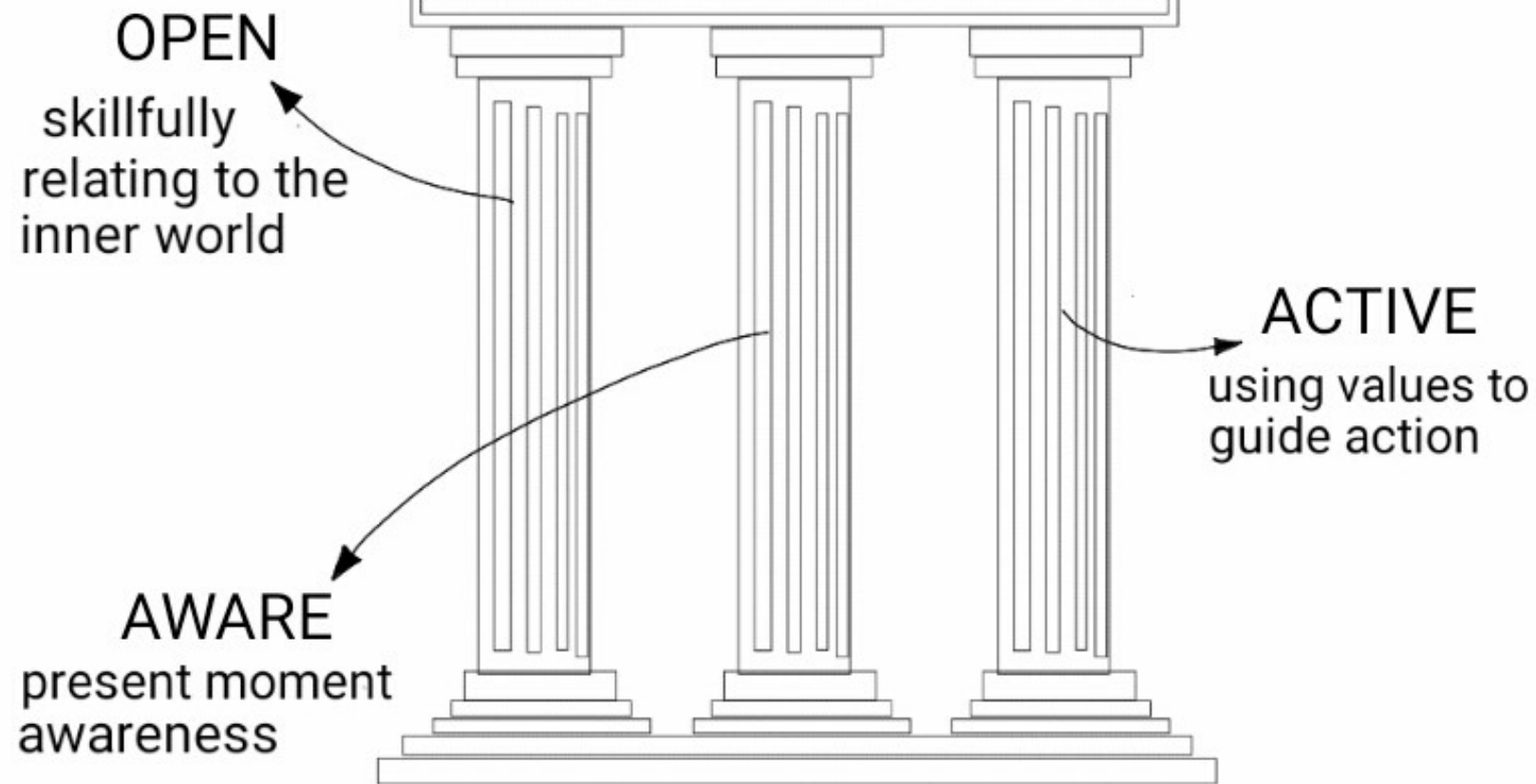


Psychological well-being & Life vitality



Protocols:

- ❖ ACT for Life / Recovery (<http://goo.gl/m8Dx6l>)
- ❖ The Mindful and Effective Employee
(<http://www.mindfulemployee.com/>)
- ❖ ACT on Social Anxiety
([http://www.actonsocialanxiety.com/pdf/Treatment Manual.pdf](http://www.actonsocialanxiety.com/pdf/Treatment_Manual.pdf))

Group exercises and metaphors:

- ❖ Passengers on the Bus
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdeA-FKDLLc>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z29ptSuoWRc>
 - <http://drericmorris.com/2015/09/13/how-to-do-acceptance-and-commitment-therapy-in-groups-passengers-on-the-bus-metaphor/>
- ❖ Tug of War
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uK467v-Zgp8>
- ❖ Unwelcome Party Guest
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYht-guymF4>
- ❖ Demons on the Boat
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-wyaP6xXwE>
- ❖ Bullseye
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tg_8FIQz60

Other helpful resources:

- ❖ Webinar slides on running ACT groups
 - <http://drericmorris.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ACT-in-Groups-Webinar-Eric-Morris-May-2016.pdf>
- ❖ ACT blog – Eric Morris
 - <http://drericmorris.com/>
- ❖ Yalom and Leszcz: Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy
 - <http://www.readings.com.au/products/2860751/theory-and-practice-of-group-psychotherapy>

Psychological Inflexibility

Dominance of Conceptualizations

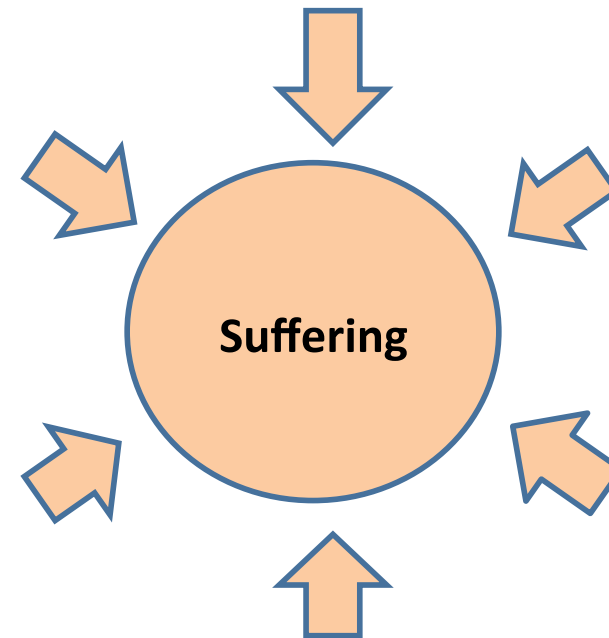
Preoccupation with past or future and
Loss of awareness of the present

