



Psychologically Flexible Parenting

6 core processes to help your family thrive during uncertain times



Today's Experience

What is Psychological Flexibility?

The 6 ACT Processes

- Being Present
- Values
- Acceptance
- Cognitive Defusion
- Perspective Taking
- Committed ACTION





But wait!
Can I get the slides?



www.actdailyjournal.info/crane

Who am I?

DIANA HILL, PH.D.

Psychologist

Psychological flexibility guide.

I am to help people grow values-rich lives.

Human

Mom, partner, friend, daughter,
homesteader, recovering striver





Intake:

Nice to meet you. What is it that you care about that brought you here?





Painting the Golden Gate Bridge





Stuck in the same spots?

Forget to take in the view?

Wonder if you're cut out for the job?

Don't know what direction to head?






What If...

Parenting could be rich
and meaningful today?



A wide-angle photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California, taken during the "golden hour" of sunset. The bridge's iconic orange-red towers and suspension cables are silhouetted against a clear, vibrant blue sky that transitions to a warm orange glow near the horizon. The bridge spans across the deep blue waters of the San Francisco Bay. In the background, the city of San Francisco is visible on the hills, and the distant hills of Marin County are also visible under the soft light of the setting sun.

Be present

Step back from critical thoughts

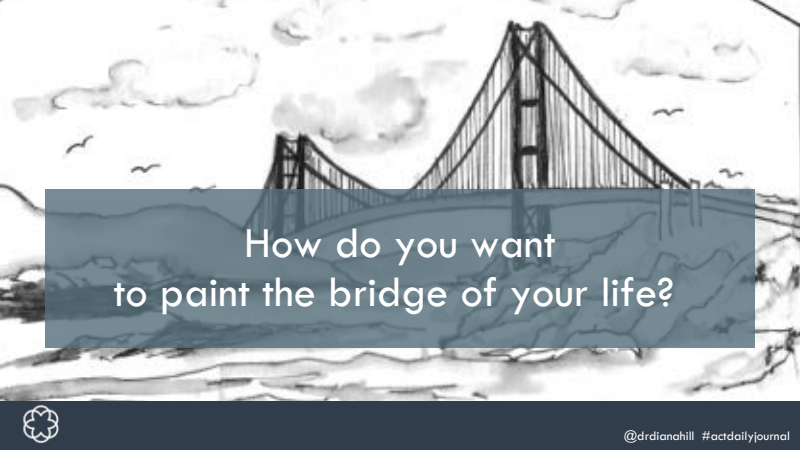
Open and allow for discomfort

Take in the view

Know what parts matter

Stick with the process





How do you want
to paint the bridge of your life?



THE ONE GUARANTEE

Parenting is unpredictable and
uncomfortable.



You're even more likely to
experience discomfort when
you engage in activities that
matter to you.

— Hill & Sorensen,
ACT Daily Journal






Psychological Flexibility

"The ability to feel and think with openness, to attend voluntarily to your experience of the present moment and to move your life in directions that are important to you."

- Steven Hayes, 2020





"Being able to do what
matters no matter what."

- Benji Schoendorff, 2021



What is Psychological Flexibility?

SIMPLY PUT: ACT

ALLOW.

be courageous, willing and
open

CARE.

orient toward what's
important to you

TAKE A STEP.

make a small move in the
direction of what you care
about



Benefits of Psychological Flexibility

MENTAL HEALTH

anxiety and stress
depression
substance use
chronic pain
insomnia
self-compassion

RELATIONSHIPS

perspective taking
empathy
intimacy
compassion
effective parenting
prosocial action


