



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH



RESTORE WORKBOOK

Research Evaluating Staff Training Online for Resilience (RESTORE)

Dr David Gillanders
Head of Clinical Psychology
University of Edinburgh

Dr Anne Finucane
Marie Curie Senior Research Fellow
University of Edinburgh



Restore Team



Dr David Gillanders
University of Edinburgh

David is Head of Clinical & Health Psychology at the University of Edinburgh. He is also a Peer Reviewed ACT Trainer, which is a quality standard from the Association of Contextual Behavioural Science (ACBS) that verifies a person's ability to deliver ACT training competently and with high fidelity. David is also a Fellow of ACBS, which is a membership category bestowed by the ACBS board, in recognition of valuable contribution to the science and practice of ACT. David is an experienced practitioner and researcher in the field of ACT for persistent health problems, staff wellbeing, oncology and palliative care. David has led the design of this course and will lead the live classroom sessions.



Dr Anne Finucane
University of Edinburgh

Anne is a Marie Curie Senior Research Fellow in Clinical Psychology at the University of Edinburgh, and Research Lead for Marie Curie Hospice Edinburgh. She has significant expertise in psychological aspects of palliative care and end of life, as well as staff wellbeing and organisational issues in this sector. She has a PhD in Psychology and a strong track record in research design and implementation. Anne has undertaken ACT training and will help facilitate the course and manage research data collection.



Dr Juliet Spiller
Marie Curie Hospice Edinburgh

Juliet is a Consultant in Palliative Medicine based at Marie Curie Hospice in Edinburgh. She has had an interest in the psychological aspects of palliative medicine since her medical student days taking every opportunity to collaborate and initiate research over the years into depression, delirium and more recently ACT. Juliet has been part of the steering group for this and other collaborative ACT in palliative care research projects.



Brigid Lydon **Marie Curie Hospice Edinburgh**

Brigid is a Secretary at Marie Curie Hospice Edinburgh and supports research activity alongside her role. Brigid is assisting with participant recruitment, advice and support, and can help participants with any queries. Brigid can also help arrange computer access at the Glasgow and Edinburgh Hospices for anyone who needs that up until the end of August 2021. After this time participants should speak to another member of the Edinburgh Hospice Admin Team who will be able to assist them.



Professor Nick Hulbert-Williams

Nick is a Coaching Psychologist and Professor of Behavioural Medicine at the University of Chester. He leads a broad research programme, including studies which test how ACT can be used in various groups of people, including those with a cancer diagnosis, those at the end of life, and the health and social care staff who provide care for them. Nick has advised on course design, format, and evaluation.



Dr Brooke Swash **University of Chester**

Brooke is a Senior Lecturer and Chartered Psychologist, based at the University of Chester. She has experience of conducting research in palliative care, and of developing Acceptance and Commitment Therapy interventions for use in an end-of-life care setting. Brooke will lead on the collection and analysis of qualitative data for the project.

Accessing advice and support:

- For support setting up MS Teams, please contact Marie Curie IT support: **0300 330 1298**.
- For advice on questionnaires or any aspect of research data collection, please contact Anne: **a.finucane@ed.ac.uk/anne.finucane@mariecurie.org.uk**.
- For support to access a PC or related queries, up until the end of August, please contact Brigid: **Brigid.lydon@mariecurie.org.uk** or your local admin team.
- For other specific queries, or queries of a more personal nature pertaining to the course that are not suitable for sharing via chat, please contact David: **David.Gillanders@ed.ac.uk**.

Dear participant

We are excited to share our RESTORE course with you!

This introductory course is based on an approach called **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy** (ACT). Many people, including healthcare professionals, have found ACT effective in improving mental health and wellbeing.

During this course, you will be introduced to key aspects of ACT, and provided with guidance on how to use ACT to manage challenging situations you encounter in everyday life, both within and outside the workplace.