Lack of Values Clarity Or Contact

Loss of contact with
Or clarity of
Personal values

Inactivity or Disorganized Activity

Inaction,
Impulsivity,
Or persistent avoidance



Experiential Avoidance

Avoidance of
Sensations, feelings,
Thoughts, or memories

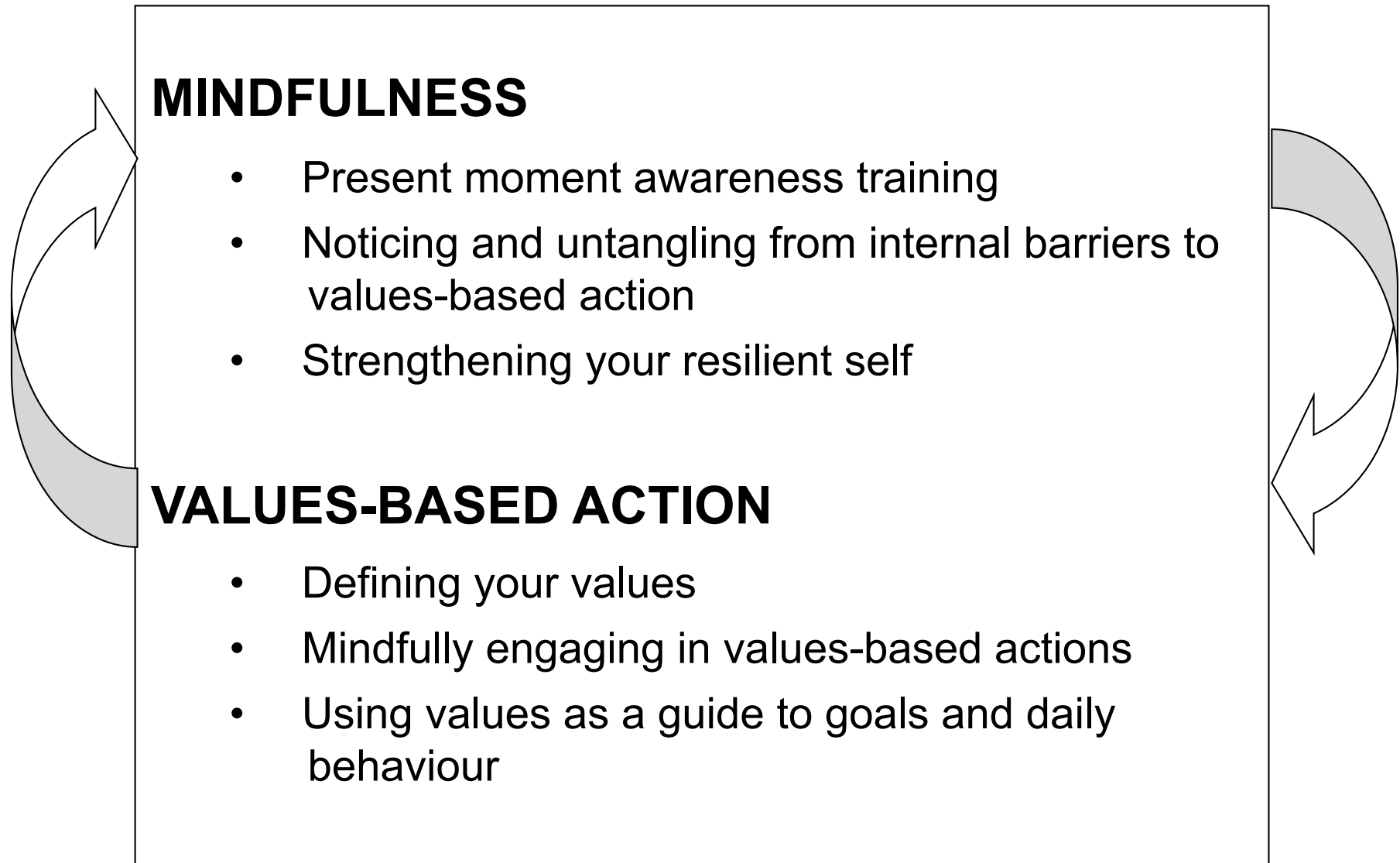
Cognitive Fusion

Entanglement in thoughts;
Listening to our mind
And ignoring experience

Self As Content (descriptions)

