

Self-processes in clinical practice from an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy /Relational Frame Theory perspective

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Informed Consent and Confidentiality

- This workshop is experiential in nature:
 - Designed this way to increase understanding of the theory and to help participants contact the core of the work
 - What might that look like....
 - You will be invited to take risks
 - For that reason we must agree to confidentiality

i
have
arrived

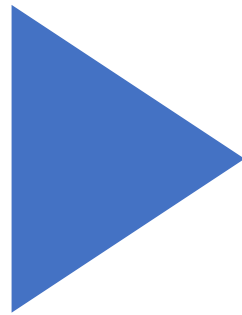
- As I look in the mirror I think
- 'Ah there you are....
- ...the source of all my problems!!'





↑
M50

Stop asking
'Am I good
enough?'



Start asking
'Am I
showing up
on purpose?'

Workshop overview

- Introducing Relational Frame Theory
- Introducing the self and RFT
- The three selves
- Training healthy selfing
- Connecting what matters from an RFT point of view

Contextual Behavioural Science

The goal is to
alleviate human
suffering

Grounded in a
philosophy of
science – Functional
Contextualism

Technical Term Alert!

- Function
- Context
- Together - *functional contextualism*





Function

- What is the 'function' of drinking a cup of tea?

Context

The situation where the behaviour happens



Drink this cup of
tea or I will shoot
you!

You can't tell the function of a behaviour unless you know what the context is

What do we mean by Behaviour?

- In everyday language, people use the word 'behaviour' to describe actions
- But in FC behaviour has a different meaning
- **Behaviour is anything a person does**
 - thinking, talking, remembering, daydreaming, fantasizing, and so on



In FC describing is not enough...

- We want to not only understand and describe human behaviour...
- We want the ability to predict and influence it
- We want to be effective for our change agents

Look at behaviour in a non-judgmental manner

What is the function?



Two different functions for each?

Eating a packet of biscuits

Fighting with your partner

Buying an expensive suit

Cheating in an exam



What can the function be?

- Escape
- Avoid
- Attention
- Self Stim



Our reactions to things feeds who we describe ourselves as

Our reactions to things is a lot to do with our learning history

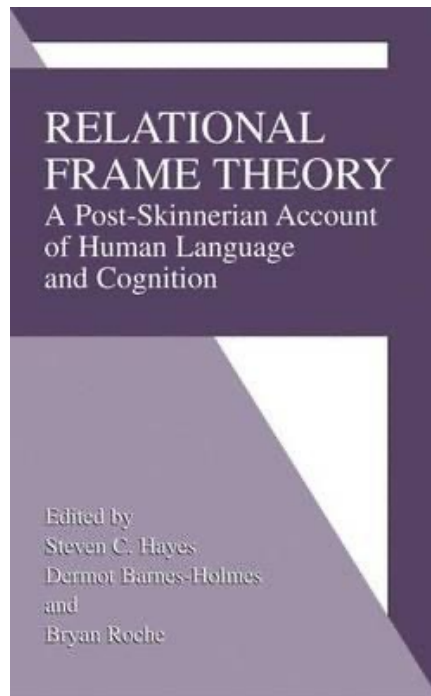
Thinking (cognition) is a big part of that



We are conditioned!

- Overbearing caregivers who monitor us closely (how we dress, how we behave) -> we might learn that being ourselves is not accepted...look to others as to how to behave
- Caregivers that shout frighten us when upset...-> we might learn to micro manage others feelings to avoid upsetting people
- Caregivers that are emotionally distant...-> we might learn to keep ourselves emotionally distant

Relational Frame Theory





World of direct experience...

- For newborn babies there is only a world of direct experience
 - Basic physiological functions including reflexes, instincts and the five senses
- No language

Relational Framing

- Relating is simply responding to one thing in terms of another

Symbolic relationships between things...

- Is what allows us to make sounds that other people understand rather than simply pointing and grunting at things



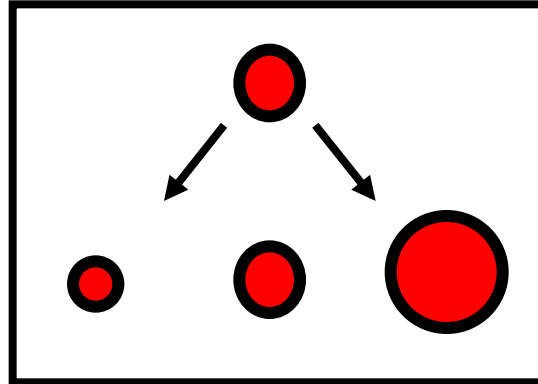
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‘HAT’

We can relate in many ways

- Same as ('Corona is the same as Corona virus')
- Opposite ('Day is opposite to Night')
- Different ('Red is different to Green')
- Comparison ('£1 is more than 10p')
- Conditional ('If anxious then I will mess up')
- Temporal ('Bad now worse later')
- Hierarchy ('A dog is a type of animal')
- Perspective ('I am here and you are there')

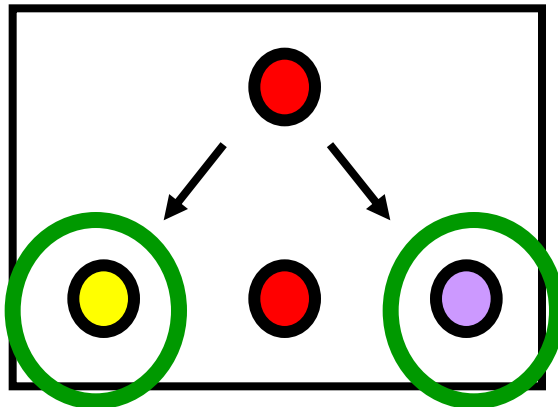
Non-Arbitrary Relational Responding



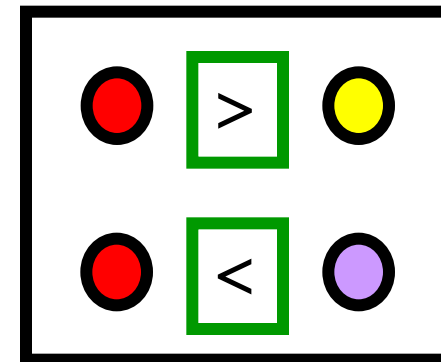
- Bigger Than
- Smaller Than

*Physical
Relations*

Arbitrarily Applicable Relational Responding



- Bigger Than
- Smaller Than



CONTEXTUAL CUES

And we can relate everything!

- Think of three single digit numbers (you can repeat numbers) and write them down in random order

- Now answer the following question, using the first number to pick the word in the first column, the second number to pick the word in the second column, etc.

•How is a . . .

•(e.g., banana)

(e.g., the cause of) (e.g., candle)

•1. Banana

1. like

1. prostitute?

•2. Race car

2. unlike

2. war?

•3. Kangaroo

3. better than

3. chair?

•4. Apple

4. different from

4. candle?

•5. Dog

5. worse than

5. house plant?

•6. Football

6. the father of

6. book?

•7. Hat

7. the cause of

7. mud hole?

•8. Computer

8. the partner of

8. baby?

•9. TV

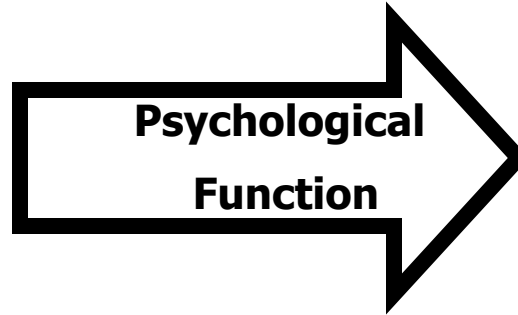
9. the opposite of

9. toilet?