We hope that over the next 8 weeks, you will make the time to view the course materials, which will be available via MS Teams; and try out the exercises in this workbook. We also recommend that you try to make time to practice some of the techniques suggested, even for five to ten minutes each day. Feel free to share your experiences with fellow course members, and those around you.

As this course is part of a research project, please be sure to complete the the online questionnaires at four key points - we will send reminders. We hope that you will find participation enjoyable, interesting and beneficial.

Best wishes

Anne Finucane, David Gillanders & the RESTORE project team



Getting started

MS Teams

Course materials will be made available each week via MS Teams. For advice on setting up MS Teams, please follow Marie Curie Guidance, and contact Marie Curie IT Support on **0300 330 1298**.

Webcam and headphones

A webcam is preferred when joining virtual classroom sessions, but it is not obligatory, and you can join using voice only. Headphones are also recommended to optimise sound quality, both when watching audio visual content, and when taking part in the virtual classroom meetings.

When and where

This course is designed so that most of the materials can be accessed via MS Teams in a flexible manner. If you can access MS Teams, you can access the materials from any location (home or workplace). Please agree the most suitable arrangements for access with your line manager.

Virtual classroom sessions

We will hold three live online virtual classroom sessions. These are online interactive sessions where we will discuss the concepts and materials so far and answer any questions. In order to get the best feeling of coming together as a group, we recommend that you join in person via webcam. You can also join via audio-only if you prefer. For these meetings, it is important that you join from a location which is secure and private and that any personal information that may be shared by participants during the online virtual sessions is not shared beyond the group.

MS Teams chat

You are invited to use the MS Teams chat function to share your experiences of the content with other participants; or to ask any questions anytime during the 8-week course. We will have a **Q&A chat channel**, as well as an **Experiences chat channel**.

Homework

We will provide opportunities for you to practice what you learn by setting homework for each session.

Additional support or information accessing resources

Please contact a member of the project team if you have any problem accessing resources.

Participant ID

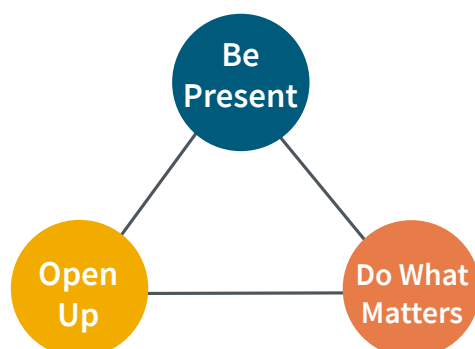
As this course is being evaluated as part of a research project, you will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires at 4 timepoints. You will be allocated a Participant ID to use when completing the questionnaires, so you will not be identified.

Please insert your participant ID here:

Approach taken

Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) has a here and now, skills-based coaching focus. It aims to help palliative care professionals to be able to deal effectively with their work, maintain their wellbeing and enhance their resilience. ACT aims to enhance 'Psychological flexibility' a term which refers to our capacity to be open and non-defensive about our thoughts, feelings and the situations we find ourselves in, aware of how these influence us, and engaged in actions that are consistent with what we most deeply care about and the kind of person we most wish to be.

These three broad skill areas are referred to as **Open** (Open Up), **Aware** (Be Present) and **Engaged** (Do what matters) skills. Over 8 weeks we will focus developing these skills.



Course overview

| Week | Module | Time required (approx.) | Aim | Content | Delivery mode |
|------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 | Introduction to ACT | 90 minutes | To introduce the ACT approach | What is it like to work in palliative care, how do you respond stress, what ways are helpful and unhelpful; what gets in the way of you feeling satisfied with your work. Introduction to ACT. | Live Virtual classroom via MS Teams |
| 2 | Values | 30 minutes | To introduce the concept of values | Identifying and acting in line with your values. | e-learning |
| 3 | Awareness | 30 minutes | To introduce awareness | Present moment awareness, mindfulness, grounding. | e-learning |
| 4 | Review of materials | 90 minutes | To review material to date | Review, troubleshooting, clarifying materials. Discussion. | Live Virtual classroom via MS Teams |
| 5 | Openness | 30 minutes | To introduce the concept of openness | Developing willingness, becoming more open, making room. | e-learning |
| 6 | Defusion | 30 minutes | To introduce diffusion | Unhooking from difficult thoughts and feelings. | e-learning |
| 7 | Compassion & Self-care | 30 minutes | To introduce self-compassion and self-care | Kindness to self and others. | e-learning |
| 8 | Review and trouble shooting | 90 minutes | To review materials and plans to sustain practice | Review, troubleshooting, clarifying materials. Discussion. | Live Virtual classroom via MS Teams |

