

# Mindful Mental Health

Moving through Challenges and Enriching Your Life

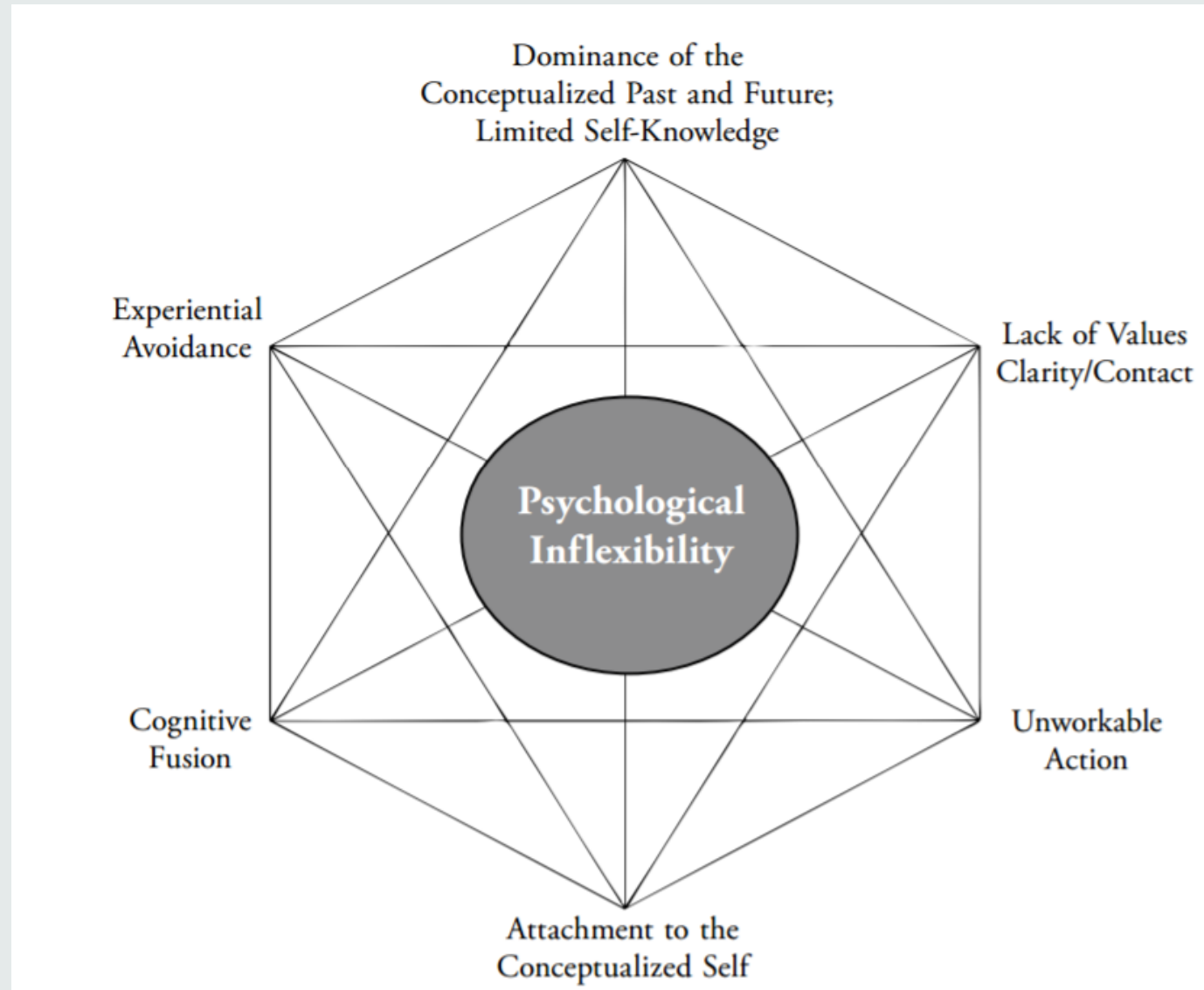