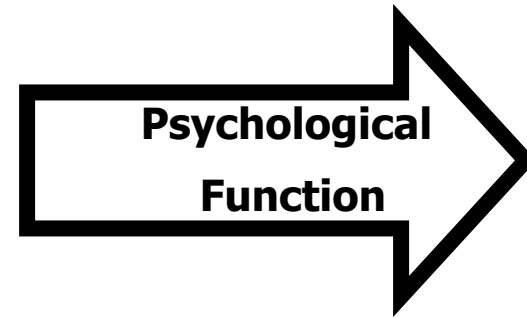
Causal Relations

- Reasons for being that way exercise

Transformation of Functions



‘Dog’



‘DOG’


is a

‘Jumjaw’


‘Jumjaw’

**Psychological
Function**




A photograph of Ernie and Bert. Ernie is on the left, holding a banana in his right hand. Bert is on the right, looking at Ernie. The background is a plain wall with a window.


Ernie why is
that banana still
in your ear?

A photograph of Ernie and Bert. Ernie is on the left, looking towards Bert. Bert is on the right, looking back at Ernie. The background is the same as the first panel.

Listen Bert, I use
this banana to keep
the alligators away

A photograph of Ernie and Bert. Ernie is on the left, holding the banana in his hand. Bert is on the right, looking at Ernie. The background is the same as the previous panels.

Alligators?
Ernie, there are
no alligators on
Sesame Street!

A photograph of Ernie and Bert. Ernie is on the left, looking towards Bert. Bert is on the right, looking back at Ernie. The background is the same as the previous panels.

Right! It's
doing a good
job isn't it
Bert?

Name	Explanation	Example	Some cues
Same as	When “things” are the same or similar	“The apple is red”	is; are; like; same as
Distinction	One “thing” differs from another along some specified dimension	“I am not like my mother”	not; unlike; different; dissimilar; but
Opposition	One “thing” differs from another “thing” in the other direction along the continuum involved	“Hot is the opposite of cold”	opposite of; oppose; inverse
Comparison	One “thing” is compared to another “thing” in terms of some specified dimension	“This is a better use of my time than watching Netflix”	more; less; better
Hierarchical	One “thing” is contained within another “thing”	“I am a member of this organization”	part of; in; within; member of
Causality	One “thing” causes another thing	“ If I take part, then I will feel connected”	force; drives; because; result of; due to; if-then
Perspective	“Things” are situated in terms of the perspective of the speaker	“ I am here now completing this course”	sees; hears; now; then
Spatial	One “thing” is related in space to another thing.	“Cyprus is far from the US”	Near/far; front/behind
Temporal	One “thing” is related in time to another thing	“The bread is done after it browns”	Before; now; after
Analogic	The properties contained in one “thing” are related to another the properties contained in another “thing”	“Anxiety is like quicksand”	This is like that



Same
Different
Opposite
Analogy
The cause of
Spatial
Temporal
Hierarchy



Spot the relations

I will never have intimacy because intimacy includes things like initiating conversations and sharing thoughts, which are conditional on confidence, and I am not confident. Therefore, I and happy are incompatible because happy is dependent on confidence, and I am distinctly not confident – I am worthless. Further, you and I are in opposition because you can't take my perspective and the characteristics of you are the opposite of those for me. Therefore you can't know what it is like for me.

- Same as
- Opposite
- Different
- Comparison
- Causal
- Temporal
- Hierarchy
- Perspective

Spot the relations

I will **never have** intimacy **because** intimacy **includes** things **like** initiating conversations and sharing thoughts, which are **conditional** on confidence, and **I am not** confident. Therefore, I and happy are **incompatible** because happy is **dependent** on confidence, and I **am distinctly not** confident – I **am** worthless. Further, you and I are in **opposition because** you can't **take my perspective** and the **characteristics** of you are the **opposite** of those for me. Therefore you can't know what it **is like** for me.

Derived Relations of Comparison

Panic attack in one's own living room results in increased arousal and avoidance of local store and university class

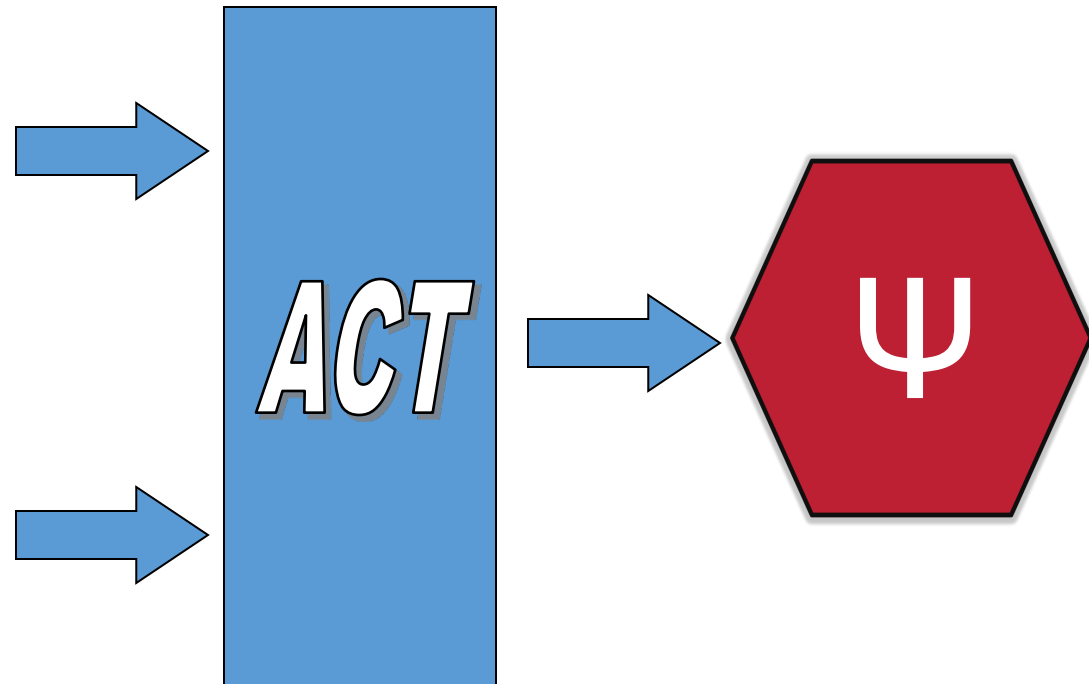


RFT allows us to...

*Understand the way
language works*

*Combat the **NEGATIVE**
effects of Language*

*Amplify the **POSITIVE**
effects of Language*



Psychological Flexibility

- Context Sensitivity [Broad (enough) and narrow (enough) stimulus control]
- Functional Coherence [and/or multiple functions transforming - not fused with one meaning]

Context insensitivity

- Humans are influenced by context which is influenced by symbolic contingencies
- Insensitivity to useful parts of context can create difficulty
- E.g., Always saying what they think in intimate relationships

Connection

Sadness

Love

Disappointment



Loss

Companionship

Regret

Intimacy

How do we do it?

- Selecting and changing functions of psychological experiences is key to effective therapy.
- The question that remains is how.
- We cannot delete.



I'm scared I'll get rejected if I get close to people.

FEAR IS NOT JUST SOMETHING TO BE AVOIDED
TRANSFORMING SYMBOLIC FUNCTIONS

If you go into fear sometimes it teaches you things. What if this fear tells you about something you want?



Why is coherence an issue?

- A key aspect of language is coherence or sense-making
- Coherence means that the language community teaches us that what we say should be internally coherent or non-contradictory
- Relational framing also has this quality

The Dark Side of Coherence

- Clients often present for therapy with coherent descriptions of what they do and don't do, what they will and won't do, what is and is not possible for them.
- For example, if a person has experienced repeated failures, concluding that they *are* a failure is coherent with their direct experience.



Functional coherence

Improve clients ability to
make sense of their life --
functional coherence



WHAT TO DO

Increase contact with
what is important about
a particular action

Bring the clients
attention to functions
that are overlooked

How does the clinical RFT framework apply to the self?

- Context sensitivity – this is about being sensitive to my own experience, self as process
- Functional coherence – my story about myself is only useful as far as it is workable

Who are
you ???