WEEK 1: Introduction to ACT

LIVE ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS

****PLEASE COMPLETE BASELINE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES BEFORE THIS SESSION**

Aims

1. To introduce the course, facilitators, and participants
2. To share experiences of working as a palliative care professional.
3. To introduce ACT
4. To describe participant input required

Materials

1. Complete Worksheet 1 in advance of the online live session. ☐
2. Join the online live session (90 minutes) ☐

Homework

- Worksheet Two: How are you responding to the stress of working in palliative care ☐

Notes

Worksheet One: What's it like to work in Palliative Care?

Based on our experience of working in this field, and our own and other's previous research studies in this area, here are some statements that palliative care health professionals might say about what it's like to work in this field, the kinds of stresses it brings and how people deal with this. Read the statements below and see what you think. Do these statements feel familiar to you? **Rate any that you feel that you identify with, and feel free to add your own. We will use these to get us started talking in our first meeting together.**

0 - This doesn't apply to me at all **1** - I sometimes feel like this. **2** - I often feel like this.

| Statement | Rating |
|---|--------|
| "It's really meaningful, a privilege to be able to help people at this time" | |
| "When you are helping someone to have a 'good death' it's very rewarding, humbling even" | |
| "You do need to give something of yourself to do this job well" | |
| "Initiating conversations about DNR Care Planning can be distressing, you don't want to upset the person, the timing has to be right" | |
| "Working with someone who is the same age as me, or has children the same age as mine can be very challenging, because it feels much closer to home. It's harder to keep work separate then." | |
| "I try to keep work and home separate as much as possible, the journey from work helps that separation" | |
| "When patients or families are keeping on fighting, wanting every last treatment, finding it difficult to be realistic about their situation, it's very hard" | |
| "It's so much harder when a patient has uncontrollable symptoms or is distressed, compared to if we can get their symptoms more manageable or they have made some shift to accepting their situation" | |
| "Working at end of life really makes you reflect on what is important in your own life and you feel it's more precious somehow." | |
| "In complex situations you can be left thinking, 'Did I do the right thing there?'. A certain amount of reflecting is OK, but you can go too far into that and start to question yourself and judge yourself. That's not so helpful." | |
| "Dealing with the emotions and the challenges is something that you can become more skilled at with time and practice experience" | |
| "People talk about 'looking after yourself' or 'self-care' but sometimes I don't really know what it is that I do to look after myself" | |
| "Sometimes just being with someone, staying present when it's hard for them (and for me) is just the most important thing. Just to stay with them" | |
| "Sometimes a family member will be really angry with you, and it helps just to remember that they aren't really angry at you. It's that they can't stand the situation they find themselves in and they are taking it out on whoever is there." | |
| "Being able to switch between sometimes thinking about the work, and just being able to distract and have fun at times, is really an important thing to learn how to do." | |
| "Finding the time to talk to your team and discuss together, especially a really complex situation or a very emotional situation, can help you feel less alone, and it stops you over thinking it." | |
| "It is upsetting sometimes, and sad. Being with people who have big regrets, or families that are so overwhelmed with the loss." | |