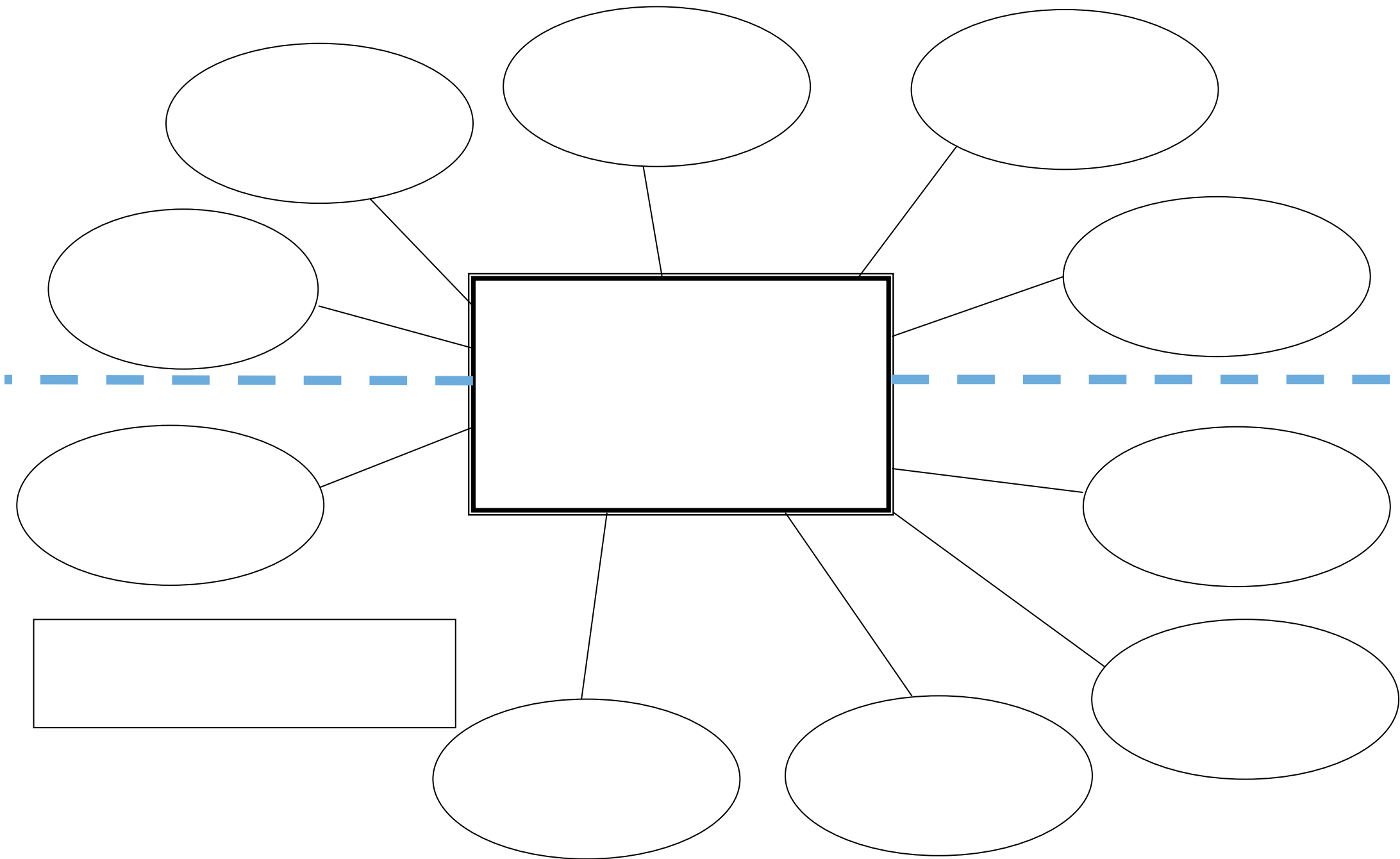
Holding tightly to identity descriptions
Believing that we are what our
thoughts say we are