A hand holding a black marker is shown writing the question 'Who are you ???' on a whiteboard. The word 'you' is underlined with two parallel lines. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

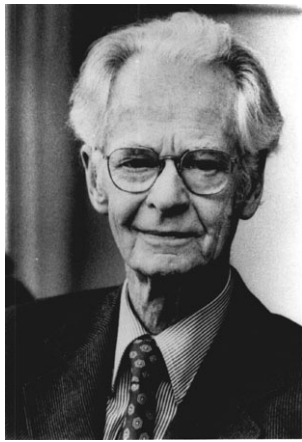
Self Matters

- Many of the key psychological challenges that people face in life are fundamentally influenced by issues of self:
 - what career path to choose
 - how to interact successfully with other people
 - how to maintain a successful relationship
 - how to cope with negative life events

Issue	Example
1. Lack of values clarity	'I don't really know what I care about'
2. Self-righteousness	'I'm more honest than you. I'd never lie like that'
3. Operating on auto-pilot	'Sorry, I missed that; I'm up to my neck in it'
4. Own experiences feeling threatening	'I can't stand these feelings'
5. Self-centeredness / Lack of perspective	'I don't care how he feels, he brought it on himself!'
6. Hyper-attentive to views of others	'Have I offended you? Are you upset with me?'
7. Lack of connectedness to others	'I don't fit in – I'm different'
8. Personal rigidity	'But this is just who I am'
9. Sense of emptiness	'I feel empty. There is nothing to me'
10. Painful self-judgment	'I should have said something; I'm so weak'



Skinner vs CBS Interpretation of Self



- ‘There is a difference between behaving and reporting that one is behaving or reporting the causes of one’s behavior.’ (pp. 34-35).
- Something more to it than this... ‘[S]elf is not simply behaving with regard to [ones] behavior but is behaving verbally with regard to [ones] behavior...’ (Hayes, Barnes-Holmes & Roche, 2001)



Self-ing

- We define the self as an action (i.e., verbal responding to one's own responding) and not as an entity.
- Hence, it is arguably more appropriate within our approach to use the term 'self-ing' (i.e., a verb) rather than 'the self' (i.e., a noun)

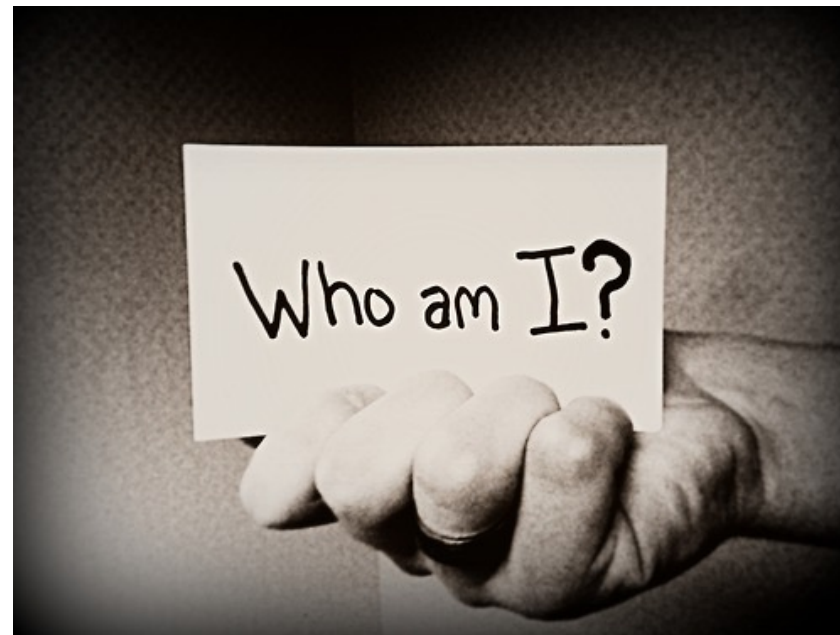
CBS and the Self



At the heart of the process is discrimination of one's own responding

Relational Frame Theory and the Self

- Transformation of functions through relational framing of one's own responding



Relational Framing of Ones own Responding...

- I am funny (**coordination**)
- I am not smart (**distinction**)
- I am anything but artistic (**opposition**)
- I am a leader (**hierarchy**)
- I am more stylish than you (**comparison**)

A sense of self and a sense of other develop in tandem

- Where are you now?
- Where were you then?
- What am I doing?
- If I was you what would I be doing now?

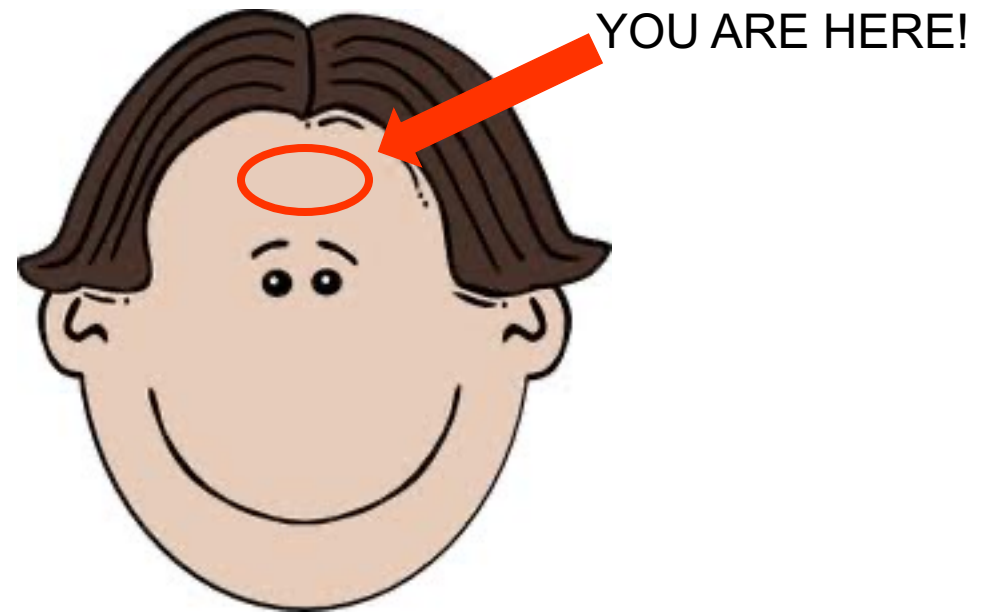
DEICITC RELATIONS:

I vs YOU (interpersonal)

HERE vs. THERE (spatial)

NOW vs. THEN (temporal)

Where is your 'self'?



Ferrari et al 2008



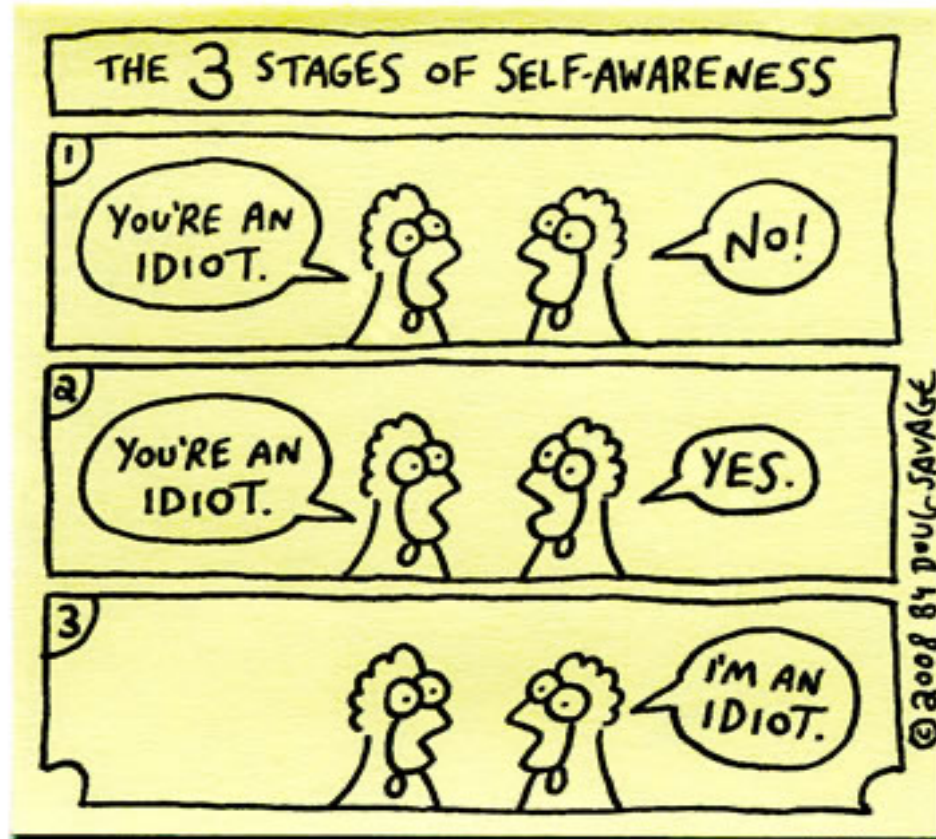
I was so stressed yesterday, I wasn't myself!

Then who were you?

Social animals...

Savage Chickens

by Doug Savage



www.savagechickens.com

A sense of self?

- Only humans have a sense of self
- Why?

- So language is responding to abstract relations
- So what does that have to do with the 'self'?



'I think there's
I am'

No Rene – you learn to verbally
discriminate your own behavior
from others behavior -
therefore you are

What did YOU have for breakfast?

I had a banana for breakfast

No silly I had a banana for breakfast



As a child begins to understand their own behavior...

I feel sad

to compare it with that of others...

I am not as happy
as you

I am a depressed
person!

to form a concept of self

The Verbal Self

- The world becomes increasingly verbal and this becomes integral to everything that the person does.
- Naturally, even a person's own behaviour becomes part of this network of relationally transformed stimuli.

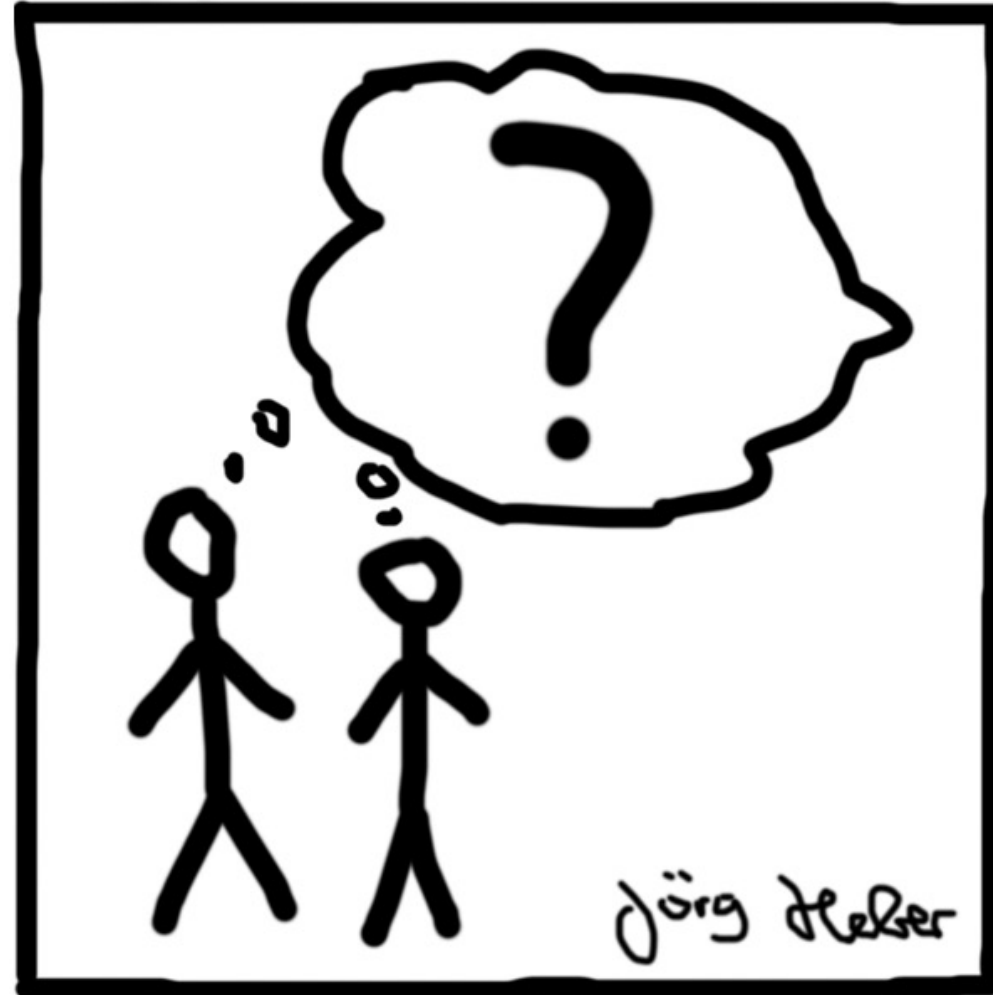


The Verbal Self Concept



- The self becomes a concept
- Experiences we perceive are quickly evaluated and categorized
- Thus, not only do we take perspective on our experiences, and notice these experiences, but we also build and derive networks around these experiences.
- However, people around us reinforce us less for noticing the perspective than for noticing the content of this experience and how we evaluate it.

Noticing Perspective



ACT and The Three Selves

Self as the content

Self as an ongoing process

Self as the context

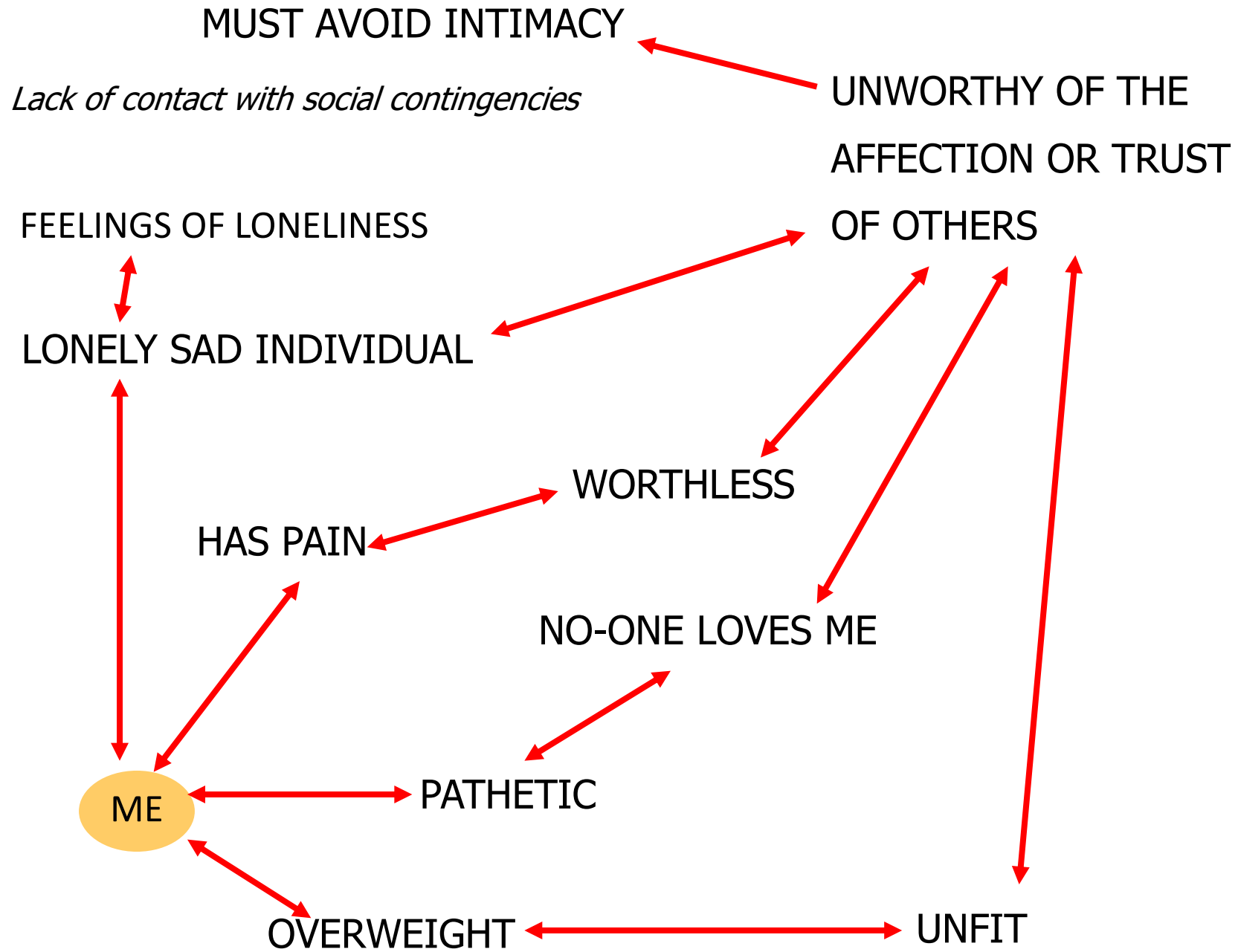
Self as Content





Self content...