| | |
|--|--|
| “Doing things that are really absorbing outside of work is really important. So planning for doing sports, or reading a really good book, or watching a TV show that you can get lost in...” | |
| “The other thing that is really demanding is around staffing shortages, budget cuts, having to do more and more with less and less. The organisational pressures are really tough...” | |
| “I think it’s healthy that people find this work challenging, or that its very tiring. It’s OK to feel that way and not have to pretend that it’s not hard, or to beat yourself up for finding it hard at times. We all do...” | |
| “There are times when you just need to swallow your own emotions and get through it, but it’s important later to find a way to process that, maybe with a colleague, or by being active – going for a walk for example” | |
| “There has been times when I’ve put a brave face on and pretended I was OK, but then later I’ve realised – no I’m not. It would have been better to try and find a way to at least not kid to myself that everything was fine.” | |
| “When a patient is very distressed, especially if we can’t get pain or other symptoms well controlled, or if they are really fighting and not accepting... that is very hard to be with.” | |
| “It bugs me a bit that other people, the public, think this must be a really sad job all the time. Because to me it’s not, it’s really a privilege to do what we do and quite often there can be a lot of humour and feeling helpful to other people.” | |
| “When I’m listening to a colleague about what they are finding hard, maybe a tough situation at work, I’m really understanding and supportive. But if that’s me that’s having the hard time I find it so much harder to be vulnerable like that.” | |
| “I think the biggest problem is when you go over and over something in your mind. It’s like you can’t let it go, and that can lead you right down the rabbit hole.” | |
| “As well as the emotional nature of this work, we are all working in teams and well... people don’t always get along do they? We might say something the wrong way or take something the wrong way because we are all harassed and in a hurry.” | |

Do you have other experiences of work stress that aren’t captured in these statements? Write them here:

Worksheet Two: How are you responding to difficult situations, thoughts and feelings?

So – this first session has helped you to identify the situations that are difficult in your work, and given you a flavour of the ways that we can typically respond to them. This worksheet will help you to begin monitoring how you are responding / dealing with these tricky situations and the thoughts and feelings that come with them, so that you can make choices about what is more effective and less effective. **Write in each space the situations, and the thoughts and feelings that you find hard to have. Don't worry if you have less than three or more than three – this is just a guide to build your awareness.**

The situations that I find most difficult are:

1.

2.

3.

The thoughts and feelings that I find most difficult are:

1.

2.

3.

How are you dealing with those, what do you do?

| Situation, Thoughts or Feelings listed above | What I do | What is the consequence? Is it a cost or a benefit? |
|--|-----------|--|
| | | |

WEEK 2: Values

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To introduce the concept of values

Materials

VIDEO 1: Core concepts of Values (approximately 10 minutes)

☐

VIDEO 2: Values Exercise (Approximately 10 minutes)

☐

VIDEO 3: Getting Balance in Values and turning intention into ACTION

☐

Homework

1. Complete the values and actions worksheet (Worksheet Three)
2. Post once on the discussion board about your actions – make a public commitment to a particular action.

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Notes

Worksheet Three: Values, Goals and Actions

Thinking of the video and exercise, see if you can write your important values in the space below. Remember values are abstract and tend to be guiding principles rather than specific actions. If you are having difficulty describing your own values, you can pick from the list on the next page, as a guide.

In this box: write about each area of life that you care about and how you would most like it to be in your life. If an area doesn't resonate with you, that's fine. These are about your personal choices.

Some values that other people have identified as important to them are:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Parenting | Being the kind of parent you want to be |
| Family | Being the kind of son or daughter, brother or sister that you most want to be |
| Intimate relationships | Being the kind of wife, husband or partner that you would most want to be |
| Community / society | Contributing to or giving something back to your community |
| Spirituality | Practices that foster your sense of spirituality or faith, however you define that personally |
| Self-care | Treating yourself well, looking after your own health and wellbeing |
| Personal growth | Doing things to nurture your own development, knowledge, skills, ideas |
| Friendship | Being the kind of friend that you most want to be |
| Recreation / Fun | Doing things to have fun, relax |
| Creativity | Doing things to express yourself in whatever medium of your choice |

Now reflect on those values that you have identified as important to you and try to consider goals and actions within each of these areas. Goals are more specific destinations that you will visit as you travel in your valued direction and actions are the steps you will take to travel. For example, if you chose the value of being a friendly colleague in your work as a health professional, one goal that might be in that direction is to take a lunch break with a colleague. An action that leads in that direction could be to suggest to a colleague at the beginning of the day that you take a break together. Use the table below to consider how the values that you feel are important to you could be translated into goals and actions. Try to consider goals and actions in each of the value areas that you wrote about on the previous page.

Don't be too concerned at this stage if it's possible, or if it will be difficult, or even about if you can or will commit to these. Some of these you will already be doing, some may be new. At this stage, let yourself just think and dream and wish for what you would really want. We will deal with obstacles later!



Fill in the table below with your ideas for how your values can be translated into goals and actions.

| Value | Goal | Action |
|-------|------|--------|
| | | |

WEEK 3: Awareness

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To introduce the concept of awareness

Materials

VIDEO 4: Core concepts of awareness (approx. 10 minutes)

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VIDEO 5: A brief mindfulness / grounding type exercise (5 – 10 minutes)

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Homework

1. Plan a time for 5 to ten minutes of mindfulness practice each day
2. Complete the awareness in everyday life worksheet.
3. Post about your experiences of that, including difficulties or struggles with it, at least once on the discussion board / MS Teams Experiences chat channel. Reflect and comment supportively on at least one other person's post as well.
4. **Please complete online questionnaires at the end of this week and before week 4**

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Notes

Worksheet Four: Awareness in Everyday Life

Growing our awareness skills is really two things: firstly its practising meditation exercises to enhance our ability to notice the world around us, and the world inside us in a non-reactive way. Secondly, it is applying these skills in everyday situations. These are easier to do in calm or neutral situations, and we usually have to practise in those kinds of situations to be able to eventually use these skills when we are in a high-pressure situation.

To help you practise awareness in everyday life, choose three activities that you do each day. These can be any activities, for example, brushing your teeth, tying your shoe laces, eating your breakfast. It helps if they are neutral tasks that are relatively short. It's not realistic to expect yourself to be mindful for long periods of time, or when you are under pressure (at least not at first).

Practice approaching these tasks with the same qualities of present moment awareness that you encounter in the meditation exercises. For example, if you choose 'Brushing my teeth', pay attention to the feel of your toothbrush in your hand, the 'squeezy-ness' of the toothpaste tube, the coldness and minty-ness of the toothpaste in your mouth, notice how it feels as your mouth foams up, feel the toothbrush moving on your teeth and gums etc. If your mind wanders off during the tooth brushing, simply observe that and bring your attention gently back to the sounds, sensations, and sights of brushing your teeth.

These tasks then become a cue to paying attention more purposefully in everyday life. Just like any kind of training, the more you practice these, the better your skills at staying present will become. Use this sheet to identify and commit to daily awareness building tasks and to record how you are doing on each one.

I will commit for the next week to bring a present moment focus of attention to the following three daily activities:

1.

2.

3.

Put this sheet somewhere where it will remind you each day. Use this chart to tick to record that you have remembered to engage in this task:

| Task | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

WEEK 4: Review progress

LIVE ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To review progress, clarify concepts, answer questions, share experiences.

Materials

90 minutes online session via MS Teams. ☐

Homework

1. Continue mindful awareness daily meditation ☐
2. Complete Worksheet Five: Active Self Care ☐

Notes

Worksheet Five: Active Self Care

In our previous research, a number of people said that they knew looking after yourself is important in this line of work, but they didn't really know exactly what they did to do that. Other people said that they had very explicit activities that they do to unwind and look after themselves. Those that mentioned having an explicit self-care plan, all spoke of how beneficial it was. This worksheet uses that knowledge to help you to be more explicit about activities that you can engage in that help you to deal effectively with the challenges of working in palliative care.

The first section builds on your awareness skills by asking you to notice how you carry stress. For some people they might feel muscle tension, headaches, for others it might be that they feel less enthusiastic about things. Other people find their sleep pattern is the first thing to tell them they are stressed. Other people find they 'comfort eat'.

The second section asks you to generate ideas about things you can do to actively look after yourself. These may be things you already do or have heard about other people doing or have thought about doing. When putting things in this box there is no expectation that you will do them – it is just to have a place to generate and park ideas.

The third section asks you to construct a plan for things that you will do regularly to help you to maintain your active self-care. This plan can be altered at any time, be flexible with it. Each box has some examples as suggestions, but you can make your own if these don't suit you. Notice how the examples are as specific as possible.



Signs that I am carrying stress:

(e.g. waking early in the morning and not able to get back to sleep, irritable with my co-workers/ children)

Ideas about things I can do to respond effectively:

(e.g. going for a walk, doing a Joe Wickes exercise video, phoning a friend)

What will I do regularly to maintain my wellbeing:

(e.g. I will take an actual 30-minute lunch break, I will plan to do a family walk, I will meet a friend for coffee, I will go for a bike ride on Saturday, I will book a massage every other month, I will do yoga twice a week)

WEEK 5: Openness

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To introduce the concept of openness

Materials

Video 6: How we respond to barriers (about 10 minutes)

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Video 7: Developing Openness (about 10 minutes)

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Homework

1. Continue mindful awareness daily meditation and active self-care activity from worksheet five.
2. Complete 'Barriers and how I respond to them' worksheet six.
3. Practice 'softening' and taking an openness stance towards difficult situations and feelings at work.

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Notes

Worksheet Six: Barriers and how I respond to them

You may have noticed that once we set ourselves a goal or a direction, it's quite likely that obstacles will appear! Sometimes these are obstacles in the world out there and sometimes they are obstacles that our own mind has generated. This worksheet helps you to track the barriers and how you deal with them. It's part of our overall **'building awareness'** skill set. **If you find yourself blocked in your progress of actions, goals and values, try to write down the barrier, and how you responded to it. Try to identify the immediate (short term) and the longer-term consequences.** Short term consequences are usually very powerful, even if the long-term consequences are undesirable. Tracking consequences in this way can help you to see which choices are effective and which need some work. That work will be the subject of later sessions. **There are a few examples given for you, please add your own.**

| ACTION or GOAL | BARRIER | What I did? | What happened next? SHORT TERM | What happened then? LONGER TERM | What could I do differently? |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| I wanted to eat more healthily | Was tired and late home so I couldn't be bothered cooking | I put on a pizza from the freezer | Relief, less effort, easy tea, yummy pizza! | I felt bad, I felt like giving up, I'm not being as healthy as I want | Well, first not beat myself up: change is hard! I could cook on Sunday and freeze portions. I could use the slow cooker. |
| To discuss future preferences about place of death with patient and family | I was afraid that this would cause too much distress and the patient was not ready. | I just listened and allowed them to lead, and ask questions, I didn't introduce the topic and so it didn't come up | I didn't have to confront it, so that was OK, but it was on my mind the whole time. I didn't really feel that I was present. | I felt guilty and that I'd let myself down. I will still have to handle this or someone in the team will. | Take a deep breath and just start. Tell them that this is often a tricky conversation, but ask them directly if they have given this much thought. |
| Since the one above I've kept stewing on it, can't seem to let it go | It keeps popping into my mind – I see the patient and their family and me with them just nodding, not doing what I am supposed to be doing | I keep going over and over it, why didn't I just do it? | I felt bad but like I was trying to fix it or figure it out, so I suppose I was doing something | It took me away from being at home, I was distracted and tired at home | I could say – tomorrow is another chance to start that conversation. I wouldn't run down a colleague who did this, sometimes the time isn't right and we just sense it. Perhaps that family being listed to helped them to be more receptive to difficult conversations. I could just try and lean in to the discomfort and not beat myself up. Tomorrow's another day... |

| ACTION or GOAL | BARRIER | What I did? | What happened next? SHORT TERM | What happened then? LONGER TERM | What could I do differently? |
|----------------|---------|-------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