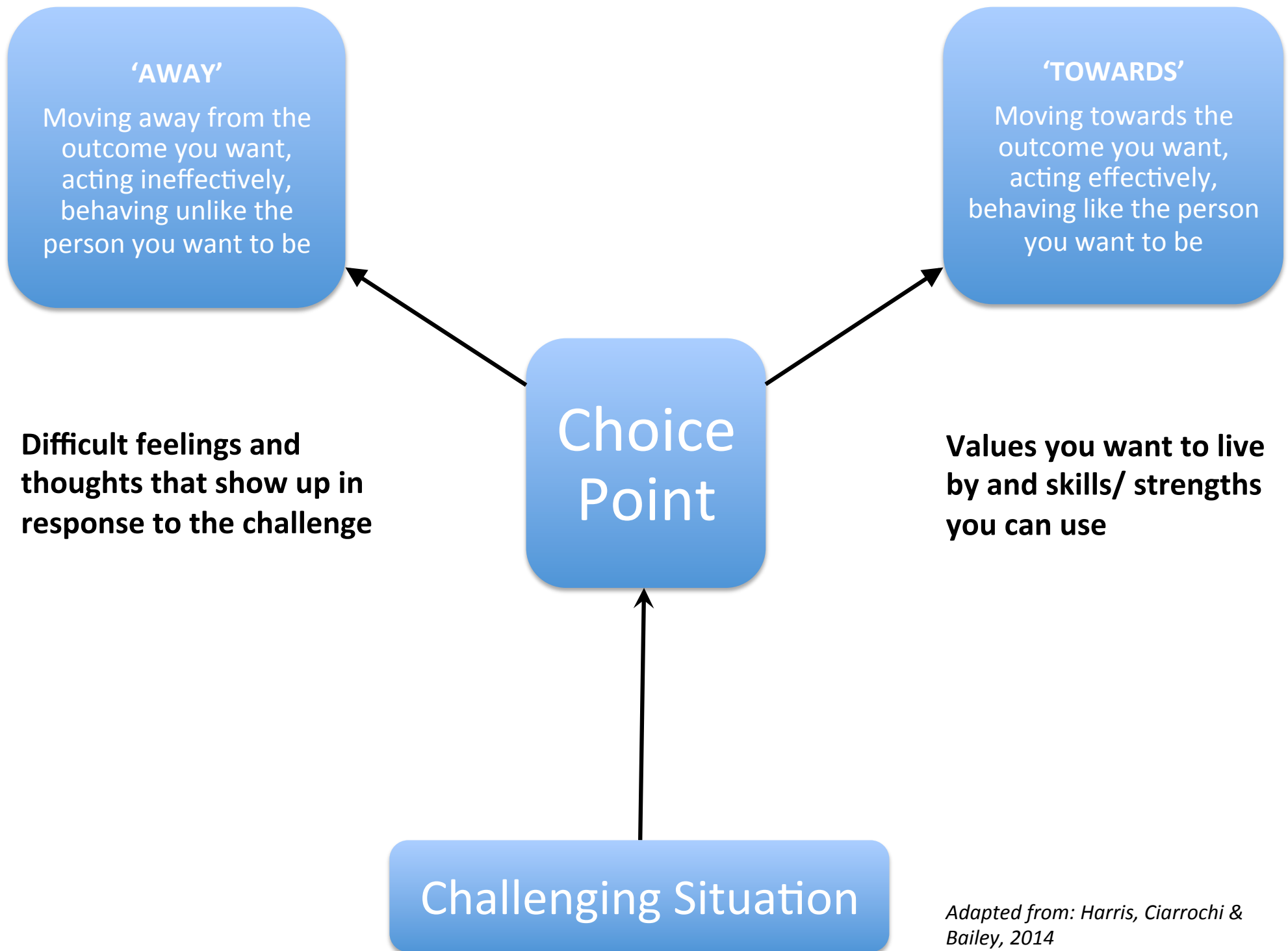
Two-skills diagram



Adapted from Flaxman, Bond & Livheim (2013) 'The Mindful and Effective Employee'.

In the ovals above the dashed line, note some of your recent small actions that have helped to bring this value to life.





Adapted from: Harris, Ciarrochi & Bailey, 2014

Passengers on the Bus



B2. Passengers on the Bus Worksheet

A3. Passengers on the Bus Metaphor

One way to think about barriers is to think about them as passengers on the bus of life.

Imagine life is like a journey, and you're the driver of your bus. You want to go places and do what's important for you. Over the course of your life, various passengers have boarded your bus. They reflect your thoughts, feelings, and all kinds of inner states. Some of them you like, such as happy memories or positive thoughts, and some you feel neutral about. And then there are passengers that you wish had not boarded the bus; they can be ugly, scary, and nasty.

So, you are driving your bus of life with all sorts of passengers on board. The scary passengers can threaten you and want to be at the front of the bus where you see them. You take this very seriously and stop the bus to struggle and fight with them. You may try to avoid them, distract yourself, or throw them off the bus, but they are your inner states, so you can't get rid of them. However, while the bus is stopped, you're not moving in the direction that's important to you.

