mindfulness has a good evidence base for treatment of low mood
- Based on transcendental meditation
- It requires practice
- It is about:
 - *being* rather than *doing*,
 - accepting our thoughts and feelings,
 - understanding where they are coming from and letting them pass,
 - not beating ourselves up about what's happening.

The breath

- We need to harness the mind's capacity for calm and clarity
- This can be illustrated by the glass of muddy water:
 - If we keep stirring it will stay cloudy
 - But if we simply wait the mud will sink to the bottom leaving clear water
- To do this focus on a neutral object which is why we start with the breath





A first taste of mindfulness

- Mindfulness is paying attention to an experience ‘differently’
- It is about paying attention:
 - on purpose,
 - in the present moment,
 - non judgementally,
 - to things as they are.

Eating the raisin

- Try this simple exercise at home
- To get a feel for the vividness of an experience when the mind is intentionally and non-judgementally present.
- Do this with as many everyday experiences as possible:
 - Drinking a cup of tea
 - Washing up
 - Having a shower





Beyond the usual goal focus

- *Doing* is about reaching pre-set goals
- *Being* is not concerned with the gap between how things are and how we want them to be
- We can still act with intention and direction but we are not constrained by our concepts about our goals
- [Dock of a bay](#)

Williams M. Teasdale J. Segal Z. Kabat-Zinn J. (2007) *The Mindful Way through Depression*, New York, Guildford Press.



What is the evidence base for ACT?

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is the most effective treatment for depression and anxiety. NICE recommends individual or group based CBT for mild to severe depression and social anxiety (NICE, 2005 and 2013).
- Third wave CBT offers opportunities for mental health promotion at individual, group and community levels.
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy is emerging as an accessible and sustainable method of improving emotional wellbeing.
- A recent systematic review and meta-analysis for a range of psychological disorders found ACT outperformed CBT in 68% of included studies at posttreatment (Ruiz, 2012). Superior outcomes for ACT observed for all but one anxiety-specific study (Ruiz, 2012). Two randomised clinical trials of more than 100 adults with anxiety showed large improvements in clinical outcomes for both ACT and CBT over time, with no significant differences between the two treatments (Arch et al., 2012 and Forman et al., 2012).



What is the difference between ACT and CBT?


- There are distinct differences between CBT and ACT.
- The core premise of CBT is that distorted cognitions lead to pathology and symptoms will only reduce if thoughts are restructured (Beck, 2005).
- ACT has a focus on hooking into thoughts and avoidance mechanisms which result in a life lived according to rigid and inflexible rules and not a sense of meaning or value (Hayes et al, 2013).
- The emphasis is more on outcomes than challenging and changing thinking. This is easier to explain and may be more sustainable.



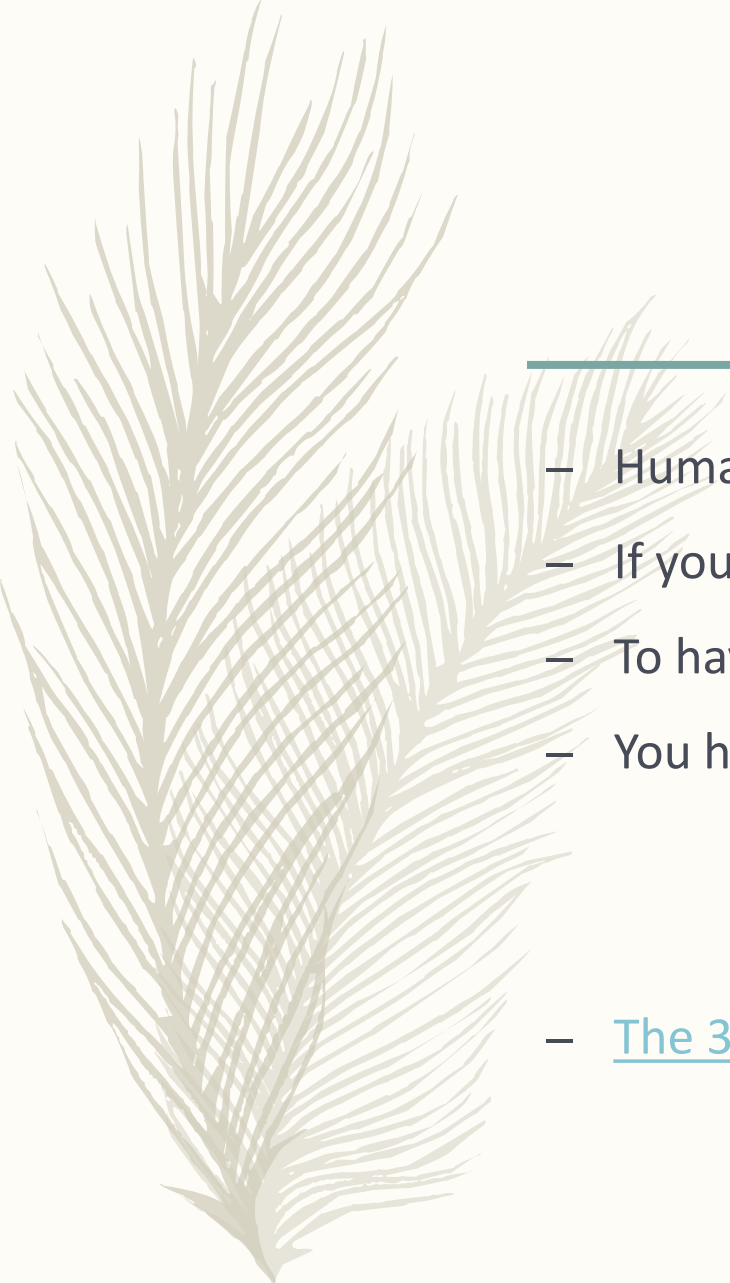
How does ACT work?