WEEK 6: Unhooking From Difficult Thoughts

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To introduce the concept of defusion

Materials

Video 8: Your mind isn't always your friend (about 10 minutes)

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Video 9: Playing with thoughts (about 15 minutes)

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Video 10: Leaves on the stream (about 10 minutes)

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Homework

1. Practice Leaves on a Stream (mp3 audio file to support practice)

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2. Use the 'playing with thoughts' tools

☐

3. Monitor what you use and its effects with worksheet seven: practising Unhooking Skills

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Notes

The different unhooking skills:

I'm having the thought that

When you catch yourself having a thought that is unpleasant or hard to have, for example “Oh my god I can't deal with this!” See if you can catch yourself, take a deep breath and rephrase it in your mind “I am having the thought: ‘Oh my God, I can't deal with this’”. After saying it like that for a moment, try one more step, by saying in your mind, “I am noticing that I am having the thought, “Oh my God I can't deal with this.”

Singing thoughts

Choose a go to tune that you can use. For me (David) for some reason it worked well when the tune was ‘Don't blame it on the boogie’. Sing your tricky thought to that tune (either in your mind or out loud – depending on the situation). I think it's good to have a tune prepared, but you can experiment with mixing it up and using different tunes. Even though this is one of the more unusual unhooking skills, it's also one of the most powerful. It can radically change how we deal with our thoughts, even the ones that could be true.

Saying thoughts in a different voice

Just like the singing your thoughts exercise, this one is one of the more unusual ones. Think of a person that you could imagine saying your tricky thoughts. It might be helpful to practice this in advance, before the ‘heat of the moment’. Imagine the Queen saying it, or imagine Billy Connolly saying your thoughts. It could be a character such as Yoda, Marge Simpson, or Batman. Alternatively you could imagine something general such as a robot voice saying the thought.

Thought Repetition

Remember the milk, milk, milk exercise? Take your tricky thought and boil it down to its essential oil: what one word would represent this thought? For example, if I were facing a challenge and I had the worry: “What if I mess this up?” I might boil that down to the word ‘Fail’. With this exercise, I repeat the word fail over and over for about 90 seconds. Use a watch or timer to do it rather than just guessing. The first 20 seconds you will usually notice a rise in stress about it, keep going through that and see what happens.

Leaves on a stream

This is the exercise we practiced, and you can practice it on your own using the audio MP3 file. In addition, once you get familiar with the practice, you can use this activity when you have a tricky thought. Simply take a moment to imagine that you could see the tricky thought outside of your mind. Imagine what it would look like on a leaf floating past you on the stream? It may float off, or it might linger with you, just see if you can watch it. Notice what it is like to see it outside of you: you are here, the thought is over there.

Perspective Taking

When you have a tricky thought, try and catch it and ask yourself, “If a friend told me they were having this thought, what might I say to them?” See if you can also extend that same supportive, friendly voice to yourself.

My thoughts are mine; they are not me

When you catch a tricky thought, see if you can notice that there is a difference between the you that is having the thought and the thought itself. This thought does not describe the whole of you. It might be part of you, but YOU are having it. You are bigger than your thoughts. Thoughts might be like clouds in the sky. See if you can notice what it feels like to say, “I am the sky, not the clouds.”