You may also try to make deals with the passengers; you'll give in and do what they tell you to do if they agree to keep quiet in the back of the bus. This may feel a little easier than fighting with them, but it means the passengers are in control of the direction your bus is heading.

By fighting and struggling with the passengers or giving in to them, you, the driver, are not in control of your journey of life, and it's likely that you are not heading in a direction that is important to you. But what if, even though these passengers look scary, nasty, and threatening, they can't take control unless you allow them to? There can be different ways to respond to the passengers so that you can head in the direction that is important.

A9. Acting Out the Passengers on the Bus Exercise

To begin this exercise, ask for volunteers:

- **One person needs to act as the driver (either Paul or George).** Have the group decide on the main passengers (for example, worry, paranoia, guilt, and so forth; thoughts like *I'm going crazy* or *I'm a bad father*) based on content from the video vignette.
- **Another three to four people need to act as passengers.** Ask for volunteers to play the role of the driver's passengers. Provide them with sticky notes with the label of their passenger, and remind them of the kinds of things each passenger would say (for example, Paul's "worry" passenger might talk about people recording him or trying to poison his food; George's "guilty" passenger might talk about him being a bad father who passed on his genes).
- **One person needs to act as the valued direction.** Ask the driver to identify the valued direction that the passengers are getting in the way of. Summarize this in one or two words on a large sheet of paper, and ask for a volunteer to hold this representation of the driver's valued direction.

Fight/Struggle Scenario

In this scenario, have the driver role-play driving the bus (walking around the room with the passengers following) and stopping to fight and struggle (for example, yelling at passengers, arguing with them). Have the passengers behave like passengers (hassling, cajoling, pleading, distracting). Do this for two to four minutes. After the exercise, do the following:

- **Ask for feedback from the bus driver:** How was it to struggle with the passengers? (The facilitator can suggest that no matter how much one argues and fights with passengers, nothing changes the quality of stuckness.)
- **Ask for feedback from the passengers:** Did they feel in control of the driver?
- **Ask for feedback from the values representative:** Did this volunteer feel connected with the bus driver or ignored?
- **Ask for feedback from the wider group:** What did group members notice as observers?

Giving-In Scenario

Ask the driver to again drive the bus, this time role-playing *giving in* to the passengers (for example, agreeing with what they say, trying to make peace with passengers by allowing them to dictate where the bus goes, and so on). Do this for two to four minutes. After the exercise, do the following:

- **Ask for feedback from the bus driver:** How was it to give in to the passengers? What was it like to let go of the steering wheel? Did it feel like the passengers were in control of the bus's direction? Reinforce the qualities that it may feel better in the short term, but at the cost of important life areas—that is, being stuck in another way.
- **Ask for feedback from the passengers:** Did they feel in control of the driver?
- **Ask for feedback from the values representative:** Did this person feel connected to the bus driver or ignored?
- **Ask for feedback from the wider group:** What did group members notice as observers?

Openness Scenario

Finally, ask the driver to practice an *openness* response (for example, using skills for noticing the passengers; thanking them for their comments; welcoming them on the bus; allowing them to be on the bus while steering it in a valued direction, with the passengers following behind saying or doing the things they usually say). Do this for two to four minutes. After the exercise, do the following:

- **Ask for feedback from the bus driver:** How was it to focus on your values and keep them in mind while the passengers were saying or doing all those things?
- **Ask for feedback from the passengers:** Did they still feel in control of the driver?
- **Ask for feedback from the values representative:** Did this person feel connected to the bus driver or ignored?
- **Ask for feedback from the wider group:** What did group members notice as observers?

Developing Aware Skills: Mindfulness Practice

Mindfulness practice enables you to develop several skills:

- the ability to focus and engage in what you are doing
- the ability to let thoughts come and go without getting caught up in them
- the ability to refocus when you realize you're distracted
- the ability to let your feelings be as they are without trying to control them



The noticing exercise that I intend to practice this week:

You may find it helpful to record what you noticed during the mindfulness practice, and also any benefits you encounter that help you keep on track with getting active.

What I noticed (thoughts, feelings, sensations):

Benefits:

