

ACCEPTANCE

In psychology acceptance occurs when a situation or scenario is acknowledged and accepted by an individual. It is typically used in reference to the acknowledgement and assent to a negative situation.

Acceptance is the last stage of the Kubler-Ross Model which is also known as the 5 stages of grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance).

TYPES OF ACCEPTANCE:

Self-acceptance:

Self-acceptance is being satisfied with one's current self. It is an agreement with oneself to appreciate, validate, and support the self as it is, despite deficiencies and negative past behavior. People have trouble accepting themselves because of a lack of motivation.

Social acceptance:

Social acceptance affects people of all social and age groups. Social acceptance can be defined as tolerating the differences and diversity in others because most people attempt to look and act like others do in order to fit in.

Children and teenagers tend to desire to be accepted among friends as part of that group, and act upon that desire through peer pressure.

When it comes to mental disabilities, social acceptance plays a big role in recovery. Many people don't understand mental illness, so they are unsure of how to embrace people who have a disease, leaving these people with feelings of isolation in friend groups.

Conditional:

A type of acceptance that requires modification of the initial conditions before the final acceptance is made, is called conditional acceptance, or qualified acceptance. For example, a contract that needs to be accepted from two parties may be adjusted or modified so that it fits both parties' satisfactions. A person has been made an offer that they are willing to agree on as long as some changes are made in its terms or that some conditions or event occurs gives conditional acceptance. In a contract that is made from a business to the employer, both parties may change and modify the contract until both parties agree or accept the details in the business contract.

Expressed:

Expressed acceptance involves making an overt and unambiguous acceptance of the set conditions. For example, a person clearly and explicitly agreeing to an offer. They accept the terms without any changes.

Implied:

Implied acceptance has one's intents to consent to the presented conditions made. Acceptance is implied by demonstrating any act indicating a person's assent to the proposed bargain. If a lady selects an item in a department store and pays the cashier for it, the lady has indicated that she has agreed to the department stores owner's offer to sell the item for the price stated on the price tag.

What Is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy?

- ❖ Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) is an **action-oriented approach** to psychotherapy that stems from traditional behavior therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy.
- ❖ Clients learn to stop avoiding, denying, and struggling with their inner emotions and, instead, accept that these deeper feelings are appropriate responses to certain situations that should not prevent them from moving forward in their lives.
- ❖ With this understanding, clients begin to accept their issues and hardships and commit to making necessary changes in their behavior, regardless of what is going on in their lives, and how they feel about it.

When It's Used

- ❖ ACT has been used effectively to help treat workplace stress, test anxiety, social anxiety disorder, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and psychosis.
- ❖ It has also been used to help treat medical conditions such as chronic pain, substance abuse, and diabetes.

What to Expect

- ❖ Working with a therapist, you will learn to listen to your own self-talk, or the way you talk to yourself specifically about traumatic events, problematic relationships, physical limitations, or other issues.
- ❖ You can then decide if an issue requires immediate action and change or if it can—or must—be accepted for what it is while you learn to make behavioral changes that can affect the situation.
- ❖ You may look at what hasn't worked for you in the past, so that the therapist can help you stop repeating thought patterns and behaviors that are causing you more problems in the long run.
- ❖ Once you have faced and accepted your current issues, you make a commitment to stop fighting your past and your emotions and, instead, start practicing more confident and optimistic behavior, based on your personal values and goals.

How It Works

- ❖ The theory behind ACT is that it is not only effective, but often productive, to try to control painful emotions or psychological experiences, because suppression of these feelings ultimately leads to more distress.
- ❖ ACT adopts the view that there are valid alternatives to trying to change the way you think, and these include mindful behavior, attention to personal values, and commitment to action.
- ❖ By taking steps to change their behavior while, at the same time, learning to accept their psychological experiences, clients can eventually change their attitude and emotional state.

Core Processes

There are six core processes of ACT that guide patients through therapy and provide a framework for developing psychological flexibility (Harris, 2011):

- Acceptance
- Cognitive Defusion
- Being Present
- Self as Context
- Values
- Committed Action

Acceptance is an alternative to the instinct to avoid negative, or potentially negative, experiences. It is the active choice to be aware of and allow these types of experiences without trying to avoid or change them. *Acceptance is not a goal of ACT, but a method of encouraging action that will lead to positive results.*

Cognitive defusion refers to the techniques that are intended to change how an individual reacts to or interacts with their thoughts and feelings rather than the nature of these thoughts and feelings. *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy is not intended to limit our exposure to negative experiences, but to face them and come out the other side with a decreased fixation on these experiences.*

Being present is another familiar concept for practitioners of mindfulness. It can be understood as the practice of being aware of the present moment while declining to attach judgments to the experience. In other words, being present involves actively experiencing what is happening without trying to predict, change, or make value judgments about the experience.

Self as context is the simple idea that an individual is not his or her experiences, thoughts, or emotions. Instead of being one's experiences, the "self as context" process rests on the idea that there is a self-outside of the current experience.

Values in this context are defined as the qualities that we choose to work towards in any given moment. We all hold values, consciously or unconsciously, that direct our steps. In ACT, we apply processes and techniques that help us live our lives according to the values that we hold dear.

Finally, ACT aims to help patients **commit to actions** that will further their goals and facilitate their attempt to live a values consistent life. All of the exercises, techniques, and practices of ACT are intended to assist individuals in reaching their goals through positive behavior changes.

These core processes show that ACT is not all that different from other behavioral-based therapies, but the emphasis on acceptance and allowing instead of avoiding is what separates ACT from many other forms of therapy.

There are three main ways to boost our self-approval or acceptance levels and therefore our emotional well-being:

Self-regulation: This allows us to shut down self- deprecating emotions such as not being good enough and focusing more on our positive attributes and restructuring negative occurrences, so we look at them as great opportunities that are meant to help us improve ourselves.

Self-awareness: Sometimes, our self-accepting level goes further than our conscious level such that when we are not self-accepting, we essentially split ourselves and feel incomplete. Self-awareness helps us understand what is happening at a deeper level.

Self-transcendence: This allows us to depend on things that are outside of ourselves to define who we are. That is, we turn to an unseen force that connects us with the world. Some of the ways we can become self-transcendent is by contributing to charities, helping the less fortunate, and so on. Self-transcendence has been proven to impact our brains positively by increasing the release of our feel good hormones, that is, dopamine and serotonin which reduce our stress levels and give us emotional fulfilment.