



Acceptance and Commitment Theory

Enhancing Psychological Flexibility for Work-Parenting Success

Flexibility Plan for Empowered Working Parents – Week 10

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(University of Namibia), 07 May 2025

The background of the slide features a corkboard with several sticky notes. Some of the visible text on the notes includes 'WMA', 'Max', 'Max', 'Max', 'CANA', 'DESCANSO', 'TAKE A BREAK', 'WITH', and 'WANT'. A large teal semi-circle is positioned on the right side of the image, partially overlapping the corkboard.

Week 10 - Talking Points

- Recap – Week 9
- Overview of the ACT and its Core principles
- Personal Short, Medium and Long-term plan
- Program wrap-up



Opening Quotes

“The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice.” Peggy O'Mara

“Small things done consistently create extraordinary results.” Robin Sharma



Recap Week 9 – Committed Action

- ✓ Do What Matters – Even when uncomfortable
- ✓ Act purposeful, values-based even when it is difficult
- ✓ Not about perfection – ACT in the direction of Values
- ✓ Anchored in values – not temporary deny or avoid
- ✓ Flexible – adapt with change – not abandon direction
- ✓ Persistent – ACT despite discomfort, doubt or setbacks

A corkboard with several sticky notes. One note says 'TAKE A BREAK', another 'Des ANDA', and others have checkmarks and the word 'WORK'. A teal circular graphic is on the right.

Moving Forward with Confidence

Work and Parenting with Flexibility is a
Lifelong Commitment



Six Core Processes of ACT

1. Cognitive Defusion
2. Acceptance
3. Self-as-context
4. Clarify Values
5. Present-moment awareness
6. Committed Action



ACT's core principles

- Accept emotional experiences without deny or avoid
- Defuse from unhelpful thoughts that fuel anxiety and guilt
- Observe self you are not your thoughts
- Clarify Values what truly matters and is important
- Present moment Awareness mindful of the now
- Committed Action take actions/behave aligned to values

The background of the slide features a corkboard on the left side with several sticky notes. One note says 'TAKE A BREAK', another says 'DESCANSO', and others have checkmarks and the word 'WORK'. To the right of the corkboard is a large teal circle. The title 'Why the Psychological Flexibility Plan Matters?' is written in a yellow, sans-serif font across the top, with the teal circle partially behind the word 'Matters?'.

Why the Psychological Flexibility Plan Matters?

- Sustain psychological flexibility
- Prevent burnout and be overwhelmed
- Improve connection with adolescent and colleagues
- Model values-based living
- Protect well-being over time



Overview of Work-Parenting Challenges

- Parents navigate a perfect storm while meeting demands
- Deal with unwanted thoughts of the past or future
- Feel overwhelmed
- Critical development stage (adolescence)
- Identity, peer pressure and greater autonomy
- Increased conflict, communication breakdowns



Short-Term Commitments (24 Days)

- Practice present moment awareness
- Work- parenting transitions
- Defusion – (I have a thought)
- Have values-based conversations
- Weekly Flexibility Tracker



Medium -Term Commitments(1– 6 Months)

- Integrate flexibility into daily Life
- Identify common triggers and create flexible responses
- Revisit values - still aligned with parenting and work?
- Join or form a support group
- Build one routine rooted in values

The background of the slide features a corkboard on the left with several sticky notes. One note says 'TAKE A BREAK', another says 'DESCENDING', and others have checkmarks and the word 'WORK'. On the right, there is a large teal circle with a white crescent shape inside it. The title 'Long -Term Commitments (6 – 12+ Months)' is written in a yellow, sans-serif font across the top.

Long -Term Commitments (6 – 12+ Months)

- Embed the Flexibility Lifestyle
- Develop a mission statement based on values
- Schedule “self-check-in” sessions - reflect and adjust goals
- Psychological flexibility learning, books, workshops
- Share psychological flexibility principles that matters



What Gets in the Way?

- **Multitasking** – divided attention, reduce focus
- **Worry** – stuck, past guilt, future worry and fear
- **Distractions** – phones, social media, emails
- **Conflicting priorities** –work-parenting commitments
- **Stress and burnout** – overwhelmed, tired and exhausted
- **Habits/Reactivity** – yell, shut down, overcompensate



How to Stay Flexible

- Values compass - when drifting return to direction
- Unpleasant thoughts as passing, instead of **'T'**ruth
- Defusion from inner critic
- Self-as-context - "I am more than today's challenge"
- Be present without control, judgment or struggle
- Do What Matters – Even when uncomfortable



Flexibility Maintenance Checklist

- I am practicing present moment awareness
- I respond to difficult emotions with acceptance
- I defuse from unhelpful thoughts
- I act in line with my work and parenting values
- I commit and act based on values, even if difficult



Create Action Plan - Handout

1. Short-Term Plan (24 Days)

- Focus on daily present moment awareness, and values-based actions

2. Medium-Term Plan (1 - 6 Months)

- Integrate Flexibility into work and parenting routines

3. Long-Term Plan (6 – 12+ Months)

- Embed psychological flexibility - support adolescent and colleagues

Psychological Flexibility Tree - Metaphor

Leaves – Acceptance

Sunlight – Present

Moment Awareness

Branches – Self-as-Context

Wind – Cognitive Defusion

Trunk – Committed Action

Roots – Values



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Psychological Flexibility Tree

- Present moment awareness (water),
- Acceptance (sunlight),
- Defusion (weeding)
- Self-as-Context (Soil)- stable and receptive,
- Committed action is the daily tending,
- Tree blooming – keep it growing,
- Plan each season ahead,



Announcements!

- Focus Group Discussion – 14 May 2025
- WhatsApp group – Scan QR Code
- Website postings
- Homework will be shared
- Face to face Session
- Post Assessment
- Stay engaged and remain on this Train - give aways:
 - ✓ Check out the ACT Wise Breakfast!
 - ✓ Shopping Vouchers
 - ✓ One on One Coaching
 - ✓ Book prices
 - ✓ Loading!

Scan QR Code



**Working Parents Research and
Empowerment**
WhatsApp group



Scan this QR code using the WhatsApp
camera to join this group



Thank you so much!