RESILIENCE

distress tolerance
grief and loss
burn out
post traumatic
growth

PERFORMANCE

work performance
athletic
performance
healthy behaviors
your chess game

Psychological Flexibility During COVID



GREATER FAMILY COHESION

LESS SPILLOVER EFFECTS OF STRESS ON KIDS

LOWER DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

LESS MARITAL DISCORD

Source: Special Issue of Journal of Contextual Behavioral Psychology

6 CORE PROCESSES OF ACT

Dr. Steven Hayes

**What is the 20%
that does the
80%? What are
the processes**

 Diana Hill PhD

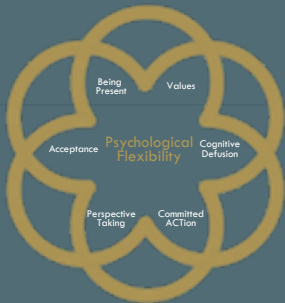
drdianahill.com

#ACTDailywithDiana



The 6 ACT Processes





Being Present

live in the now

aware of thoughts, emotions, behaviors



Where and with whom would you like to be more present in your life?



Between stimulus and response there is a space.

In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

-Victor Frankl



Let's Practice



Being Present Practice

TWO EYES IN

Notice the world inside you (thoughts, emotions, sensations)

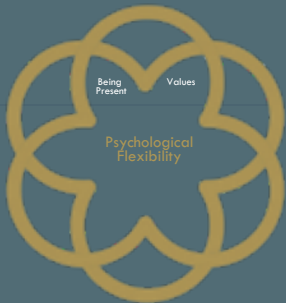
TWO EYES OUT

Notice the world outside you (people, places, things)

ONE EYE IN + ONE EYE OUT

Stay aware of what is happening inside, while engaging with the world outside





Values

qualities of how we live our life
acting in ways that feel consistent with the
type of person we want to be in the world





WHAT ARE VALUES?

This not That

ABOUT RICHNESS AND
MEANING

COMFORT AND PLEASURE



A WELL-LIVED LIFE

Hedonic Happiness: comfort, pleasure, satisfaction

Eudaemonic Happiness: meaning, purpose, coherence

Psychological Richness: curiosity, perspective, variety

Source: Oishi and Westgate (2020)



@drdianahill #actdailyjournal

RICH AND MEANINGFUL MOMENTS





At the end of the day,
what was rich and meaningful
to you about your day?



WHAT ARE VALUES?

This not That

ABOUT MEANING

COMFORT AND PLEASURE

MAKE YOU VULNERABLE

PROTECT YOU FROM PAIN



You hurt where you care and
you care where you hurt .

— Steven Hayes, Psychologists Off the Clock podcast



WHAT ARE VALUES?

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PROTECT YOU FROM PAIN

DYNAMIC AND EVOLVING

END POINTS



Towards and Away

EVERY MOMENT IS A CHOICE POINT



Tuning In To Tune-Up

WE ALL GET OUT OF TUNE

Away from
Values



Toward
Values

Cues you are out of tune:
Regret, longing, jealousy,
pain of discrepancy

Cues you are in tune:
Vitality, something deeply
resonates within





Choice Point

TUNE IN:

What matters most right now? Am I acting in line with the type of parent I want to be?

TUNE UP:

What adjustments can I make right now to turn towards my values?





WHAT ARE VALUES?

This not That

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PERSONAL AND CHOSEN

MORALS AND SHOULD



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INTRINSICALLY
REWARDING

GOLD STARS



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DOMAINS

Family

Friends

Spirituality

Health

Leisure

Work/Education

Environment/Community

Creative Expression

Physical Self-Care

Romantic Relationships



VALUES

Compassionate

Courageous

Curious

Fair

Funny

Generous

Hardworking

Responsible

Humble

Independent

Loving

Loyal

Kind

Open



Values Practice

Pick a domain that's a little out of tune...

Family

Work/Education

Friends

Environment/Community

Spirituality

Creative Expression

Health

Physical Self-Care

Leisure

Romantic Relationships



On a scale from 0-10
How important is this domain to you?