- Descriptions, evaluations and judgements
- Reason Giving
- Rules



Rule-following...



An important phenomenon facilitated by relating is rule following.



Verbal humans are able to act in accordance with verbally-specified, rather than directly experienced, contingencies.

‘When you visit Dublin
you should visit the book
of Kells’!

Rules can influence behaviour that
occurs much later even though it did
not have this effect on behaviour when
the rule was present...

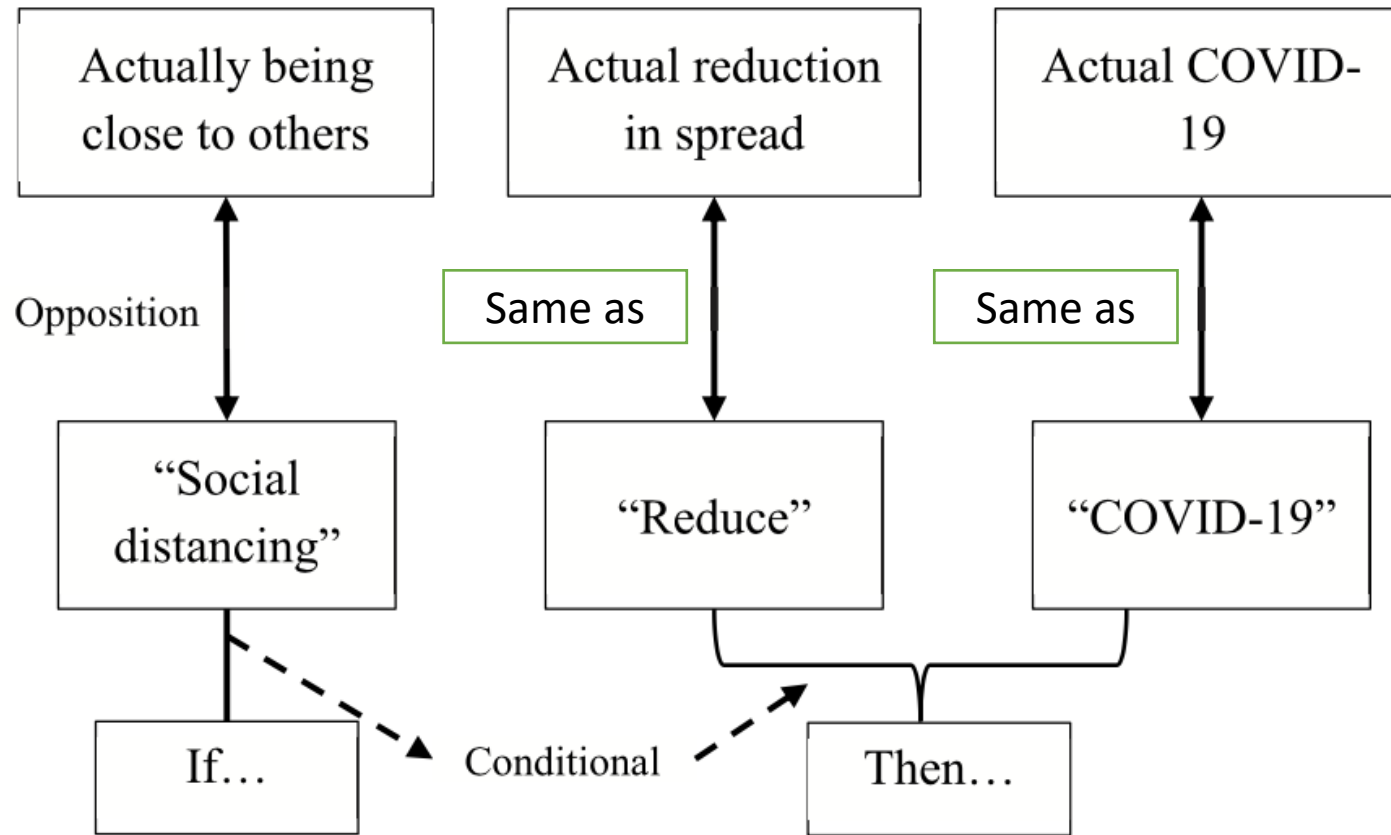


Fig. 1. Simplistic visual representation of how events in the rule “*I must engage in social distancing in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19*” may be organized into a relational network.

Rule-following: Insensitivity effect

*You get points by
pressing the spacebar*



Learns fast but is rigid

*Figure out how to
get points*



Learns slower but flexible

Insensitive or overwhelmed? Misnomer...

- “Rule-governed behavior is typically cast in terms of [symbolic relations] selectively increasing a learners’ behavioural sensitivity to some environmental consequences, while simultaneously decreasing their sensitivity to all others.” (Dr. Nigel Vahey)

Rules: Useful & not so useful...



If I run I can catch the bus!

If I can just get rid of this anxiety, I'll be able to do what I want in my life!



Rule-following isn't the problem, *inflexibility* is.

Rules can be useful for ourselves:

- “If attending a workshop, I will pay attention”
- “I should trial techniques I learn with my clients to see how they work in my context”

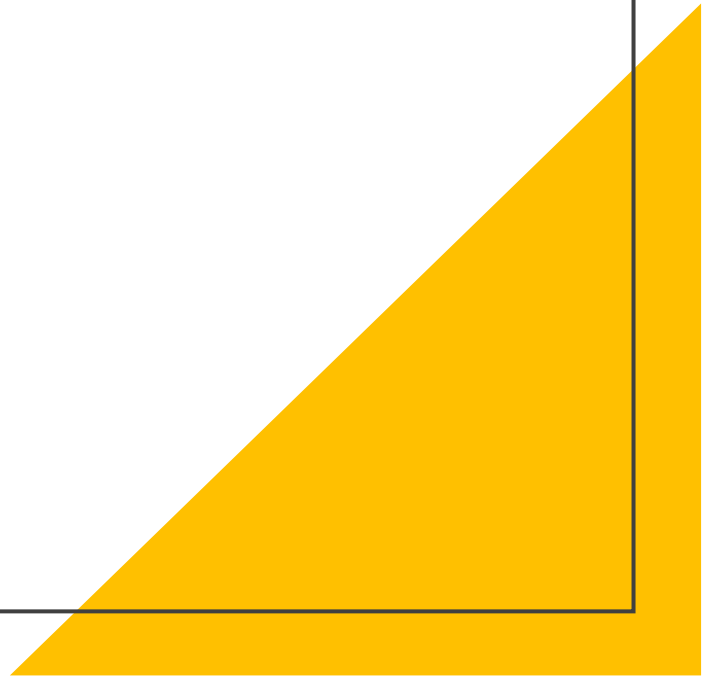
and people we work with:

- “If unwanted thoughts show up, I will practice acceptance”

Sometimes, we need to promote rule-following

- Context sensitivity
- Functional coherence

Group Rules Exercise



Self as Process



Self as Process

- Self-as-process, or the knowing self, is the ongoing, verbal discrimination of the psychological events that we experience as they occur in the moment.
- The knowing self feeds self as content
- AND is also necessary to contact 'self-as-context'



Self as Process and Relations of Coordination and Distinction

- In therapy, these types of relational frames are often used to help clients **label** and **discriminate** among their thoughts, feelings, and sensations
- If the skill of naming is weak or idiosyncratic, it is hard to get what we want

Self as Process and Relations of Coordination and Distinction

- Naming my experiences is a key process in developing **sensitivity to the context**
- If these language skills are weakly developed we have difficulty predicting and understanding the causes and consequences of our behaviour