Worksheet Seven: Practicing Unhooking Skills

To help you in developing your stepping back skills, it can be helpful to track which skills you have been using. **Use the sheet below to reflect on which of the types of ‘unhooking’ exercises you have been using. Tick the box if you have used that technique that day, you can use as many as you like.** To remind you of the different skills, they are described overleaf.

| Exercise | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 7 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. “I’m having the thought that...” | | | | | | | |
| 2. Saying thoughts in a different voice | | | | | | | |
| 3. Singing thoughts | | | | | | | |
| 4. Thought repetition (milk, milk, milk) | | | | | | | |
| 5. Leaves on a stream (seeing thoughts external to me) | | | | | | | |
| 6. Perspective taking (what would I say to....) | | | | | | | |
| 7. Seeing the thoughts as MINE, but not ME | | | | | | | |
| Write here any other techniques you’ve been using to step back from thoughts and feelings: | | | | | | | |
| <p>What has been the effect of practicing ‘unhooking’? Make any notes here, what have you noticed?</p> | | | | | | | |

WEEK 7: Compassion and Self-Care

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To introduce the concept of self-kindness and self-support

Materials

Video 11: Learning to treat yourself as you do others (about 10 minutes)

☐

Video 12: How you are talking to yourself in a moment of difficulty exercise (about 10 minutes)

☐

Homework

1. After the 'Talking to yourself in a moment of difficulty exercise' – spend some moments reflecting on what that was like for you, using worksheet eight below. Write some paragraphs describing what the exercise was like for you, what you take from it, how you could use that in the future. ☐
2. Post on our discussion board your reactions to how you talk to yourself in a moment of difficulty, read other's posts and notice if you find it easier to be kind towards others than to yourself. ☐
3. Ongoing Self Care Plan – Re-examine the worksheet. (There is another copy below in case you need it: worksheet nine) Have you been using it, or has it gathered dust? If it isn't being used, then connect it with this self-support activity and re-engage in it. ☐
4. Post on our discussion forum about your ideas for self-care activity, make a public commitment to whatever you are able to commit to. ☐
5. **Please complete the 3rd set of online questionnaires before the final session** ☐

Notes

Worksheet Eight: Talking to yourself in a Moment of Difficulty Exercise.

After the 'Talking to yourself in a moment of Difficulty Exercise', spend some moments reflecting on what that was like for you. **Write some paragraphs describing what the exercise was like for you, what you take from it. How could you use that in the future?**

Worksheet Nine: Revisiting active self-care

Taking everything that you have learned from this programme into the future, revisit the active self-care worksheet. You'll notice it now also has some additional elements around overcoming obstacles. After completing this, put it somewhere as a reminder to you to keep this part of your life active. Revisit this regularly, keep this document live.

| | |
|---|--|
| What will I do regularly to maintain my wellbeing: (e.g. I will take an actual 30-minute lunch break, I will plan to do a family walk, I will go for a bike ride on Saturday, I will book a massage every other month, I will do yoga twice a week) | |
| External Barriers that I will need to plan and problem solve (e.g. shift patterns, seasons, lockdown etc) | |
| Internal Barriers (e.g. thoughts, feelings, sensations, energy etc.) | What skills can I use to tackle these barriers? |
| | |

WEEK 8: Review

LIVE ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS

Aim

To review materials and plans to sustain practice.

Materials

Week 8: Live Online (about 90 minutes) ☐

Homework

**** Please complete the fourth and last set of online questionnaires about one month from now.** ☐

Insert date you plan to complete final questionnaires here: _____

Notes

FURTHER RESOURCES

Reading

Harris R. *ACT made simple*. 2nd Edition ed.: New Harbinger Publications, Inc, 2019.

Harris R. *The Happiness Trap*. Robinson, 2008.

Hayes SC, Strosahl K and Wilson KG. *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy the Process and Practice of Mindful Change*. Portland: Guildford Press, 2016.

Video

<http://thehappinesstrap.com/free-resources/>

Cocktails & Courageous Conversations - webinar / conversations by Rikke Kjelgaard.

In these free to access interviews, Rikke Kjelgaard (A Danish psychologist), interviews other ACT practitioners about their journey into ACT, about their own connection with our common human struggles, and about how they use ACT skills in their work and in their personal lives.



Notes

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RESTORE

Research Evaluating Staff Training Online for Resilience

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact: a.finucane@ed.ac.uk or david.gillanders@ed.ac.uk

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