Adapted from the Valued Living Questionnaire (Wilson et al., 2010)

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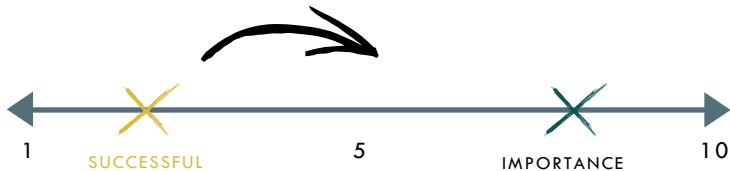
On a scale from 0-10

How successful are you at living your values in this domain?



Adapted from the Valued Living Questionnaire (Wilson et al., 2010)

What could you do to close the gap?



Adapted from the Valued Living Questionnaire (Wilson et al., 2010)



Values Practice

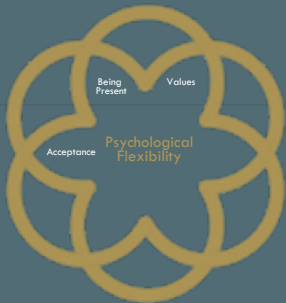
TUNE IN:

Notice. What does it sound like and look like when you are in line with your values?

TUNE UP:

How might you live more in tune with your values today?





Acceptance

stop struggling with your experience
open up and allow



Most common therapy requests

I want to stop thinking...

I want to stop feeling...

I want to stop remembering...



I can't help with that.
But I can help you...

Let go of fixing, make room for feeling

Choose your actions based on your values

Find the gifts in your pain



Acceptance

DIFFICULT TEAMS

T: Thoughts

E: Emotions

A: Action Urges

M: Memories

S: Sensations

What shows up in parenting that is difficult to think about, feel, or remember?





Experiential Avoidance

WHAT HAVE YOU TRIED?



Experiential Avoidance Strategies



NUMBING



BRACING



DISTRACTING



GIVING UP



RUSHING THROUGH



OVERTHINKING





Experiential Avoidance Roundabout

When turning away from pain

also turns you away from values



Acceptance

Is Not

Approval
Liking It
Being Passive
Allowing for harm,
abuse, oppression
Resigning
Giving up

Is

Willingness
Allowing
Making space
Curiosity
Openness
Letting go
Courage



“The Uses of Sorrow”

(In my sleep I dreamed this poem)

Someone I loved once gave me
a box full of darkness.

It took me years to understand
that this, too, was a gift.

-Mary Oliver







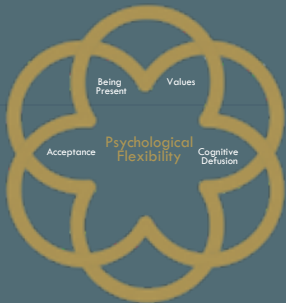
Acceptance Practice

Body: Gently contact and allow

Mind: Get curious, Say 'yes' to what is

Behavior: Take action toward values,
even if it's uncomfortable





Cognitive Defusion

notice your internal chatter
step back from your thoughts



Cognitive Fusion

HOOKED BY UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

Self-Criticism

Comparisons

Judgments & Opinions

"Shoulds"

Rules

Being Right





Cognitive Defusion

NOTICE YOUR CROWING MIND

Pick a comparison, should, rule or self-criticism that interferes with your parenting.





@drdianahill #actdailyjournal

Cognitive Defusion

DON'T TAKE YOUR THOUGHTS SO
SERIOUSLY

Type out your unhelpful parenting
thought in the chat...with your pinkies!



Self-trust



Cognitive Defusion

GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD AND INTO
YOUR LIFE

Your Mind: Cock-a-doodle-doo!

You: Thank You, Mind!

You Are
Not Your
Thoughts...
Thank god



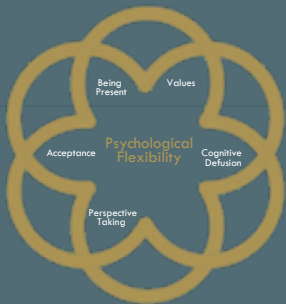
Cognitive Defusion Practices

NOTICE YOUR THOUGHTS

DONT TAKE YOUR THOUGHTS SERIOUSLY

GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD AND INTO YOUR LIFE





Perspective Taking

notice your self-story, connect with a greater whole





Spotting Inflexible Stories

I AM...