How do self as process problems emerge? Issues with discriminating own experiences

- Dominance of pliance
- Absence of emotional talk
- Avoidance (emerging later in life)
- Deliberation distortion (caregiver says anxiety is weakness)

Tuning into self as process helps us become conscious of our conditioning

- We want to become aware of how we think, feel and behave
- Your automatic reactions are not who you are they are products of what you have experienced! [context matters]



How to develop self as process

- Pick a relatively non challenging emotional fluctuation for the client to notice and acknowledge.
- *Close your eyes, sit so that your back is away from the chair or straight and upright. Now become aware of your breathing. You don't need to try to control it. Just let yourself breath in and out, let yourself feel how it feels. Witness your breath. Try to be with your breathing for the next minute. If at some time you think that it is silly or boring just let yourself sit there and notice that these are thoughts. Now hold your nose with your thumb and hand – notice what this feels like. Let go of your nose and notice if your feeling changes.*

We want to move from focusing on the world outside of ourselves to observing our self

- Many of the people we work with (and ourselves) spend most of their time focused on other people – their wants, opinions, expectations, needs, etc.
- *‘What does my friend think about my new car, will my mother approve of my choice of partner, did I offend my colleague by saying that...’*
- We were all conditioned to do this to varying degrees!

Self as Context



Self as Context Definition

- In the broad sense, self as context has been described as a process involving ‘...the coming together and flexible social extension of deictic framing – especially I HERE NOW – to enable observation or description from a particular point of view that facilitates as outcome a wide variety of experience including defusion, acceptance, compassion, empathy, theory of mind and a transcendent sense of self’ (Hayes, 2011).

Self as Context Exercises

Observer you

Self compassion exercises

Mindfulness exercises

Future you

Chessboard metaphor

Inner Child

Perspective taking exercises

Who is noticing that?

How can we find a balance between stability in the self and variability in the behavioural repertoire?

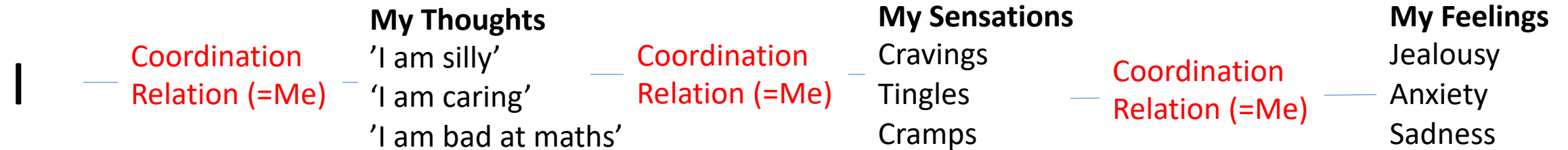
Camera metaphor

A stable position allows you to get a better perspective on things.

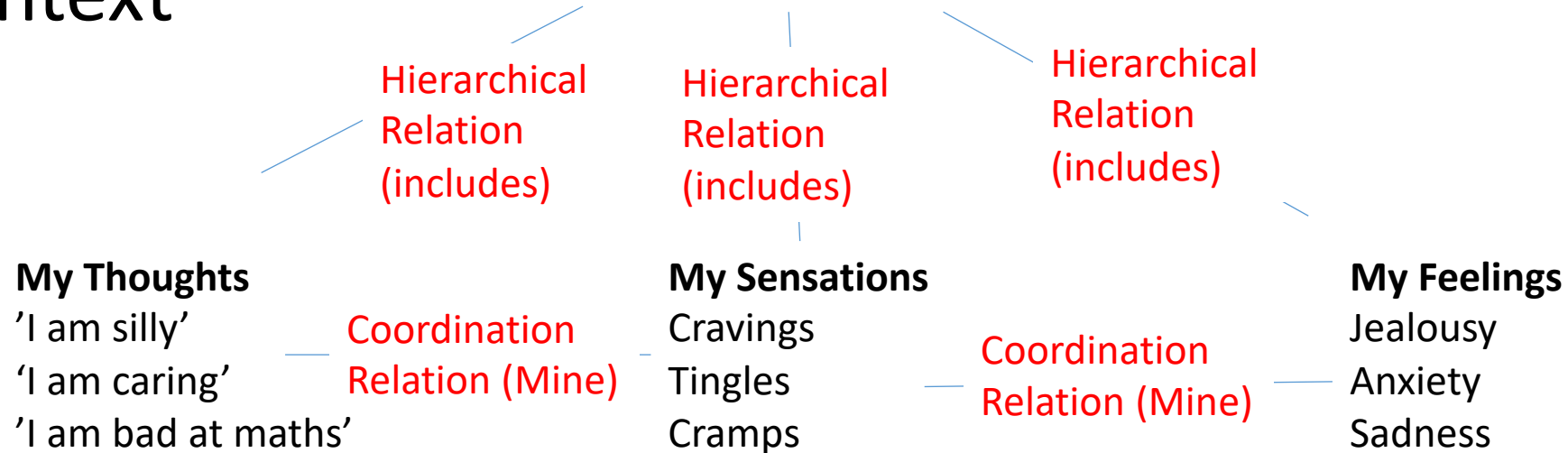


- You can think of it like when a cameraman uses a camera to photograph natural patterns in which the camera is left on and just left there in position for hours or days. Later the cameraman can speed the time up and see patterns of activity of birds or animals or patterns of light that might otherwise not be visible. The camera is like the stable sense of perspective that exists even though what it takes pictures of change across time.

Content



Context



Self as Context - Flexible Self-ing- How to Do It

Target	Example
<p>The variety of experience:</p> <p>I as various</p>	<p>How do you feel now, and now and now?</p> <p>Remember different situations and moments of your life. How did you feel then? Is that different to how you feel now?</p>
<p>Stability in a sense of perspective:</p> <p>I as perspective</p>	<p>Notice who is noticing thoughts, sensations and feelings across a variety of experiences in your life e.g., last summer, five years ago, when you were a teenager.</p> <p>Notice who is noticing the experiences of you today, yesterday, in a year's time</p>
<p>Distinction and hierarchical relations:</p> <p>I as container</p>	<p>Your experiences are part of you</p> <p>You are the container of all your experiences</p>
<p>Able to respond in line with values in action:</p> <p>I as flexible</p>	<p>Given your history it is not surprising that you made these choices.</p> <p>Now with this knowledge (that your experiences are only part of you) what can you do that is in line with what matters to you? (i.e., you are able to respond)</p>

I as Various

- Help the client notice the flow of experiences
 - Help the client stop moving
- Formal meditation can do this
- Via language – right now, and now and now in this moment

I as Perspective

- Noticing common perspective across experience and points of view
 - You are the observer of all your experiences and views

I as Perspective via perspective relations

Perspective 1

- Think of a time when you were at your most unhealthy?
- Contact how you felt at that time

Perspective 2

- Think of a time when you judged someone else's unhealthy lifestyle
- Now contact how you felt then
- Now contact how they felt then

Contacting what you would do differently

- Now imagine yourself going back in time and responding differently to this person

I as Container

- Emphasizing the hierarchical dimension of the self
 - You are the container of all your experiences
- Emphasizing the distinction between the self and the experiences
 - You are not any one experience as these will change

I as Container: Emphasizing the hierarchical dimension of the self

- Deliberate use of hierarchical framing
- Leading the client to formulate her experiences as something she *has* rather than something she *is* is a good and simple way to build hierarchical relations.

Hierarchy



Using Hierarchical Relations to improve your SAC interventions...

- Distinction

- *Each time a thought pops into your head, imagine putting it on one of those leaves...Just imagine yourself on the side of the bank watching this thought go down the stream*

- Hierarchy

- *Each time a thought pops into your head, imagine putting it on one of those leaves...Just imagine yourself on the side of the bank watching this thought go down the stream. **And just notice that it is you who is noticing your thoughts.***

I as Flexible

- Noticing impact of context
- Noticing the impact of behaviors

I as Flexible: Noticing impact of context

- Ask questions about a variety of current and past elements that may contribute to the clients ineffective action
 - Can you think of things that characterized that day that might have led you to acting this way?
 - If you were me right now, how would you view this situation?
 - Given your history how could it be any other way?

*Don't have to shoulder all the responsibility

I as Flexible: Noticing the impact of behaviours

- Impact of clients own influence
- When you study how does that impact your grades? Your relationship with your parents?

*And you are able to respond

I as Flexible

- Write down something that you no longer do that was important to you?
- What led you to stop doing it?
- What was happening around that time in your life?
- What was it that was important to you about doing this?
- What have you missed since stopping it?
- In service of my value, I am willing to_____.”

MEANING AND MOTIVATION

Building motivation and meaning

- In the area of health people typically know that their behaviors are problematic
- The struggle can be both with meaning AND motivation
- We need to change how the people we work with symbolically relate to their actions and experiences



RFT and Meaning and Motivation

1. Hierarchical Relational Networks
2. Motivative augmenting

1. Hierarchical relations

Symbolic purposes as guides to action

- The therapist's goal is to construct the abstract symbolic purposes of action that both bring a client satisfaction now and extend forward in time as a guide to action
- We want to go beyond the specific consequences that clients expect from their actions to **qualities of action**
 - compassion
 - honesty, integrity
 - Love
 - precision)
- and **overarching goals**
 - in order to learn
 - protect
 - teach
 - connect

Symbolic reinforcers

- We find meaning when we are able to link our actions to inexhaustible sources of satisfaction that project into the present moment but that remain present even once the action is over
- Our ability to relate things through language not only allows us to establish connections among them, but also leads to a ToF
- Example of work (QoL vs. obliged)



Building Hierarchical networks

- Put both a **positive overarching goal** (e.g., longevity) and a **quality of action** (e.g., with compassionate self care) at the top, and **actions and specific goals** at the base (e.g., going for a run twice a week for 30 minutes)
- When actions are framed in a hierarchy with overarching goals and qualities of action, satisfaction and motivation become continuously available

Longevity via self care

Top of hierarchy:
Overarching goal
and quality of
action

Quit
Smoking

Take
medication

Exercise
more

Healthy
eating

Middle of
hierarchy:
Actions

Buy
replacement
chewing gum

Remove
cigarettes
from house

Set
reminders

Go for a run
twice a week
after work

Only eat
chocolate on
Saturdays

Base of hierarchy:
Specific goals

Positive overarching goals

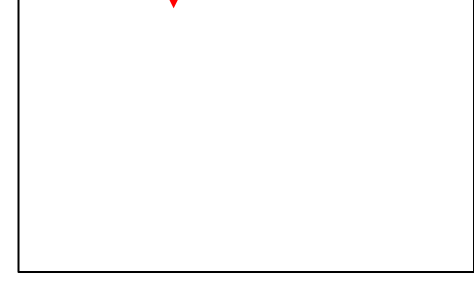
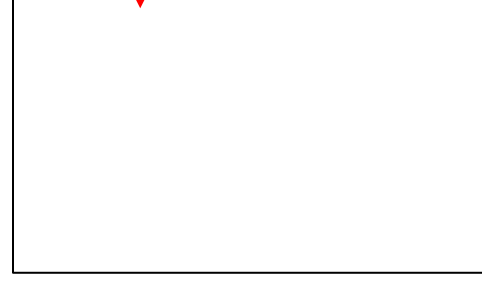
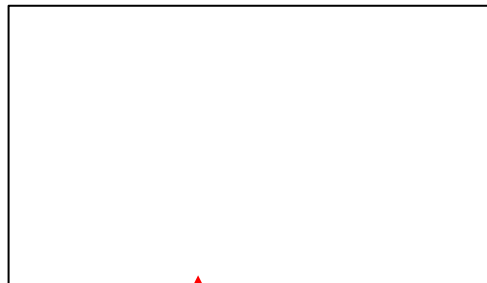
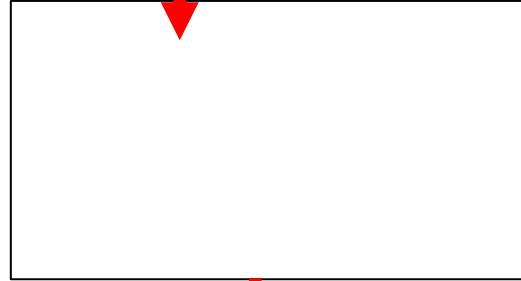
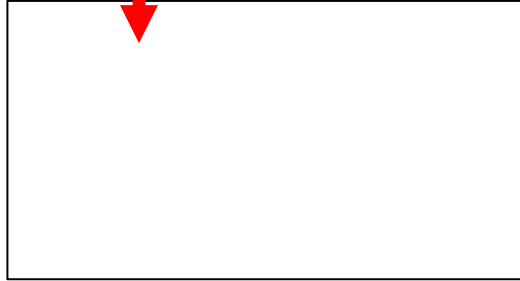
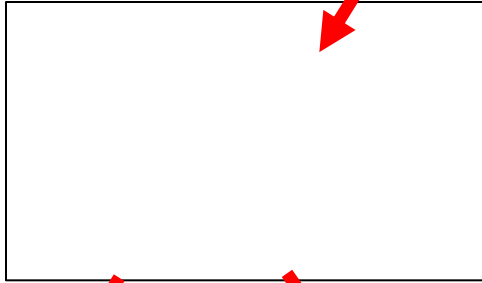
- An overarching goal is one that does not end
- It is important that a client's overarching goals be positive
- Although avoiding aversive consequences (negative goal) can be a powerful source of motivation (e.g., quitting smoking to avoid cancer), it doesn't bring the same sense of vitality that positive goals offer
- More than relief, we want our clients to find satisfaction in their lives
- Thus, **meaning is best cast in terms positive overarching goals**

Top of hierarchy:
Overarching goal
and quality of
action



INSERT YOURS HERE

Middle of
hierarchy:
Actions



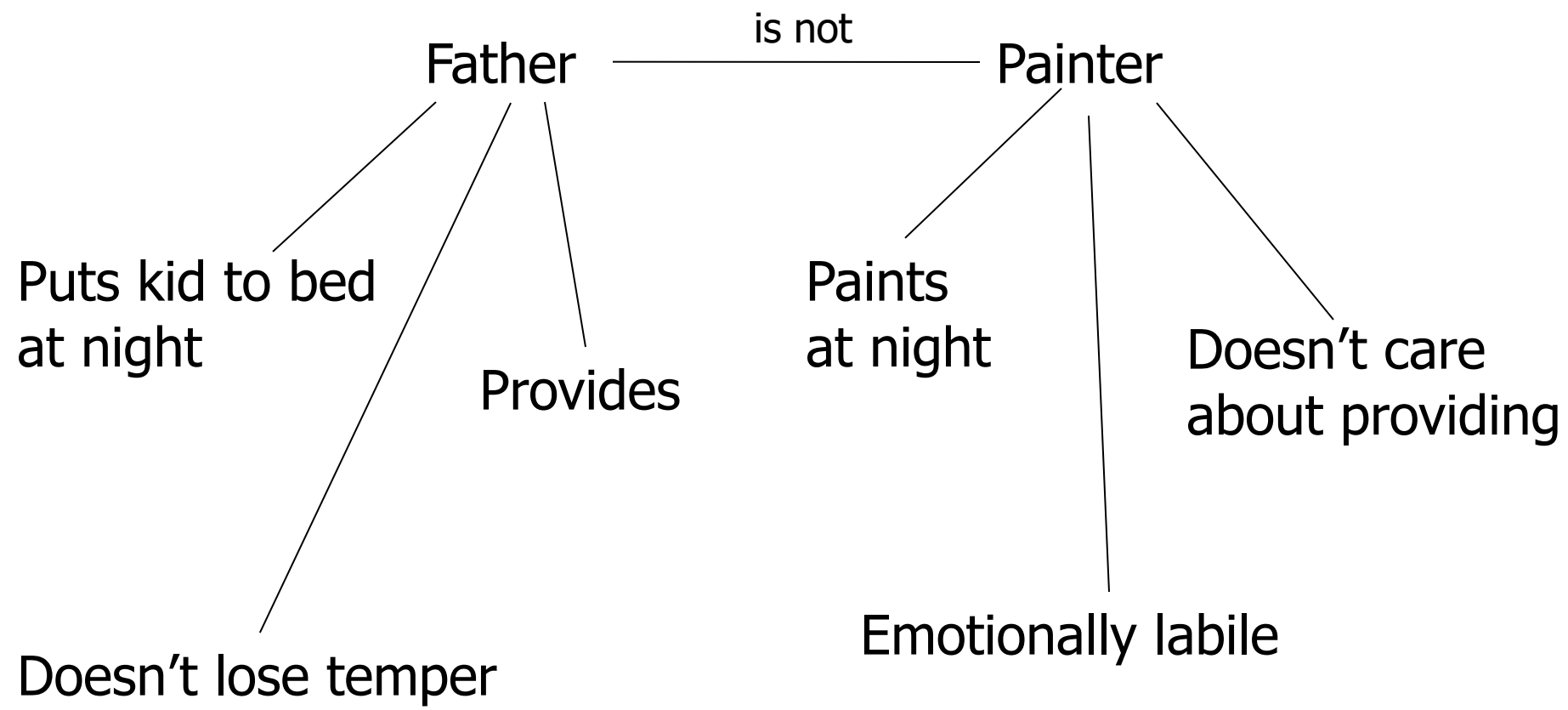
Base of hierarchy:
Specific goals

Moving from Conditional to Hierarchical Relations

- When setting goals we often only set up conditional relations BUT conditional relations focusing on specific goals only allow contact with satisfaction if the goal is met
 - e.g., “I need to work to get my degree to make a lot of money and then I will be happy,” “I need to lose weight before I can start dating again”
- Hierarchical relations make the process of engaging in the action reinforcing in and of itself
 - e.g., “I am happy to work on my degree because it is part of my overarching goal always to be learning more”; “Eating healthy is a form of loving self care which is one of my valued qualities of action”

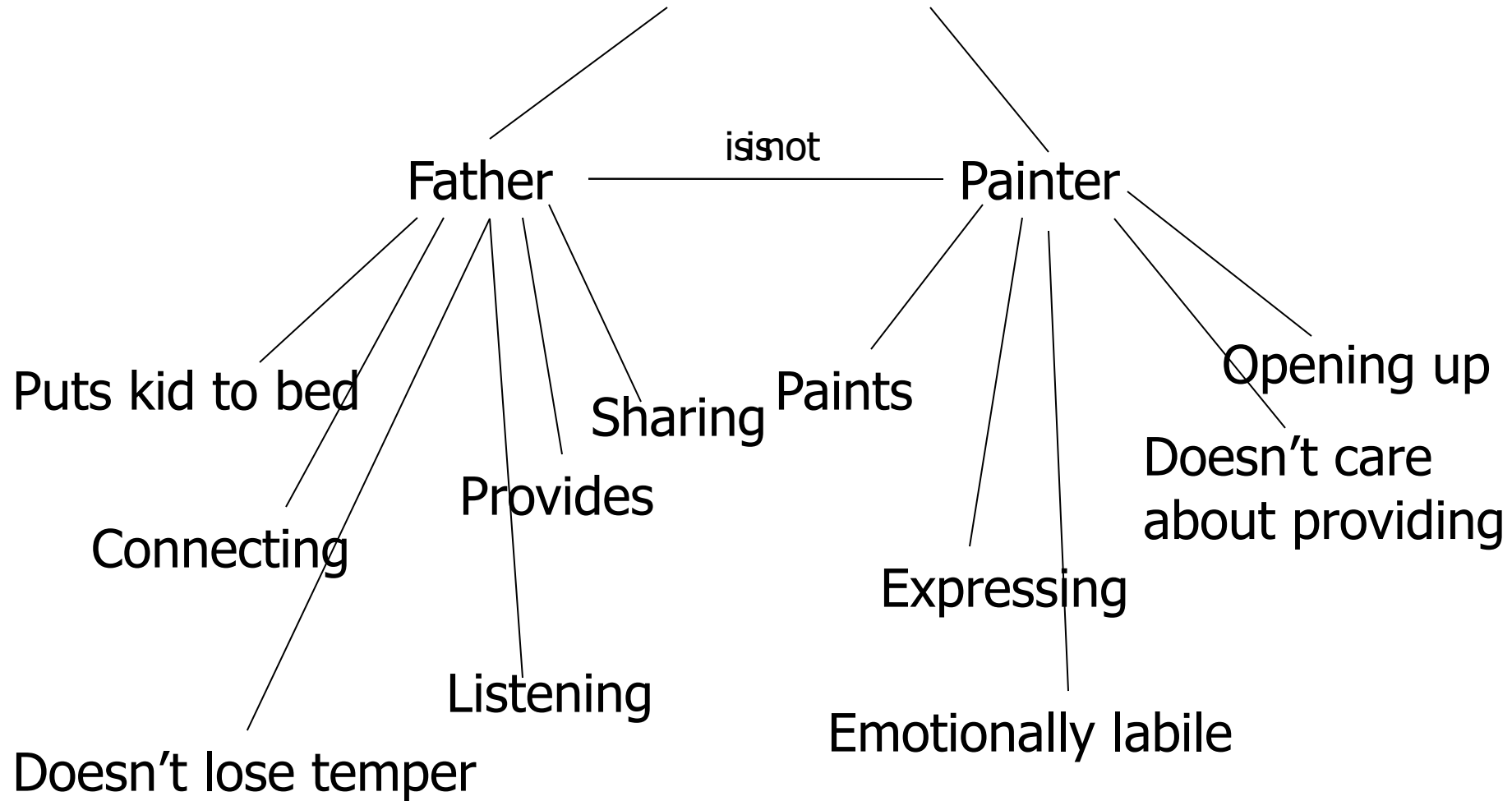
Mark

- Mark describes a "values conflict" between his painting and being a father. The stress of this conflict is impacting his health.



You Get to Pick

The 'Me' I Want to Be



Create your own self-as-context exercise

[adapted from A-Tjak]

- Step 1 Help the client to direct their attention inwards. Give instructions on how to sit and to close the eyes or find a spot to focus one's gaze. Then give instructions to direct the attention for instance on the five senses or bodily experiences like the breath, sitting in a chair, feeling your feet on the floor, your arms on the armrest or in your lap.
- Step 2 (I as Perspective) Help the client to become aware that they are present in this space at this moment and that they are the one noticing (I-here-now). Intertwine this with instructions to direct their attention (as in step 1). For example: 'notice that you are present here now. Notice that you are the one who notices the experiences from your five senses or your bodily experiences' (emphasize what the client can 'notice' as concretely as possible). Use questions like: "who notices this? Notice your answer."
- Step 3 Help the client to make a perspective change. Vary with- Place (From here to there). Another space in the room were the client is now, like another chair or from the ceiling. Another space outside the room were the client is now, like at home, in the office, etc. This helps to make new information available.-Time (from now to then). Previously or later in time. Closer to or further away in time from this moment. For instance: at the beginning or ending of the session. Earlier or later in the week. In six months' time or six months ago. When the client was a child (this introduces self-compassion through compassion with a smaller version of their self). When the client has become older (this introduces a wise mind with more experience and knowledge). Let the client change perspectives and have the different versions of himself look at each other, interact with each other. Person (from I to you). Taking the perspective of another person. For instance, a friend, a family member, a parent, a partner, a child. To stimulate selfcompassion: let the client take the perspective of someone who cares a great deal about the client, accepts him without conditions. To introduce more understanding of others: let the client take the perspective of someone they have trouble with (lead in gently here), with whom they interact in unpleasant ways. Let the client change perspectives and have the different other persons look at them and let them look at the others and listen to them.
- Step 4 (I as container) Help the client to discover the continuity of the experiences in step 1-3. Help the client to notice that they have been present with all the experiences of this exercise and that they are the one who has noticed all experiences. Help the client to see that they can encompass all their experiences.
- Step 5 Help the client to round off the experience and come back to the experience here and now. Let them focus the attention on some aspect of the present situation, like the five senses, or bodily experiences at this time. Let the client formulate what the exercise has shown them or has changed in their experience. Invite the client to take this experience with them. Indicate that the exercise is done or give the client space to choose the moment to end the exercise (when you are ready...).