- The cognitive component of ACT is that psychopathology is the result of entanglement in the content of thoughts (fusion), and the resulting attempts to avoid unpleasant internal experiences (e.g., thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations), leading to a rigid, psychologically inflexible, nonvalued way of living (Hayes et al, 2013).
- Act has a focus on allowing the thoughts to be there but not hooking into them and living the life that you want (Hayes, 2004).
- So the thoughts could be placed on leaves in a stream and allowed to float away.
- Effort can then be put into finding ways of living a rich and meaningful life.

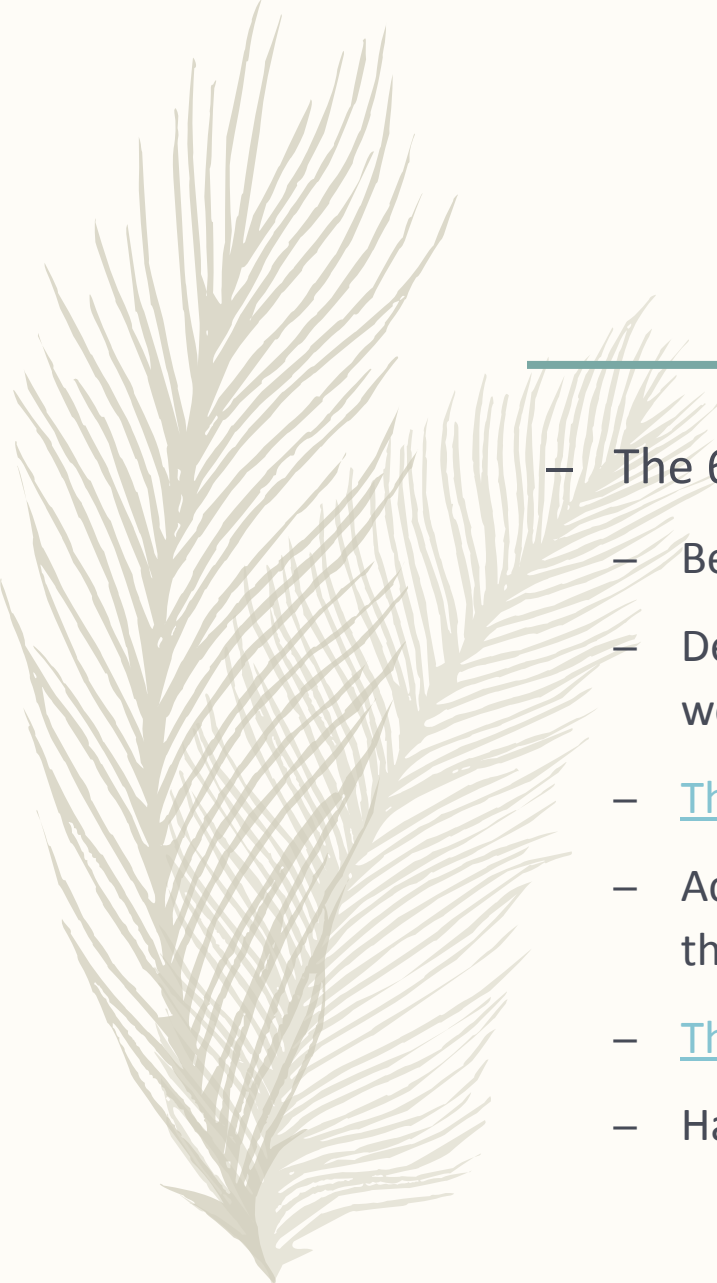
Why ACT?


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- Revolutionary new therapy
 - Helps you live a rich, full and meaningful life and handle the pain which inevitably comes with life
 - We need it -30% of the adult population will suffer from a recognised psychological disorder
 - Our minds have evolved from Stone age man fighting danger to worrying about everything we encounter
 - [The happiness trap: evolution of the human mind](#)
 - We also compare ourselves constantly to the ideal
 - The result is that we are hardwired to suffer psychologically

The myths

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- Humans are naturally happy
 - If you're not happy, you are defective
 - To have a better life, you have to get rid of negative feelings
 - You have to be in control of your thoughts and feelings
 - [The 3 happiness myths](#)

The principles of ACT

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- The 6 therapeutic processes of ACT are
 - Be in the present moment
 - Defusion-learn to ‘step back’ from our thoughts, let them come and go as if they were cars driving past our house
 - [The Sushi train](#)
 - Acceptance-opening up and making room for painful thoughts instead of fighting them
 - [The struggle switch](#)
 - Harris R. (2009) ACT made simple

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- Self-as-context- ‘pure awareness’ of the observing self as well as the thinking self
 - Values-know what matters
 - [The choice point](#)
 - Committed action-‘doing what it takes’ to live by our values even if that brings up pain and discomfort
 - [The values focused vs the goals focused life](#)
 - Harris R. (2009) ACT made simple

Mindfulness apps



Mindfulness app

Five ways to wellbeing

- [Five steps to mental health](#)





Tips

- Use being a mentor to your advantage
- Think-am I going to be worrying about this tomorrow, next week, next month?
- What is the worse that can happen?
- Be assertive-is someone else's emergency your emergency?
- Managers are under stress and may pass that onto you
- Talking things through will help you process them
- Understand mental health-read the 'Overcoming' books

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