THEY ARE...

I NEVER...

THEY NEVER...

I ALWAYS...

THEY ALWAYS...

I DON'T...

THEY DON'T...

I CAN'T...

THEY CAN'T...





Self-Story Checklist

- MISSING OUT ON HERE AND NOW?
- IGNORING CONTEXT?
- INFLEXIBLE BEHAVIOR?
- CONFIRMATION BIAS?
- LACKING EMPATHY?
- FEELING DISCONNECTED?



Perspective Taking

I AM...

THEY ARE...



Perspective Taking

I AM...SOMETIMES

THEY ARE...SOMETIMES



Perspective Taking

I AM...SOMETIMES

THEY ARE...SOMETIMES



Perspective Taking



WE ARE





Perspective Taking

"I LOVE YOU TOO MUCH
TO FIGHT ABOUT..."

Source: The Self Driving Child by Stixrud and Johnson



Perspective Taking


1. NOTICE WHEN YOU ARE CAUGHT IN A STORY AND NAME IT

"THAT'S MY BAD EGG STORY."

1. RECOGNIZE CONTEXT

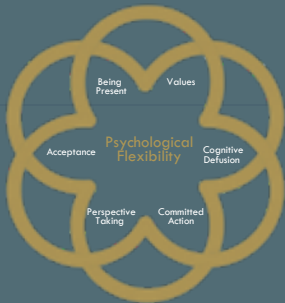
2. REMEMBER TO LOVE



A close-up photograph showing a person's hand gently holding a small, fluffy yellow chick. The chick is positioned next to a string of light-colored beads, with one bead being a distinct light blue. The background is a white, textured fabric. A semi-transparent teal box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

You are more than
the stories your
mind creates





Committed Action

taking action in the direction of your values, even in the face of obstacles

Committed ACTION



Committed Action

FEELS LIKE THIS



Committed Action

TAKING ACTION

CONNECTING TO VALUES

EVEN IN THE FACE OF OBSTACLES

(MORAN, 2018)



Committed Action

LOOKS LIKE THIS



Committed ACTion

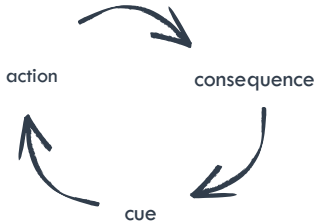
FOCUS ON ACTION OVER OUTCOME

MAKE SMALL DAILY MOVES

MOTIVATE WITH VALUES

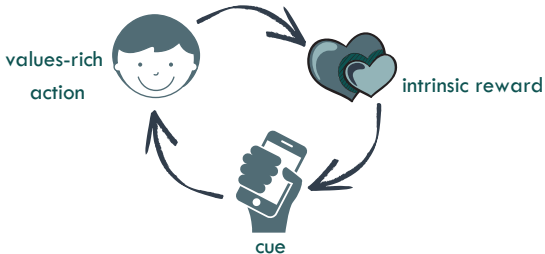


Daily Habits

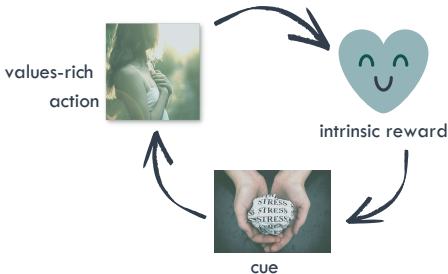


Committed Action

VALUES-RICH DAILY HABITS



Values-Rich Daily Habits



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about



Resources

ACT

ACT Daily Journal by Diana Hill and Debbie Sorensen
A Liberated Mind by Steven Hayes

PARENTING

What Do You Say? by Bill Stixrud and Ned Johnson
How to be a Happier Parent by KJ Dell'Antonia

PODCAST

Psychologists Off the Clock

SUMMIT

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