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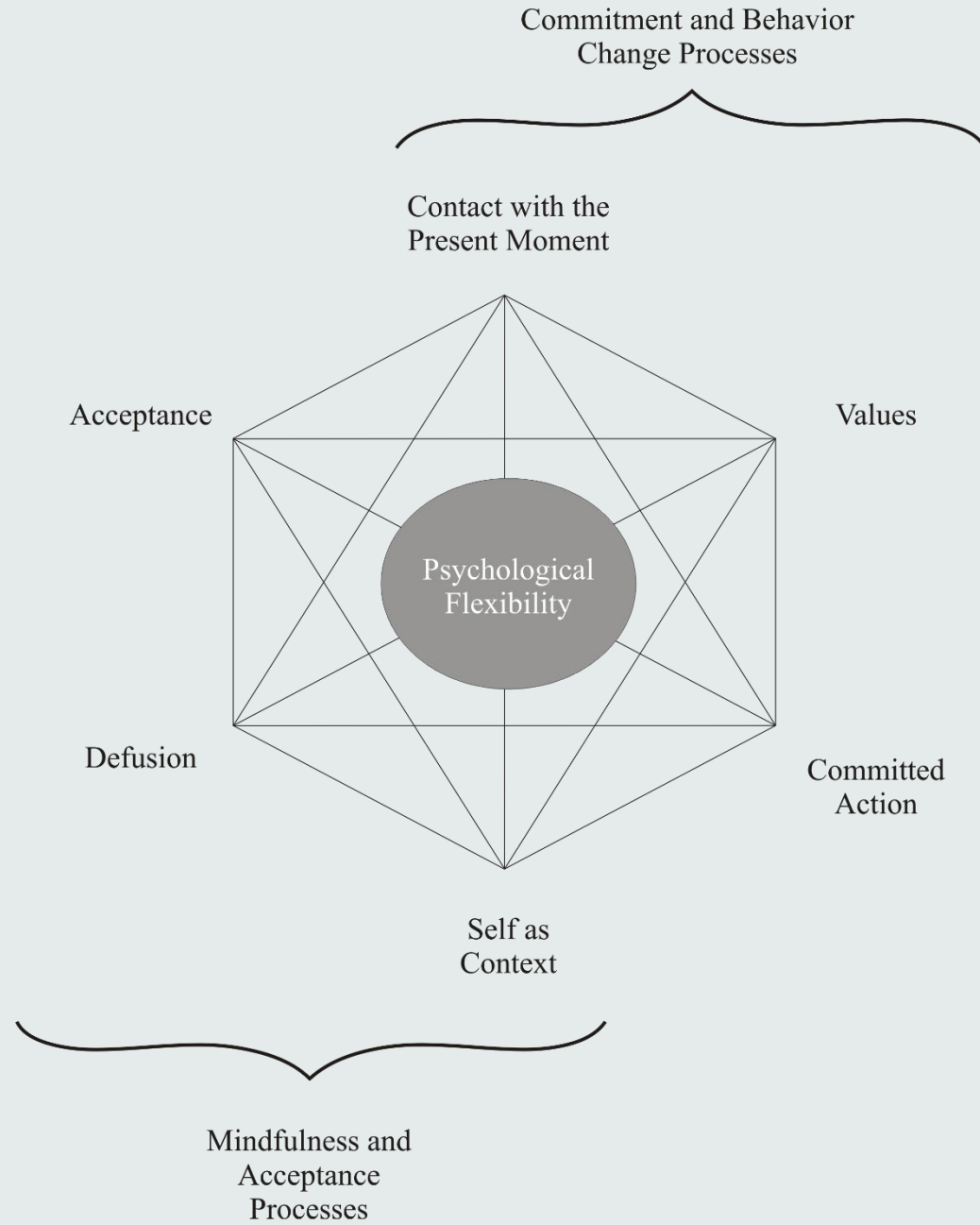


# Rigidity is the Enemy of Mental Health



# 6 Processes that Lead to Mental Health

- Self as Context
- Defusion
- Acceptance
- Contact with the Present Moment
- Values
- Committed Action



# **A Short Definition of ACT**

**(Acceptance and Commitment Training)**

**ACT uses acceptance and mindfulness processes, and commitment and behavior change processes, to produce greater psychological flexibility.**

Steven C. Hayes -- [contextualscience.org](http://contextualscience.org)

# Psychological Flexibility

## Being Versatile/Resilient

**“contacting the present moment fully as a conscious, historical human being, and based on what the situation affords, changing or persisting in behavior in the service of chosen values”**

# Bus Metaphor



Passengers on the  
Bus – thoughts,  
feelings,  
memories, etc.  
Who's driving?

# Self as Context

- "You are not who you think you are."
- Self as Content
  - "I am my thoughts, feelings, experiences"
- Self as Context
  - "I have thoughts, feelings, experiences, but who I am is much bigger. I can make room for them."

# Self as Context

Conceptualized Self versus Observing Self

Chessboard Metaphor





# Nature of Words/Thoughts

- Words/thoughts have conditioned meanings, associations, & emotions
  - Not born with language
  - Imitate, then internalize (thoughts)



# Cognitive Defusion

- **Problem of Language & Fusion**
  - The word water is not wet
  - Thoughts as mental events
- **Lemon or Milk Exercise**



# Cognitive Defusion

- Defusion/Decentering/Distancing involves noticing thoughts vs. getting caught up in them
- Fighting thoughts can make them worse
- Talking/journaling
- Movie theatre analogy



# Acceptance

- Acceptance of reality as it is in this moment
- Acceptance of our own emotions/self-compassion
- Don't have to like it
- People often try to "fix" emotions
- Math problem versus sunset



# Being kind to our emotions

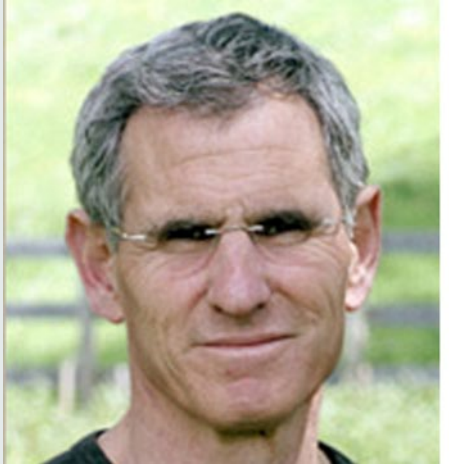
Quicksand Metaphor



Holding a Crying Baby



# Contact w/ Present Moment (Mindfulness)



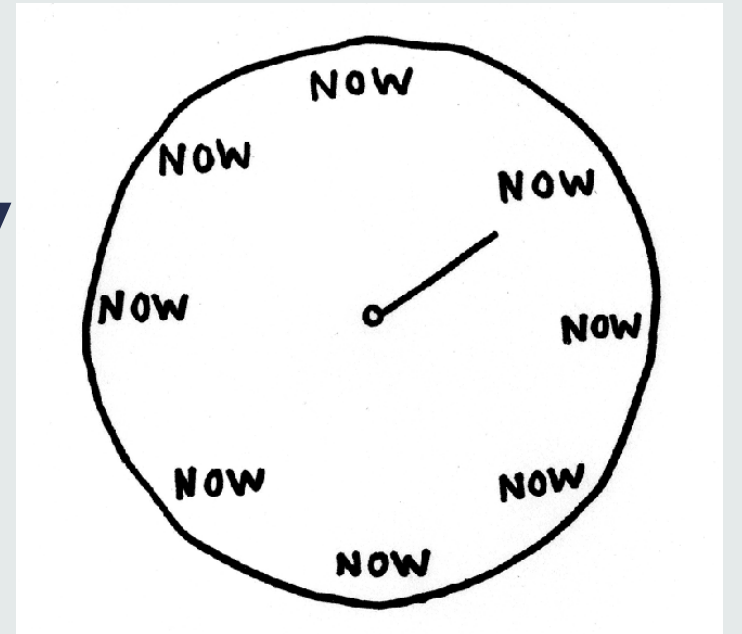
“the awareness that emerges  
through paying attention,  
in a particular way, on purpose,  
in the present moment,  
and nonjudgmentally

to the unfolding of experience moment to moment”

(Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145)

# Contact with Present Moment

- Living in the past and living for the future
- Mindfulness of present moment sensory experiences
- Busyness versus productivity
- 3-minute breathing space



# Values

- Values are compass headings – never arrive there
- What makes life meaningful and fulfilling
- Values pull us, versus feeling pushed to do them
- Set concrete goals toward values





# Values Exercises

- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- Funeral exercise
- Magic wand exercise
- Valued Living Questionnaire



# Value Domains

1. Family relations.
2. Marriage/couples/intimate relations.
3. Parenting.
4. Friendships/social life.



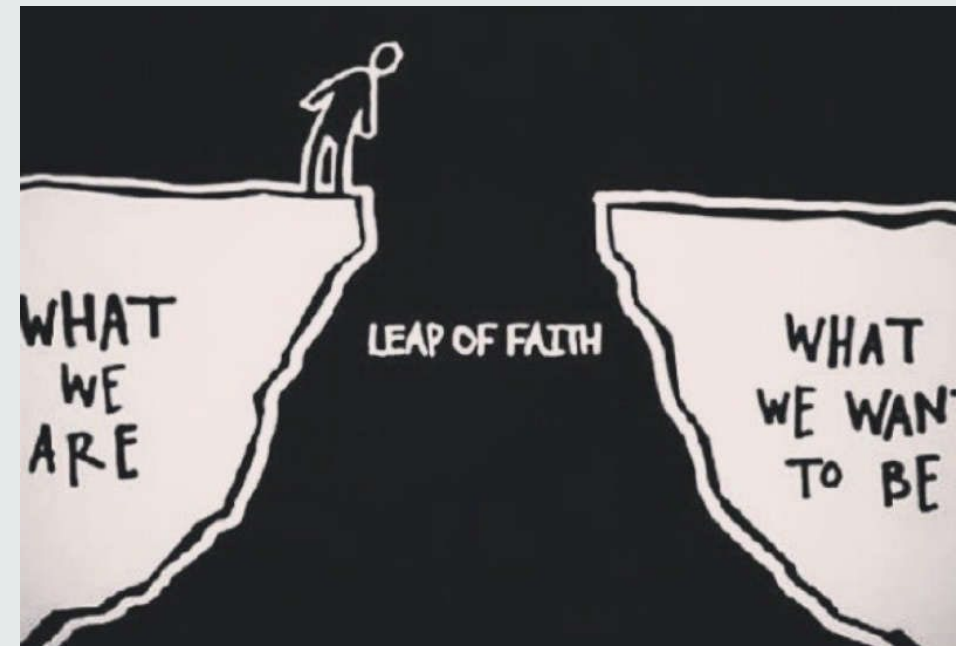
# Value Domains

5. Career/employment.
6. Education/personal growth and development.
7. Recreation/fun/leisure.
8. Spirituality.
9. Citizenship/ environment/ community life.
10. Health/physical well-being.

(Harris & Wilson, 2008)

# Committed Action

- Are you willing to commit to moving toward your values?
- A step can be big or small, but must be taken
- The problem of “trying”
- What is one small step you can you do *today*?
- Are you willing to have uncomfortable thoughts & feelings in the service of what you value?



# Daily Action Steps for Self Care

- Reflect on your own values
- Take committed steps each day
- Remember you are more than your job
- Notice your thoughts without getting lost
- Give yourself permission to have feelings
- Make contact with the present moment

# Contact Info

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