

ACT for Life

Group Intervention for Psychosis Manual

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Authors: Joseph Oliver, Eric Morris, Louise Johns, & Majella Byrne

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust/
Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London
United Kingdom

Contact: louise.johns@kcl.ac.uk

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Many people recovering from psychosis find it difficult to initiate and persevere with actions in important life areas. ACT is consistent with recovery and well-being, providing a set of evidence-based principles. The ACT therapeutic approach to psychosis focuses on helping clients to increase psychological flexibility in order to pursue life goals and directions that are personally meaningful. ACT assumes that psychological flexibility can be developed even when people experience persisting psychotic symptoms. This manual provides a description for a four session group based intervention for people who are experiencing or recovering from distressing psychosis. This intervention is currently being evaluated as part of a research trial, supported by a Guys and St Thomas' Charity Grant.

1. An ACT view of psychosis

ACT formulates the problems of distressing psychosis in terms of *psychological inflexibility*, where individuals experience diminished life circumstances due to excesses of experiential avoidance, over-literality about private experiences, lack of clarity and/or resignation about life directions, and difficulty with committing to actions that are effective over the longer term. The approach of ACT encourages clients to shift agendas from experience elimination and control to pursuing greater life vitality. In terms of coping with psychotic symptoms, ACT encourages a shift from *entanglement* with anomalous experiences, to orientating behaviour toward chosen values (even in the presence of anomalous experiences).

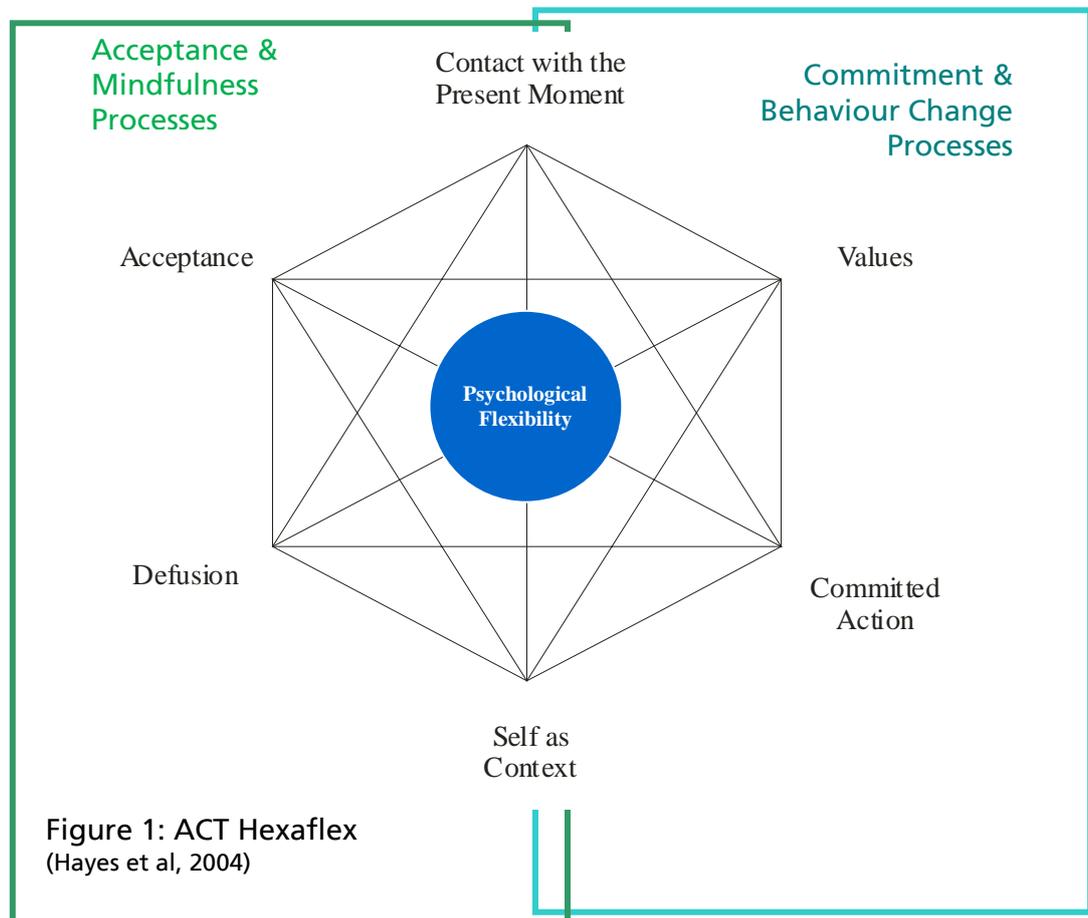
The ACT model posits that people who are distressed and disabled by psychotic symptoms are likely to be living in aversive, escape-based contexts for their behaviour. It is theorised that these contexts are largely verbally regulated (Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson, 1999). ACT helps the client to access approach-based contexts through an experiential therapeutic approach that uses a set of inter-related processes (see below for the "hexaflex" ACT model).

The ACT stance with distressing psychosis:

- a. Focusing on symptom impact - Exploring the effects of cognitive fusion and experiential avoidance with delusions and hallucinations
- b. The experience (in the case of voices), or the feared outcomes of it (delusions), are targets for avoidance and control, thereby increasing symptom impact
- c. Negative symptoms may be considered a possible outcome of chronic avoidance (limited social reinforcement)
- d. Emphasising acceptance rather than disputation
- e. Pragmatic truth criterion: focused on moving things forward, rather than finding the cause of psychotic symptoms
- f. Targets symptoms indirectly by altering the context within which they are experienced rather than frequency and believability per se.

Core Clinical Processes of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

In ACT six processes have been identified as central to the ability to persist or change in the service of valued action, and collectively define the intervention model (Hayes, et al, 2004). These core processes are based on a consistent theory of the functional properties of human language and cognition (Hayes, Barnes-Holmes & Roche, 2001). Figure 1 below shows the relationships that these core processes have with each other and the goal of greater psychological flexibility.



A description (from Strosahl et al, 2004) of each of these clinical processes is as follows:

Acceptance	Foster acceptance and willingness while undermining the dominance of emotional control and avoidance in the client's response hierarchy
Defusion	Undermine the language-based processes that promote fusion, needless reason-giving, and unhelpful evaluation and thus cause private experiences to function as psychological barriers to life-promoting activities
Contact with Present Moment	Live more in the present moment, contacting more fully the ongoing flow of experience as it occurs
Self-as-Context	Make experiential contact with the distinction between self-as-context versus the conceptualised self to provide a position from which acceptance of private events is less threatening
Values	Identify valued outcomes in living that will legitimise confronting previously avoided psychological barriers
Committed Action	Build larger and larger patterns of committed action that are consistent with valued life ends

There are several principles in the delivery of these clinical processes (Hayes et al., 2004):

- a. The processes are highly interdependent, so that starting to use one process is likely to see the emergence of other processes. Thus there is no correct order for doing these processes.
- b. Clients will exhibit idiosyncratic profiles within these processes, so that not all the processes will need to be worked on in therapy.
- c. Therapists need to be highly proficient at providing interventions within any of the core processes, and avoiding using a “one size fits all” approach with regard to sequencing and form of interventions.
- d. Many ACT interventions touch upon multiple processes, and as therapy is contextualistic the meaning of the intervention is dependent upon the client’s unique history and life situation.

1. Key elements:

- a. Informed Consent
- b. Normalise psychotic symptoms & introduce observing private events (including voices) as EXPERIENCES. Broaden to contrast between having experiences and responding to them; difference between experience and action.
- c. Contrast experience of symptoms with responses to them, linking with workability and the function of coping methods
- d. Suggest acceptance and defusion (willingness/ observing/ describing experiences) as an alternate stance to (resisting/ being entangled in/ judging these experiences)
- e. Experientially contact a sense of self as perspective – (self as observing and containing experiences, but not the content of these experiences)
- f. Suggest personal values as providing direction in action, contrast with cost of experiential avoidance and fusion with experiences
- g. Develop step by step and progressive plans to engage in valued actions; review regularly, encouraging use of skills in acceptance, present focus, and defusion to persist or change plans as needed.

2. Where ACT fits as a CBT Approach with Psychosis

ACT is a contextual cognitive behavioural therapy approach, based upon behaviour analytic view of cognition. It uses techniques and methods taken from traditional behavioural therapy, as well as from a set of principles from a treatment model that is based upon understanding behaviour in terms of rule governance, relational frame theory and functional contextualism.

ACT emphasises acceptance of psychological experience as experience, and noticing the present moment and choices.

It can be argued that CBT for Psychosis involves components of acceptance, decentering from experience, and values-focused behaviour change. In CBT for psychosis therapists create the context for change by:

- Displaying willingness and acceptance
- Reinforcing discussion of experiences (exposure?)
- Allowing defusion through distancing (reformulation, floating alternatives, using the cognitive model in a functional way)
- Avoiding trap of being overly literal about beliefs (ie, not colluding but also not demanding belief change)
- Encouraging behaviour change even if psychotic symptoms persist (values/ behavioural regulation)

3. Why an experiential rather than a direct instruction/sense making approach?

The ACT model considers the effects of rule-governance (Hayes, 1989) in contributing to narrow repertoires of behaviour. It is predicted that broad, flexible responding to private experiences and life events is more likely to occur when behaviour is contingency-shaped, rather than rule-governed.

ACT targets several types of rule-governed behaviour that are theorised to contribute to client problems (pliance, tracking and augmenting: see Hayes, Wilson & Strosahl, 1999 for a discussion).

Therapy can be considered a social context where behaviour is shaped, and new rules are developed. In ACT terms it is important that new behavioural repertoires are developed that will generalise, be flexible to contextual changes, and not require the ongoing presence of the therapist for maintenance. Thus, the aim is for ACT to provide a context where contingency shaped learning occurs (rather than more rule-following): such a context is experientially- and pragmatically-focused, and non-literal in style.

4. The Therapeutic Relationship

The therapeutic relationship is validating, normalising, and collaborative. It is about creating a social context that teaches the limits of literal language for problem-solving, and encourages experiential learning. In rule governance terms the context of the therapeutic relationship reduces the effects of pliance, shapes effective tracking of what is workable with private experiences, and orientates formative and motivative augmenting in values based directions.

ACT for psychosis sessions focus on:

- a. Pragmatic working with client problems
- b. Creating a context that is focused on the present moment, mindful, defused from literal language, and oriented to client values
- c. Identifying patterns of experiential avoidance and fusion (that contribute to distress and disability with psychotic symptoms)
- d. Clarifying client values to establish goals/focus for therapy
- e. Gaining a sense of the clients current routine and activities, and to compare/contrast this with chosen values

5. Adherence – Prescribed and Proscribed Therapist Behaviours

Appendix A contains the adherence measure that we are using in the study. It describes a set of *prescribed* and *proscribed* therapist behaviours.

6. ACT for Psychosis Made Simple (Gaudio, 2005)

- b. Explore unworkable coping strategies (struggle, avoidance)
- c. Suggest acceptance (and other underused coping strategies) as an alternative stance
- d. Place acceptance in the context of a valued life domain
- e. Identify a valued goal and formulate specific action plan (however small to be accomplished today)

7. ACT For Life Intervention

The intervention consists of four, two-hour weekly group sessions. The intervention is based principally around the "Passenger on the Bus" metaphor (Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999), which is used to provide a consistent narrative thread throughout the groups. We use the metaphor to explore issues of workability, fusion, mindfulness, values and committed action in each of the sessions. We emphasise choice around participation, saying from the outset that, we would like people to participate as much as possible but it is an equally valid option to sit out of exercises. However, we generally find participants enjoy the interactive aspects of the group and often comment afterwards that the role playing is often one of the more memorable aspects of the group.

From the first group, we ask participants to be setting values goals that they can work towards throughout the week. However, we are careful to emphasise process goals here rather than outcome goals. As such, we frame this as an opportunity for participants to notice "passengers" or obstacles that arise as they approach the activity, and if the activity is completed, this is simply an added bonus.

We use PowerPoint presentations to make the groups more interactive and provide further structure to the groups. We have found this particularly useful in working with younger clients.

The groups are designed to for approximately 8-10 participants. In each group we would have two to three therapists working with the group.

Each session follows a similar structure, which includes:

1. Warm-up exercise
2. Noticing (mindfulness exercise)
3. Discussion of the out of session activity from the previous week
4. Group discussion/ activity
5. Planning out of session activity

Session Purposes:

- a. To introduce participants to the group
- b. Introduce Mindfulness aka "Noticing" to the group
- c. Introduce ideas about barriers, and acting on values

Equipment

- Laptop
- Projector
- Paper, pens
- Marker pens/ Worksheets
- Refreshments
- Index cards
- Name tags
- Flipchart
- Speakers
- Passengers on Bus worksheet
- Out of Session Planning Worksheet
- Resource folder
- CD

Introduction: Introduce facilitators [5 minutes]

Slide 2 : What today is about

- Talk thru slide

Slide 3: Ground rules

- Say "here's what we came up with..."
- Talk thru slide
- Ask the group if there are any other ground rules they would like to add

Slide 4: Icebreaker [5 minutes]

- Ask participants to pair up. "*With your partner, find out three things the other person really likes doing*" Facilitators give examples to cue people in e.g. "I like to watch movies"
- Once each person has said three things, ask each participant to feedback to the group one thing that their partner liked. Have everyone stand up for this exercise, then sit down once completed.

Slide 5: Mindfulness exercise: Getting present and noticing **10-15 minutes**

- Part of what these workshops will be about is helping you to become more aware of what is going on inside you (thoughts, feelings etc) and outside of you too (sights, sounds etc.). One way to do this is by practising being in the present moment.
- Does anyone know what 'automatic pilot' means? [useful explanation = doing things without bringing our conscious awareness to them, for example, like putting our socks on, or driving a car – it would be unhelpful to

think about every movement in order to do this activity]. Unfortunately though, we are often on automatic pilot in many other areas of our lives. This means that sometimes we don't think before we respond, or we don't listen to what our bodies, emotions and behaviours are telling us. Learning to purposefully pay attention helps create a better awareness of these experiences, and being more aware means we can begin to alter our experiences and have more freedom to choose how we wish to respond.

- How do we do this? By practising the skill of becoming more aware of where our attention is and learning to deliberately shift the focus of our attention. We can do this through focussing on our body, especially our breath, or by using our five senses to bring us into the present moment. From here we are able to observe what's going on for us, emotionally, physically and mentally.
- There are some important points to remember in doing these kind of noticing exercises:
 - There is no right or wrong way of doing this, simply try to follow my instructions as best as you can, if you choose to do so; always doing what is right for you.
 - We are not trying to change any of our experiences; we are simply allowing ourselves to be, in a world that seems to be all about doing. So, letting your experiences be just as they are, and letting you be just as you are.
 - And as best we can, not passing judgement on these experiences
 - All we are aiming to do is simply learn to observe these processes; using what we call mindfulness to notice the activity of your mind and practising coming back to the present moment.

1. *First, get in a comfortable position in your chair. Sit upright, with your feet flat on the floor, your arms and legs uncrossed, and your hands resting in your lap. Either close your eyes or fix them on a point in front of you.*
2. *Turn you attention to your breathing. Notice the sensations of breathing in [pause]. And notice the sensations of breathing out [pause]. You might notice the air moving in through your mouth or nose. You might notice the sensations of the air moving out [pause]. Notice the feeling of your chest rising and falling. As you do this you might notice your mind drift away from noticing your breathing – if that happens, acknowledge where your mind took you and gently bring it back to your breathing [pause].*
3. *Next, bring your attention to the sensation of sitting the chair. Notice where your feet touch the ground [pause 5-10 seconds]? Notice where parts of your feet don't touch the ground [pause 5-10 seconds]? Next, notice the sensation of sitting in the chair and see if you can notice the sense of your weight on the chair [pause 5-10 seconds]. Maybe notice where parts of your body contact the chair. Notice where your body doesn't contact the chair [pause 5-10 seconds].*
4. *Next, move your attention inside your body. See if you can notice any physical sensations or feelings, such as a tight muscle or an area of tension [pause 5-10*

seconds]. Pick one of these and direct your attention there [pause 5-10 seconds]. Examine it with a sense of curiosity. Where does it start? Where does it end [pause 5-10 seconds]? See if you can observe it without trying to change it [pause 5-10 seconds]. Spend a bit of time just noticing this sensation or feeling [pause 5-10 seconds]. As you do this, it might increase. It might decrease. It might stay just the same. Just notice this [pause 5-10 seconds].

5. *Lastly, bring your attention back to your breathing [pause 5-10 seconds]. Notice again the steady rhythm of your breathing that is with you all the time [pause 5-10 seconds].*
6. *When you are ready, open your eyes if they are closed and come back into the room.*

Invite observations from this exercise (debrief)

Reinforce anything people notice.

- If feedback is ACT consistent, reinforce and take further. Reinforce any noticing
- If feedback is not ACT consistent, just notice it and put back to the group e.g. "what else did you notice? The same as other people or something different perhaps?"
- Give opportunity for lots of feedback before responding in detail to any one client
- If no feedback is given, share your own experience rather than suggesting feedback (modelling rather than prompting)
- The most important action is to draw on group experiences/ process

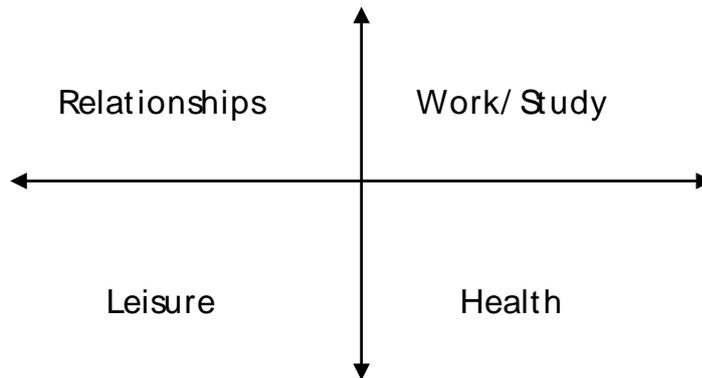
Slide 6: Values: what do you want your life to be about?

"If this group could really be about doing something important, if magic could happen, and you leave the group and just do this thing... what would it be?"

- Exercise [5mins]: Ask participants to think for a couple of minutes to consider what that thing or action might be. Picture yourself actually doing this thing.
- Then ask participants to write down on a piece of paper the important action. Emphasise that they won't be asked to share this with the group
- And then ask participants about the process of doing this exercise. *"what did you notice doing this exercise" "Did you notice your minds coming up with any barriers, for example memories from when you tried before, self critical thoughts, painful feelings?"*
- Validate that this is what minds do, particularly when we plan to head in a valued direction. *"this is what minds do, particularly when we plan to head in a valued direction"*.
- Link with the committed action of attending this group, could coming along today be about a valued direction?

Slide 7: Group Discussion: What are the important things in life? 10-15 mins

- Provide some broad examples as prompt here like other people/ work/ study/ relationships/ family etc). *Write examples up on flipchart using this grid:*



How to respond to material answers:

- e.g. "if money wasn't an obstacle, what would you do?"
- money/ power – try to elicit what the function of these are e.g. safety, to protect other people in your life etc
- other examples:
 - "in coming here today, what did you really think this group would bring to you? you've committed your time to this" ; "if you didn't have these problems, what would you really want your life to be about?"

Slide 8: Discussion: What can get in the way of the important things in life?

- Provide example if necessary like thoughts, emotions, physical sensations. Particularly focus discussion on internal barriers such as thoughts, emotions, memories, giving reasons.
- May be helpful to initially talk about what *generally* can act as a barrier rather than ask individuals for personal examples.
- Draw out distinction between internal (e.g. thoughts) and external (money) barriers

Slide 9: Introduce "Passengers on the Bus" Metaphor 10 mins

Go through the Passengers on the Bus Metaphor. Say:

"Is dealing with barriers and obstacles a bit like being a driver of a bus and managing the passengers on the bus?"

"Suppose there is a bus and you're the driver. On this bus we've got a bunch of passengers. The passengers are thoughts, feelings, bodily states, memories, and other aspects of experience. Some of them are scary. What happens is that you're driving along and the passengers start threatening you, telling you what you have to do, where you have to go. "You've got to turn left," "You've got to go right," and so on. The threat they have over you is that if you don't do what they say, they're going to

come up front from the back of the bus.

It's as if you've made deals with these passengers, and the deal is, "You sit in the back of the bus and scrunch down so that I can't see you very often, and I'll do what you say pretty much." Now, what if one day you get tired of that and say, "I don't like this! I'm going to throw those people off the bus!" You stop the bus, and you go back to deal with the mean-looking passengers. But you notice that the very first thing you had to do was stop. Notice now, you're not driving anywhere, you're just dealing with these passengers. And they're very strong. They don't intend to leave, and you wrestle with them, but it just doesn't turn out very successfully.

Eventually, you go back to trying to calm the passengers down, trying to get them to sit way in the back again where you can't see them. The problem with this deal is that you do what they ask in exchange for getting them out of your life. Pretty soon they don't even have to tell you, "Turn left"—you know as soon as you get near a left turn that the passengers are going to crawl all over you. In time you may get good enough that you can almost pretend that they're not on the bus at all. You just tell yourself that left is the only direction you want to turn. However, when they eventually do show up, it's with the added power of the deals that you've made with them in the past.

Now the trick about the whole thing is that the power the passengers have over you is 100% based on this: "If you don't do what we say, we're coming up and we're making you look at us." That's it. It's true that when they come up front they look as if they could do a whole lot more. They do look pretty scary. The deal you make is to do what they say so they won't come up and stand next to you and make you look at them. But what if it was a little different to this? Imagine that the driver (you) has control of the bus, but you trade off the control in these secret deals with the passengers. What if, in other words, by trying to get control, you've actually given up control! What if it were the case that these passengers can't make you do something against your will."

These are the key elements of the metaphor:

- You're the driver of the bus. You want to go places and do what's important for you.
- The passengers are your thoughts and all kinds of inner states. Some are nice, some ugly, scary, nasty.
- The scary ones threaten you and want to come up front where you'll see them.
- You take this very seriously and stop the bus (you don't go anywhere anymore) and try to make a deal with them: they'll keep quiet in the back of the bus, only when you do exactly what they tell you.
- This means your route plan is greatly impaired and you're always on the watch when driving the bus.
- What happens is that you let these passengers control the whereabouts of the bus. You, the driver, are not in control at all.

- What if it's like this: Even though these passengers look scary, nasty, threatening etc. they can't take control (unless you let them). They can't actually make you do something against your will.

Slide 10: Identify valued direction 10-15 mins

Exercise: Passengers on bus worksheet.

Break into 2 groups. One facilitator goes with each group and helps each participant to fill in a PoB worksheet. Say:

"Choose the most important area for you, one you care most about. And then – how would you like to act like it really is important to you? What would be the things you would do to show this was really important to you?"

- Give example: Family - showing that I care as a value. Ask – what could someone do to show that the really care? (e.g. say I love you, listen to them, help them out etc.). Fill in a blank worksheet as an example.
- Give participants PoB worksheet and have them write in the space, the thing they would do to demonstrate their value is important.

Slide 11: Identify Passengers

Still in the smaller groups, help the participants identify their passengers and what they say. Say:

"What are some of the passengers on your bus that can prevent you from acting on your values? The thoughts, feelings, memories and sensations that, if you listen to them, will guide you off your valued path"

Give examples of passengers (e.g. feel too depressed to do things for my family. Don't think they'll notice). Fill in a blank worksheet as an example.

Have each participant fill in the worksheet, identifying what their passengers might say to them.

Come back together as one group. Ask for feedback on the process of filling in the worksheet. For example, what was easy, what was hard etc.

After this, summarise, saying: *"Maybe sometimes we get too focused on managing the barriers or too distracted by them. Sometimes we can actually lose sight of our values and what's important to us"*

- *"Often our values and this struggle go hand in hand. When we move towards what's important to us, barriers and struggle often pop up."*

Slide 12: What we reckon can help

- Talk thru slide

- Bring in idea of choice – “you chose to come here today, what would you choose to pursue in your life?”

Slide 13: Video of “Tom” 10-15 mins

Introduce: “To think a little bit more of passengers and buses, we’re going to show a short video of someone **acting out a made-up story** [make sure this is clear] about Tom. Tom has been struggling with lots of passengers on his bus. When you watch the video, see if you can spot some of his passengers, and also how he responds to them.

On whiteboard, write up prompts for participants to be watching out for during the video:

- a. What passengers are on his bus?
- b. How did Tom respond to his passengers?
- c. What things do you think are important to Tom?

Show role play video of Tom. Pause at various points during the video and ask participants if they can identify passengers/ responses/ values/

Slide 14: Group discussion

- a. What passengers are on his bus?
 - b. How did Tom respond to his passengers?
 - c. What things do you think are important to Tom?
- *Highlight the effort and the cost of this struggling in this story*
 - Ask participants: *“Can you relate to any bit of this story? e.g. relief, avoidance, lack of valued direction? Or do you know anyone like Tom?”*
 - Suggest willingness as an alternative:
 - *“Sometimes we can get so caught up in trying to get rid of stuff inside that we end up losing sight of what’s important. Sometimes, if we let go of the struggle to get rid of stuff and maybe be a bit willing to allow that stuff to be there (not that we have to like it), we can get back to doing what’s really important. we’ll come back to this idea more as we go.”*

Slide 16: Homework: for the next week 15-20 mins

“Think about the important thing/value you identified earlier. Can you think of one thing you could do over the next week that would be a way of showing that this is something important?”.

Break into 2 groups again. Use Out of Session Planning Worksheet to help participants plan one thing they could do over the following week that would move them towards their value. Frame this exercise as about noticing values and passengers. Encourage participants to make the activity SMART:

Specific: specify the actions you will take, when and where you will do so, and who or what is involved. Example of a vague or non-specific goal: “I will spend more time with my kids.” A specific goal: “I will take the kids to the park on Saturday to play baseball.” A non-specific goal: “I will be more loving towards my wife.” A specific goal: “I will ring my wife at lunchtime and tell her I love her.”

Meaningful: The activity should be personally meaningful to you. If it is genuinely guided by your values, as opposed to following a rigid rule, or trying to please others, or trying to avoid some pain, then it will be meaningful. If it lacks a sense of meaning or purpose, check in and see if it is really guided by your values.

Adaptive: Does the activity help you to take your life forwards in a direction that, as far as you can predict, is likely to improve the quality of that life?

Realistic: The activity should be realistically achievable. Take into account your health, competing demands on your time, financial status, and whether you have the skills to achieve it.

Time-bound: to increase the specificity of your activity, set a day, date and time for it. If this is not possible, set as accurate a time limit as you can.

In the small groups, ask participants if they would be willing to tell the others what they plan to do.

Still in small groups, say that each of the therapists would like to call the participants during the week to see how the exercise went. Make clear that the call is *not* to check up to see if the exercise has been done, but to discuss what the participant *noticed*, irrespective of whether they had done the exercise or not. Ask for permission to do this.

Closing the group:

Finally, come back together as a large group and ask for feedback on the group. Ask participants how they generally found the group and what they found most memorable.

Possible questions:

How did you find the group today?

What did you notice?

What did you find helpful / unhelpful?

What was the most memorable thing from today's group?

Session 2: Outline

Session Purposes:

To introduce willingness as an alternative, using the Passengers on the Bus metaphor

Equipment

- Laptop
- Projector
- Paper, pens
- Marker pens/ Worksheets
- Refreshments
- Index cards
- Passengers on Bus worksheet
- Name tags

Additional equipment

- Soft ball
- Post it notes
- Satsumas for noticing exercise, 1 for each participant and facilitators

Introduction

Slide 2: What this workshop is about (reminder)

Slide 3: What we covered in the first session

Warm up exercise

5 mins

Slide 4:

"To get us started, we'd like to invite you to do a short warm-up exercise. The person holding the ball says what they would take to a desert island and why, and then throws or passes the ball to another person, who says what they'd take, and then passes the ball on, and so on until we've all had a turn."

Everyone will stand up during this exercise and sit down when they've had their turn.

Slide 5:

"Now, we are going to spend a few minutes getting present, just focusing on ourselves here and now."

Mindfulness of a Satsuma Exercise

15 mins

- Script: *"We spend a lot of our lives not really being present in the here and now. Life can be busy, our minds can be easily distracted. We are going to spend a few minutes focusing on the present now by spending time noticing an object".*
- Give one satsuma to each participant

Instructions:

1. *Take the object you've been given and examine it.*
2. *Study its shape, its contours. [pause]*
3. *Notice the way that the skin feels. [pause]*
4. *Notice its colours. [pause]*
5. *Break open the skin and notice the what is inside.*

6. *Notice the texture on the inside of the fruit. [pause]*
7. *Take out one piece of the fruit, hold it in your hand [pause]*
8. *Now feel the object between your fingers. [pause]*
9. *Take a moment to really study it – maybe like you’ve never seen one of these before. [pause]*
10. *Then put the piece of satsuma to your nose and see if you can notice any smells. [pause]*
11. *Then, if you are willing, place the piece of satsuma in your mouth. Don’t chew it straight away – just roll it around in your mouth. [pause]*
12. *When you are ready, eat the satsuma. Notice how it tastes. Notice the texture. [pause]*
13. *Notice the sensations as you swallow the satsuma. [pause]*

End with a linking to values and purpose:

“Even with a small object like this Satsuma we can notice more by focusing in the present moment: notice your experience of this object by being with it in this particular way. And now notice being here in the room, your purpose for coming here today, and the Passengers that you carry with you while doing this.”

Slide 6: Passengers on the Bus Metaphor review

Review PoB metaphor - link with directions we want to go, passengers that have got on the bus in the past, life energy/vitality being taken up trying to deal with the passengers.

Clarifying what the passengers are: memories, thoughts, feelings, sensations that can act as barriers to valued actions. Barriers to action can be in trying to push experiences away AND also “clinging on to” experiences. Being caught up with these “positive passengers” can also stop the bus, e.g. “stopping the bus and looking through holiday snaps [such as pleasant memories]” can also stop you from going in valued direction.

Also in this review it may be useful to clarify what we mean by values: “chosen life directions”. These are the directions that we *choose* to steer the bus. It can be easy to turn what happens when we choose into problems, e.g., criticising ourselves for not heading in directions that we “should” be going, being disappointed by failure, struggling with the feelings that come from going in valued directions. These can all be more passengers on the bus. When we take our hands off the steering wheel, no longer driving the bus in order to deal with these passengers then this is not taking valued action. The point is to help the group participants to discriminate the taking valued action is not “fixing” the passengers or being free of distress; rather it is simply choosing to go in the direction you choose and noticing what happens.

Slide 7: Review of homework of valued action and noticing barriers **10 mins**

Do this in smaller groups (half the group participants in each, led by a group facilitator).

Encourage the participants to either say what the passengers are or what they noticed about the process.

Points of discussion/ style:

- In reviewing progress early in the group participants usually offer content rather than process: useful to validate and then draw the participants to the *process* of acting on values, commonalities between them etc.
- PoB Metaphor creates awareness of passengers and how we struggle with them.
- In general validate feelings but do not get caught up in problem-solving or judgements about experiences. Reinforce noticing and all actions toward valued directions. Even spending time thinking about taking action may be a functional improvement if the participant tends to avoid doing this.
- Talk about feel of the group- “it’s about going from the outside in” – changing actions in our lives + see what happens with passengers
- Validate the fact that participants may attend the group without feeling motivated – perhaps this “lack of motivation” is another passenger e.g, “no fuel in the bus?”
- Qualities of Committed action – you can still carry out a valued action, but you can’t control the outcome: is there value in acting on what is important/meaningful even if it doesn’t work out the way you want it to?
- If clients bring up wanting to feel a certain way e.g. “i want to feel more motivated” help clients understand a vital living approach. In ACT, we are trying to separate out feeling a certain way before going about action.
- Satisfaction in “doing all you can” – orientate clients to this; our minds can make taking action tricky as they compare/evaluate/judge. We start from where we start, rather than where our minds say we “should” be starting from.
- Usually ‘not phoning a certain person’ comes up – say “when you start noticing values more, it can be frustrating as practical barriers show up e.g. ‘i didn’t have enough time’ could this be another passenger? (validate noticing)

“ Towards the end of the previous session, we invited you to try to do something that was important to you, something that you valued”.

“ Did anyone have a go at this, what sorts of things did you notice?”

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

- reinforce all efforts of taking valued action AND noticing barriers
- thinking about doing something is a start, but then what barriers showed up?

SUMMARY

“ There might be lots of things we value and want to pursue. Thinking about doing something is a start, but then barriers often show up and can get in our way.”

Slide 8: Tom's story – review

5 mins

What were Tom's passengers? (low mood, depression, "I can't be bothered" etc.)
How did he respond to his passengers? (Gave in to them, tried to get rid of them etc.)

[From the video it is not clear what Tom may want now in terms of valued living; the facilitator could say "in listening to tom's passengers, it's not entirely clear what his values are at the moment" – invite the group to consider what his valued directions may be. Hopefully the life areas of family and friends may be elicited, which is enough and adds a positive aspect to the task!]

Passengers on the Bus Metaphor: Act out Tom's story

25 mins

[If your group does not want to do this, alternatives are:

- to go through Tom's story again using the exercise sheets
- to discuss what Tom's values might be, and how his passengers become barriers
- to discuss alternative responses that Tom might make to his passengers.

Ask for volunteers; 1 person to act as Tom, 1 as Tom's valued direction, and another 4-6 to act as passengers. Have the group decide on the main passengers on Tom's bus (e.g. low mood, thoughts of "I'm useless" or "I can't be bothered"). Write each one on a post-it note and give one to each "passenger". For the value direction, write this in as few words as possible, on a sheet of A4 paper for the person to hold.

In preparing this exercise:

- Be aware that number of clients in the room may affect number of passengers on the bus
- Due to the emotive nature of the task it may be useful to have the group come up with some ground rules about how to carry out the exercise:
 - o Checking in that the person who is Tom is willingly doing the exercise
 - o What to do if actions are too evocative (e.g., statements from passengers; touching the driver etc); focus on permission-giving and willingness
- In terms of instructing passengers on what to say....keep flexible and allow improvisation. It's more relevant if they come up with their own comments and actions.
 - o Optimally it would be best if the group comes up with at least two unworkable strategies that Tom used with his passengers before trying the acceptance/willingness response.
- It is better if the facilitators do not act as passengers; instead one therapist should lead the exercise (managing the driver, leading the passengers) and one observing who can pay attention to the process of the exercise, notice responses from group participants etc.
- After each part of the exercise check in with the participants that this maps onto their experience – elicit reflections from both passengers and driver. Reflect back onto "this is how our minds work" – validating and normalising.

Part 1: Have "Tom" pretend to be driving the bus (walking around the room with the passengers following) and respond as Tom did (stopping to fight/struggle). Ask Tom to act out these responses whilst trying to drive the bus. Have the passengers behave like passengers (hassling, cajoling, pleading, distracting). Spend 2-4 minutes doing this. Get feedback from driver of bus: therapist suggests that no matter how much arguing and fighting with the passengers you have, nothing changes / quality of "stuckness"

Part 2: Ask Tom to again drive the bus; this time giving in to the passengers, trying to make peace with them by giving up on his valued direction. How did Tom do this from the video? What it is like to let go of the steering wheel? What happens in his life when he does this? Reinforce the qualities of this: that it may feel better in the short-term but at the cost of important life areas, that it is being "stuck" in another way. . Spend 2-4 minutes doing this.

Part 3: Finally ask Tom to practice a "willingness" response. Steering the bus in the direction of his values, with the passengers following behind, saying/doing the things that they usually say.

Debrief: Ask Tom how he found this exercise and compare and contrast the three parts: Fighting/ struggling with passengers, giving in/ resignation vs just doing what you need to do. Pull out here differences between three situations – present moment focus, acceptance, defusion stuff.

Slide 9: Passengers on the Bus "Grid" Willingness

Draw together all the elements with difference between sensory experiences and mental experiences

Slide 10 Leaves on the Stream

10 mins

"Before we finish, we'd like to invite you to do a short noticing exercise. This will give you an idea of how we can be with and observe our unwanted thoughts, urges and feelings, rather than struggling with them."

You can notice how this is similar to being with the Passengers on the Bus. We're practicing noticing when you get caught up with struggling or fixing, and bringing yourself back to having your hands on the steering wheel, deciding where you want to go in your life... even with the passengers being there."

Exercise: Floating leaves on a moving stream.

- 1. Find a comfortable position and either close your eyes or fix them on a spot, whichever you prefer. Get in touch with the experience of sitting on the chair, with your feet in contact with the floor.*
- 2. Now I'd like to invite you to imagine that you are standing by the bank of a gently flowing stream, watching the water flow past. Imagine feeling the*

ground beneath your feet, the sounds of water flowing past, the way that the stream looks as you watch it. (pause briefly)

- 3. Imagine that there are leaves from trees, all different shapes and sizes and colours, floating past on the stream. And you are just watching these float on the stream, this is all you need to do for the next few minutes. (pause)*
- 4. Now, I'd like you to notice each sensation, feeling and thought that you become aware of, and imagine placing it on a leaf, and letting it float on by. Do this regardless of whether the thoughts and feelings are positive or negative, pleasurable or painful. Even if they are the most wonderful thoughts, place them on the leaf and let them float by. (pause)*
- 5. If your thoughts stop, just watch the stream. Sooner or later your thoughts will start up again (pause).*
- 6. Allow the stream to flow at its own rate. Notice any urges to speed up or slow down the stream... and let these be on leaves as well. Let the stream flow how it will.*
- 7. If you have thoughts or feelings about doing this exercise, place these on leaves as well. (pause)*
- 8. If a leaf gets stuck or won't go away, let it hang around. For a little while all you are doing is observing this experience, there is no need to force the leaf down the stream. (pause)*
- 9. If you find yourself getting caught up with a thought or feeling, and the stream disappears, just notice what you got caught up with, and gently turn this into a leaf and let it float on the stream. You are just observing each experience as a leaf on the stream, it is normal and natural to lose track of this exercise, and will keep happening. When you notice it does, just bring yourself back to watching the leaves on the stream.*
- 10. Continue throughout the exercise to briefly remind the participants of the instructions, particularly about letting leaves float by and noticing when an experience hooks them. Continue for another minute.*
- 11. End the exercise by instructing the participants to let the image of the stream and leaves dissolve and to bring their awareness back to sitting in the chair, in the room. When they feel ready to open their eyes, stretch etc.*

When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and focus on the present moment and the rest of the day."

Briefly ask participants how they experienced this exercise, what they noticed in terms of the tendency to get hooked by thoughts and feelings, bring themselves back to observing leaves etc. What types of experiences hooked them? What was it like to let go of experiences so that they could come and go without holding on? Reinforce

noticing and draw participants' attention to how easily our minds can get hooked, that it takes active noticing and a choice to observe our experiences, etc.

Slide 15: For next week - Homework:

10 mins

Discuss in smaller groups (half the group participants in each)

"What would you be willing to have as part of taking a valued action this week? What passengers might come up?"

Link back to PoB and the content of this session.

Reinforce any "showing up": people willing to name their commitments, identify passengers etc., with the group.

Discussion of whether there is anyone that the participant could share this valued action with? (to support making a commitment)

Offer for the facilitators to get in touch with clients in between sessions about these valued actions. [gives opportunity to chat about how they found the group, reinforce willingness moves, etc] Also ask for permission to link in with primary nurse on ward / care coordinator if in community about valued action between sessions (function is to get people noticing and into action). Reinforce any suggestions by participant to share their commitments with others.

Feedback

- a. Ask participants for feedback about they found the group.
- b. What did you notice?
- c. What did you find helpful / unhelpful?
- d. What was the most memorable thing from today's group?

Session 3: Outline

Session Purposes:

- To link acting on values with noticing and willingness.
- To practice defusion toward experiences
- To get in contact with values as directions, commit to action

Equipment

- Laptop
- Projector
- Paper, pens
- Marker pens/ Worksheets
- Refreshments
- Index cards
- Out of Session Planning Worksheet
- Name tags
- Flipchart

Additional equipment

- "Don't stand up" instruction paper
- Post it notes / paper for PoB exercise

Slide 2: What this group is about

- Talk through slide

Slide 3: What we covered last time

Talk through slide

Slide 4: Warm up – what passengers did you notice this week? **5 minutes**

Stand in a group and pass a ball around. Whoever has the ball has to say a passenger they noticed during the week (or one from someone else, or just a general passenger). (e.g. anger, I'm useless etc.). Use slide of PoB with eggs to prompt people. Once participants have done this 2-3 times they sit down.

Facilitators to volunteer passengers they noticed.

Slide 5: Mindfulness of breath **10 minutes**

"Now, we are going to spend a few minutes getting present, just focusing on ourselves here and now."

1. *First, get in a comfortable position in your chair. Sit upright, with your feet flat on the floor, your arms and legs uncrossed, and your hands resting in your lap. Either close your eyes or fix them on a point in front of you.*

2. *Turn your attention to your breathing. Notice the sensations of breathing in [pause]. And notice the sensations of breathing out [pause]. You might notice the air moving in through your mouth or nose. You might notice the sensations of the air moving out [pause]. Notice the feeling of your chest rising and falling. As you do this you might notice your mind drift away from noticing your breathing – if that happens, acknowledge where your mind took you and gently bring it back to your breathing [pause].*
3. *Next, bring your attention to the sensation of sitting the chair. Notice where your feet touch the ground [pause 5-10 seconds]? Notice where parts of your feet don't touch the ground [pause 5-10 seconds]? Next, notice the sensation of sitting in the chair and see if you can notice the sense of your weight on the chair [pause 5-10 seconds]. Maybe notice where parts of your body contact the chair. Notice where your body doesn't contact the chair [pause 5-10 seconds].*
4. *Next, move your attention inside your body. See if you can notice any physical sensations or feelings, such as a tight muscle or an area of tension [pause 5-10 seconds]. Pick one of these and direct your attention there [pause 5-10 seconds]. Examine it with a sense of curiosity. Where does it start? Where does it end [pause 5-10 seconds]? See if you can observe it without trying to change it [pause 5-10 seconds]. Spend a bit of time just noticing this sensation or feeling [pause 5-10 seconds]. As you do this, it might increase. It might decrease. It might stay just the same. Just notice this [pause 5-10 seconds].*
5. *Lastly, bring your attention back to your breathing [pause 5-10 seconds]. Notice again the steady rhythm of your breathing that is with you all the time [pause 5-10 seconds].*
6. *When you are ready, open your eyes if they are closed and come back into the room.*

Invite observations from this exercise (debrief)

Slide 6: Revisit and check in values (Homework review)

10 minutes

What were you willing to have / noticing passengers / what valued actions you took this last week

“We would like to hear how you have gone with increasing your willingness since the last session. What valued actions did you take? And what was that like? What passengers did you notice? How did you respond to them? What did you do that let the passengers be while you moved in your valued direction? ”

Break into 2 groups (different to last session). One facilitator goes with each group. Reinforce all efforts to take valued actions, as well as any noticing that the participants have made. All steps/inclinations in valued directions should be reinforced, as this is part of building repertoires of effective behaviour.

With those participants who have had difficult engaging in valued action, reinforce any descriptions they make of thinking about doing it, small plans, inclinations etc. Similarly reinforce any noticing they made of barriers to doing the task, struggling etc. This is then a good opportunity to mention using defusion/acceptance and mindfulness skills

when facing barriers, as well as the concept of “willingness” to have unwanted experiences as part of taking valued actions.

Slide 7: Revisit Passengers. Act out again.

25 minutes

Ideally with participant example but otherwise make up with lots of burly passengers.

“Does anyone have an example they’d like to act out, maybe something in the last week that we’ve just been talking about?”

If nobody is forthcoming, could ask “Does anyone have an example which they would be willing to direct someone else to act?”

If still no-one, act out a general example, with common passengers – ones that group members have reported in previous sessions. Or use the example of being/ contributing in a group (a current common experience to all participants!)

- Notes for the exercise: Try to ensure clarity around values (defining values rather than goals)
- Tell people how long the exercise will last for, and for how long they’ll be in touch with the passengers
- Set up of the exercise (as for session 2)

Ask for volunteers; 1 person to act as the driver, 1 as the valued direction, and another 4-6 to act as passengers. Have the group decide on the main passengers on the bus (e.g. anxiety, tiredness, thoughts of “I can’t be bothered”). Write each one on a post-it note / piece of paper and give one to each “passenger”. For the value direction, write this in as few words as possible, on a sheet of A4 paper for the person to hold.

In preparing this exercise:

- Be aware that number of clients in the room may affect number of passengers on the bus
- Due to the emotive nature of the task it may be useful to have the group come up with some ground rules about how to carry out the exercise:
 - o Checking in that the person who is driving is willingly doing the exercise
 - o What to do if actions are too evocative (e.g., statements from passengers; touching the driver etc); focus on permission-giving and willingness
- In terms of instructing passengers on what to say....keep flexible and allow improvisation. It’s more relevant if they come up with their own comments and actions.
 - o Optimally it would be best if the group comes up with at least two unworkable strategies that the driver uses with his passengers before trying the acceptance/willingness response.
- It is better if the facilitators do not act as passengers; instead one therapist should lead the exercise (managing the driver, leading the passengers) and one observing who can pay attention to the process of the exercise, notice responses from group participants etc.
- After each part of the exercise check in with the participants that this maps onto their experience – elicit reflections from both passengers and driver. Reflect back onto “this is how our minds work” – validating and normalising.

Part 1: Have driver pretend to be driving the bus (walking around the room with the passengers following) and respond as by stopping to fight/struggle (responding to passengers, arguing with them). Ask driver to act out these responses whilst trying to

drive the bus. Have the passengers behave like passengers (hassling, cajoling, pleading, distracting). Spend 2-4 minutes doing this.

Get feedback from driver of bus: therapist suggests that no matter how much arguing and fighting with the passengers you have, nothing changes / quality of "stuckness"

Part 2: Ask driver to again drive the bus; this time giving in to the passengers, trying to make peace with them by giving up on his valued direction (e.g. agreeing with passengers, doing what they say).

Or, actively ignoring them – covering ears, humming, etc.

What it is like to let go of the steering wheel? What happens in life when you do this?

Reinforce the qualities of this: that it may feel better in the short-term but at the cost of important life areas, that it is being "stuck" in another way. Spend 2-4 minutes doing this.

Part 3: Finally ask driver to practise a "willingness" response. Steering the bus in the direction of his values, with the passengers following behind, saying/doing the things that they usually say (noticing the passengers without engaging with them – focusing on the value instead).

Debrief: Ask driver how he found this exercise and compare and contrast the three parts: Fighting/ struggling with passengers, giving in/ resignation vs just doing what you need to do. Pull out here differences between three situations – present moment focus, acceptance, defusion stuff.

BREAK

Slide 8:

10 minutes

How can we notice our passengers and keep going in the direction we care about?

"If we notice how our minds work, we can have thoughts that seem like actual experiences, such as memories from the past. We can also have thoughts and not act on these thoughts.

"Have you ever done something opposite to your thoughts and feelings?"

Exercise: Think the Opposite – "Don't stand up and walk around the room"

Give participants sheet of paper with "don't stand up and walk around" written on it. Ask participants to read the instruction and do the opposite. Ask them to continue to do the opposite whilst continuing to read the instruction.

"If your mind is stopping action, ask yourself, "is it possible to think that thought as a thought, AND do X?". Try this out by deliberately thinking the thought while doing what it has been stopping".

Debrief: Ask participants how they found the experience. Were they able to do the opposite? Did their minds get in the way? Have there been other times in participants' lives where they have been able to do the opposite to what their minds have said (**try to get some examples**). Relate this exercise back to the PoB metaphor, highlighting

how what our minds say can be like a passenger and just because a passenger says something doesn't mean we have to act on it.

Discuss problems with overthinking – such as when we are trying to learn to do something like ride a bike, skateboard, learn guitar etc. Too much thinking really gets in the way of being able to learn these skills. Our passengers might like to jump in with all sorts of handy advice, ideas or chatter, but actually they just make things more difficult.

Slide 9: Lemon

5 minutes

"Sometimes our passengers (our thoughts, feelings, sensations) seem so real and powerful. We may not be able to get rid of them but we can notice other aspects of them and we can change our relationship with them.

Part 1: Exercise: Lemon, lemon, lemon - see how in one way, our thoughts are also sounds in our heads

First ask participants what comes to mind when they read the word lemon. Ask about images, texture, smells, taste, sound.

Then ask participants to say the word "lemon" out loud repeatedly. Continue for 2-3 minutes, increasing volume and speed.

Debrief: ask participants what they noticed in doing the exercise, looking for examples where the indirect properties of the word (image, taste etc) dropped away and the more direct properties of the word became more prominent (sound of the word, loss of meaning etc.).

Part 2: Exercise: Negative/ critical word - Ask participants to think of the worst, most negative critical word that could be used to describe themselves (or people in general). For example "loser", "hopeless", "waste of space" etc. Have group generate 5-10 of these then all decide together which is the "worst" most sticky one (if necessary have a vote).

Ask participants to describe how this word/ phrase feels when they say it (heavy, sad etc), how does it look (black, spiky), how does it sound?

Then repeat exercise as with "Lemon".

Bring back to the PoB metaphor, highlighting how sometimes, even when what the passengers say feels *true, important or like an order* that must be obeyed, they are still only a set of words or a story and you have the choice to decide which direction your bus goes in

Who's in Charge of your life – your mind/ voices etc. or you? Could you make it that you in charge just as a choice, rather than needing to change thoughts/what your mind is doing etc

So, although your passengers are there, you still have the choice about how to act.

Slide 10: Getting present

10 minutes

“Before we finish, we’d like to invite you to do a short noticing exercise. This is similar to the Leaves on the Stream exercise we did last week. It gives you an idea of how we can be with and observe our unwanted thoughts and feelings, rather than struggling with them.”

“You can notice how this is similar to being with the Passengers on the Bus. We’re practicing noticing when you get caught up with struggling or fixing, and bringing yourself back to having your hands on the steering wheel, deciding where you want to go in your life... even with the passengers being there.”

Exercise: Clouds in the Sky

- 1. First, get in a comfortable position in your chair. Sit upright with your feet flat on the floor, your arms and legs uncrossed, and your hands resting on your lap. Allow your eyes to close gently (pause 5-10 seconds). Take a couple of gentle breaths: in ... and out – in ... and out. Notice the sound and feel of your own breath as you breathe in (pause) and out (pause 5-10 seconds).*
- 2. Imagine you are lying on a grassy hill on a warm spring day. Imagine feeling the ground beneath you, the smell of the grass, and the sounds of nearby trees blowing in the breeze (pause). Now, imagine you are looking up at the sky while lying on this hill, watching clouds pass across the sky (pause). Become conscious of your thoughts and feelings. Each time a thought pops into your head, imagine that it is written on one of those clouds. If you think in words or images, place these on a cloud and let them float by (pause).*
- 3. The goal is to stay watching the sky and allow the clouds to keep moving by. Don’t try to change what shows up on the clouds in any way. If the clouds disappear or you go somewhere else mentally or you find that you are in a cloud, just stop and notice this happening and gently bring yourself back to watching the sky and clouds. [pause]*
- 4. If you have any thoughts or feelings about doing this exercise, place these on clouds as well. (pause)*
- 5. If your thoughts stop, just watch the sky and the clouds. Sooner or later your thoughts will start up again (pause).*
- 6. You are just observing each thought as a word or an image on a cloud. It is normal and natural to lose track of this exercise, and will keep happening. When you notice it does, just bring yourself back to watching the clouds in the sky (pause).*
- 7. Continue throughout the exercise to briefly remind the participants of the instructions, particularly about letting clouds float by and noticing when a thought hooks them. Continue for another minute.*
- 8. “Lastly, bring your attention back to your breathing [pause 5-10 sec]. Notice again the steady rhythm of your breathing that is with you all the time [pause 5-10 sec]. Then bring your awareness back to sitting in the chair, in the room. When you feel ready, open their eyes, stretch etc.”*

Slide 11: Closing values exercise: "homework"

15 minutes

"What would you be willing to have as part of taking a valued action this week? What passengers might come up?"

Break into 2 groups again. Use Out of Session Planning Worksheet

Feedback

- Ask participants for feedback about how they found the group.
- What did you notice?
- What did you find helpful / unhelpful?
- What was the most memorable thing from today's group?

Session 4: Outline

Session Purposes:

- To review progress so far and support noticing, willingness and action
- To review the content of the group
- To provide an opportunity to practise exercises
- To reinforce group participation

Equipment

- Laptop
- Projector
- Paper, pens
- Marker pens
- Refreshments
- Index cards
- Name tags
- Flipchart

Additional equipment

- 3 pieces of flipchart paper: Noticing, Willingness, Taking Action
- Sticky dots / stars, blu-tack
- Summary 'driving licence' worksheet (A4 card)
- Valued direction arrow (3 copies)
- Certificate (A4 card)
- Resource folder, including list of local resources

Slide 2: What this group is about

- Talk through slide

Slide 3: What this group is about

Talk through slide

Slide 4: Warm up – what passengers did you notice this week? **5 minutes**

If participants are reluctant to talk about their own experiences, ask "did you notice any passengers on other people's buses? Friends, family etc."

Or, if participants are isolated, ask "did you notice any passengers on the TV, radio, or in the newspaper?"

Facilitators to volunteer passengers they noticed.

Slide 5: Mindfulness of breath

10 minutes

"Now, we are going to spend a few minutes getting present, just focusing on ourselves here and now."

1. *First, get in a comfortable position in your chair. Sit upright, with your feet flat on the floor, your arms and legs uncrossed, and your hands resting in your lap. Either close your eyes or fix them on a point in front of you.*

2. *Turn your attention to your breathing. Notice the sensations of breathing in [pause]. And notice the sensations of breathing out [pause]. You might notice the air moving in through your mouth or nose. You might notice the sensations of the air moving out [pause]. Notice the feeling of your chest rising and falling. As you do this you might notice your mind drift away from noticing your breathing – if that happens, acknowledge where your mind took you and gently bring it back to your breathing [pause].*
3. *Next, bring your attention to the sensation of sitting the chair. Notice where your feet touch the ground [pause 5-10 seconds]? Notice where parts of your feet don't touch the ground [pause 5-10 seconds]? Next, notice the sensation of sitting in the chair and see if you can notice the sense of your weight on the chair [pause 5-10 seconds]. Maybe notice where parts of your body contact the chair. Notice where your body doesn't contact the chair [pause 5-10 seconds].*
4. *Next, move your attention inside your body. See if you can notice any physical sensations or feelings, such as a tight muscle or an area of tension [pause 5-10 seconds]. Pick one of these and direct your attention there [pause 5-10 seconds]. Examine it with a sense of curiosity. Where does it start? Where does it end [pause 5-10 seconds]? See if you can observe it without trying to change it [pause 5-10 seconds]. Spend a bit of time just noticing this sensation or feeling [pause 5-10 seconds]. As you do this, it might increase. It might decrease. It might stay just the same. Just notice this [pause 5-10 seconds].*
5. *Lastly, bring your attention back to your breathing [pause 5-10 seconds]. Notice again the steady rhythm of your breathing that is with you all the time [pause 5-10 seconds].*
6. *When you are ready, open your eyes if they are closed and come back into the room.*

Invite observations from this exercise (debrief)

Slide 6: Revisit and check in values (Homework review) 10 mins

What were you willing to have / noticing passengers / what valued actions you took this last week

“We would like to hear how you have gone with increasing your willingness since the last session. What valued actions did you take? And what was that like? What passengers did you notice? How did you respond to them? What did you do that let the passengers be while you moved in your valued direction? ”

Break into 2 groups (different to last session). One facilitator goes with each group. Reinforce all efforts to take valued actions, as well as any noticing that the participants have made. All steps/inclinations in valued directions should be reinforced, as this is part of building repertoires of effective behaviour.

With those participants who have had difficult engaging in valued action, reinforce any descriptions they make of thinking about doing it, small plans, inclinations etc. Similarly reinforce any noticing they made of barriers to doing the task, struggling etc. This is then a good opportunity to mention using defusion/acceptance and mindfulness skills

when facing barriers, as well as the concept of “willingness” to have unwanted experiences as part of taking valued actions.

Slide 7: Key Messages

15 minutes

3 pieces of flipchart paper, portrait, with one of “Noticing”, “Willingness”, “Taking Action” written at the top.

Ask members to say what things they have done in the group and/or between sessions that fit under each heading (not mutually exclusive).

Facilitators to prompt if necessary. Also, have things written on card, which group members can stick onto the pieces of paper.

Then (using stickers) ask participants to vote on the one that stood out for them most / the one they found most useful.

Examples

- Noticing:
 - Mindfulness exercises: getting present (mindfulness of breath and body), satsuma exercise, leaves on the stream, clouds in the sky.
 - Identifying values, passengers, choices, etc.
 - Video of Tom
 - Homework, therapist phoning during the week
 - Exercise: Lemon, lemon, lemon
- Willingness:
 - Being with passengers
 - Passengers on the bus (exercises)
 - Homework
 - Think the Opposite – “Don't stand up and walk around the room”
 - Exercise: Lemon, lemon, lemon
- Taking Action:
 - Coming to the group
 - Choosing valued directions
 - Actions during the week to move closer to your goals, to move in your valued direction (homework)
 - Think the Opposite – “Don't stand up and walk around the room”
 - Exercise: Lemon, lemon, lemon

BREAK

Slide 8: Revisit passengers

10 minutes

In discussion, draw out elements of metaphor, including valued direction, passengers and what they may represent and potential for bus to be diverted from valued direction. (SHARP: mentioned how your passengers can be tricky and cunning)

Draw out different ways diversions can happen:

- Listening to passengers
- Believing passengers
- Giving in to them
- Struggling with them
- Trying to throw them off the bus

[facilitators could role play]

Draw out new ways that the group has suggested may be helpful in approaching passengers:

- Being clear about the direction you want your bus to go in
- Noticing that you have a choice about where you steer the bus
- Passengers are just passengers
- Being mindful can help us be more aware of our passengers and help us notice the choices that are available to us
- Sometimes fighting and struggling with the passengers can take you away from what's really important. An alternative can be making space and allowing passengers along for the ride
- (SHARP: ways of being with your passengers (defusing from them) – viewing them as ballast, old patterns, bored of them, responding “yeah, yeah”, saying to yourself “just do it!”).

Write these and other suggestions on the flipchart.

Discussion: Did people do anything different over the last few weeks that they may not have done? Did people notice things they would have liked to do differently? If you had the choice, what can you see yourself doing differently over the next six months?

Slide 9: Where to from here - moving forward

25 minutes

Break into 2 groups. One facilitator goes with each group and helps each participant to fill in 'driving licence' worksheet.

Complete valued directions and goals/committed actions on one side of the worksheet, and passengers on the other (these will have been identified by participants previously for Out of Session Worksheet).

Reinforce any “showing up”: people willing to name their commitments, identify passengers etc., with the group.

Ask if participants are willing to act out their commitment, by taking a step towards the valued direction arrow.

Discussion of whether there is anyone that the participant could share their valued actions with? (to support making a commitment)

Again, offer for the facilitators to get in touch with clients following the group about these valued actions. Also ask for permission to link in with care coordinator / main contact in the community about valued action following sessions (function is to get people noticing and into action).

Come back together as one group. Ask for feedback on the process of filling in the worksheet. For example, what was easy, what was hard etc.

Ask if anyone will volunteer what they've put on their worksheet.

Slide 10: Tying it all together: Final message:

5 minutes

Read the paragraph below. Key points are on the slide.

“There may be times both here in the workshop and at home when you experience thoughts and feelings that try to convince you that don’t feel like doing this anymore or that it’s all too much and too difficult. Even if you start to think about giving up on a valued direction, continue moving. You can be the driver of your bus, and take all the passengers with you. You have already experienced in the exercises that thoughts and feelings come and go, but the progress that you make toward your goals will be for real and won’t just go away. This is what really matters. Ultimately you are in control of the direction of your life, like a driver on the bus - you control it with your hands and feet. Although you can’t control what kind of feelings, thoughts or worries come along with you, you will go where you let your hands and feet take you. Act on your values rather than your fear, with your hands and feet. Do what you care about, even with the thoughts and feelings that will show up when you decide to take action. That is what you truly can control.”

Slide 11: Certificates

5 minutes

Facilitators hand out – round of applause from everyone!

Feedback

- Feedback on today’s session and the group overall.
- What did you notice?
- What did you find helpful / unhelpful?
- What was the most memorable thing from the group – what will you take from it?

ACT for Psychosis Adherence Rating Scale

For the therapy session please rate for the presence of each of the components below. For each component that is present, please rate how appropriate for this stage of therapy, and then rate client responsiveness to this component.

ACT Therapeutic Stance	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High
Developing Acceptance and Willingness/Undermining Experiential Control	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High
Undermining Cognitive Fusion	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High
Getting in Contact with the Present Moment	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High
Distinguishing the Conceptualized Self from Self-as-context	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High
Defining Valued Directions	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High
Building Patterns of Committed Action	How present in this session?	How appropriate for this stage of therapy?	Client Responsiveness?
	0 Not at all 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High	0 Inappropriate 1 Minimally 2 Satisfactory 3 Highly 4 Very Highly	0 Unresponsive 1 Minimal 2 Satisfactory 3 High 4 Very High

ACT-Inconsistent techniques/ Proscribed behaviours	How present in this session?				
Did the therapist explain the "meaning" of paradoxes or metaphors (possibly to develop "insight")	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Did the therapist engage in criticism, judgement or taking a "one up" position?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Did the therapist argue with, lecture, coerce or attempt to convince the client?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Did the therapist substitute his or her opinions for the client's genuine experience of what is working/ not working?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Did the therapist model the need to resolve contradictory or difficult ideas, feelings, memories, and the like?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Evidence for Delusional Beliefs: Did the therapist assess the evidence that the client uses to support his/her delusional beliefs?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Validity Testing/Behavioural Experiments: Did the therapist encourage the client to 1) engage in specific behaviours for the purpose of testing the validity of their beliefs, OR 2) make explicit predictions about external events so that the outcomes of those events could serve as tests of those predictions OR 3) review the outcome of previous validity tests?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Colombo Style: Did the therapist help the client to explain his/her reasons for holding a belief by apologising for being confused about it all but then carefully questioning to gain the details?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very
Verbal Challenge of Delusions: Did the therapist challenge the client's beliefs through discussion?	0 Not at all High	1 Minimal	2 Moderate	3 High	4 Very

Overall Rating

How would you rate the clinician overall in this session, as an ACT therapist?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Poor Barely Adequate Mediocre Satisfactory Good Very Good Excellent

ACT Therapeutic Stance

Any of the following:

- The therapist speaks to the client from an equal, vulnerable, genuine, and sharing point of view
- The therapist models willingness to hold contradictory or difficult ideas, feelings, memories, and the like without needing to “resolve” them.
- The therapist takes a compassionate and humanizing stance toward the client’s suffering.
- The therapist always brings the issue back to what the client’s experience is showing, and does not substitute his or her opinions for that genuine experience
- The therapist is willing to self disclose about personal issues when it makes a therapeutic point
- The therapist sequences and applies specific ACT interventions in response to client needs, and displays readiness to change course to fit those needs at any moment.
- New metaphors, experiential exercises and behavioural tasks are allowed to emerge from the client’s own experience and context
- The therapist recognises ACT relevant processes in the moment and where appropriate directly supports these in the context of the therapeutic relationship

Developing Acceptance and Willingness/Undermining Experiential Control

Any of the following:

- Therapist communicates that client is not broken, but is using unworkable strategies
- Therapist helps client examine direct experience and detect emotional control strategies
- Therapist actively uses concept of “workability” in clinical interactions
- Therapist actively encourages client to experiment with stopping the struggle for emotional control and suggests willingness as an alternative.
- Therapist uses shifts between control and willingness, as an opportunity for the client to directly experience the contrast in vitality between the two strategies.
- Therapist helps the client investigate relationship between levels of willingness and sense of suffering
- Therapist helps client make experiential contact with the cost of being unwilling relative to valued life ends
- Therapist helps client experience the qualities of willingness (a choice, a behaviour, not wanting, same act regardless of how big the stakes)
- Therapist uses exercises and metaphors to help client contact willingness the action in the presence of difficult material
- Therapists structures graded steps or exercises to practice willingness
- Therapist detects struggle in session and teaches the client to do so

Undermining Cognitive Fusion

Any of the following:

- Therapist identifies client's emotional, cognitive, behavioral or physical barriers to willingness
- Therapist suggests that "attachment" to the literal meaning of these experiences makes willingness difficult to sustain
- Therapist actively contrasts what the client's "mind" says will work versus what the client's experience says is working
- Therapist uses language tools, metaphors and experiential exercises to create a separation between the client and client's conceptualized experience
- Therapist uses various interventions to both reveal the flow of private experience and that such experience is not "toxic"
- Therapist works to get the client to experiment with "having" these experiences, using willingness as a stance
- Therapist helps client make contact with the evaluative and reason giving properties of the client's story

Getting in Contact with the Present Moment

Any of the following:

- Therapist displays defusion from client content and direct attention to the moment
- Therapist can bring his or her own feelings or thoughts in the moment into the therapeutic relationship
- Therapist uses exercises to expand the clients sense of experience as an ongoing process
- Therapist tracks content at multiple levels and emphasizes the present when it is useful
- Therapist models coming back to the present moment
- Therapist detects client drifting into past and future orientation and comes back to now
- Therapist teaches the client to detect their own drifting into the past and future, and to come back to the present moment

Distinguishing the Conceptualized Self from Self-as-Context

Any of the following:

- Therapist helps the client differentiate self-evaluations from the self that evaluates
- Therapist employs mindfulness exercises to help client make contact with self-as-context
- Therapist uses metaphors to highlight distinction between products and contents of consciousness versus consciousness
- Therapist employs behavioral tasks to help client practice distinguishing private events from self
- Therapist helps client understand the different qualities of self conceptualization, just noticing events and simple awareness

Defining Valued Directions

Any of the following components:

- The therapist helps the client clarify valued life directions
- The therapist helps client “go on record” as wanting to stand for valued life ends
- The therapist teaches client to distinguish between values and goals
- Therapist distinguishes between outcomes and processes
- Therapist puts his or her own therapy relevant values in the room and models their importance

Building Patterns of Committed Action

Any of the following components:

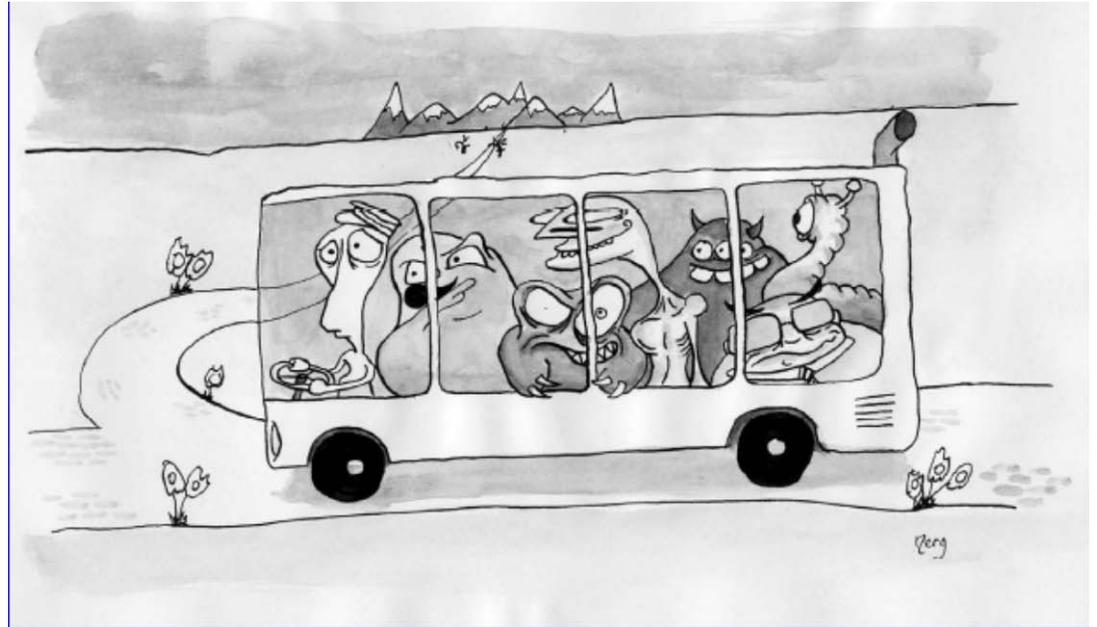
- The therapist helps client identify valued life goals and build an action plan
- The therapist encourages the client to “have” barriers and make and keep commitments
- The therapist encourages client to take small steps and to look at the quality of committed action
- The therapist keeps the client focused on larger and larger patterns of action
- The therapist integrates slips or relapses into the experiential base for future effective action

Out of Session planning Worksheet

My goal is to (be specific):

My values guiding this goal:

My action for this week to move me closer to my goals:

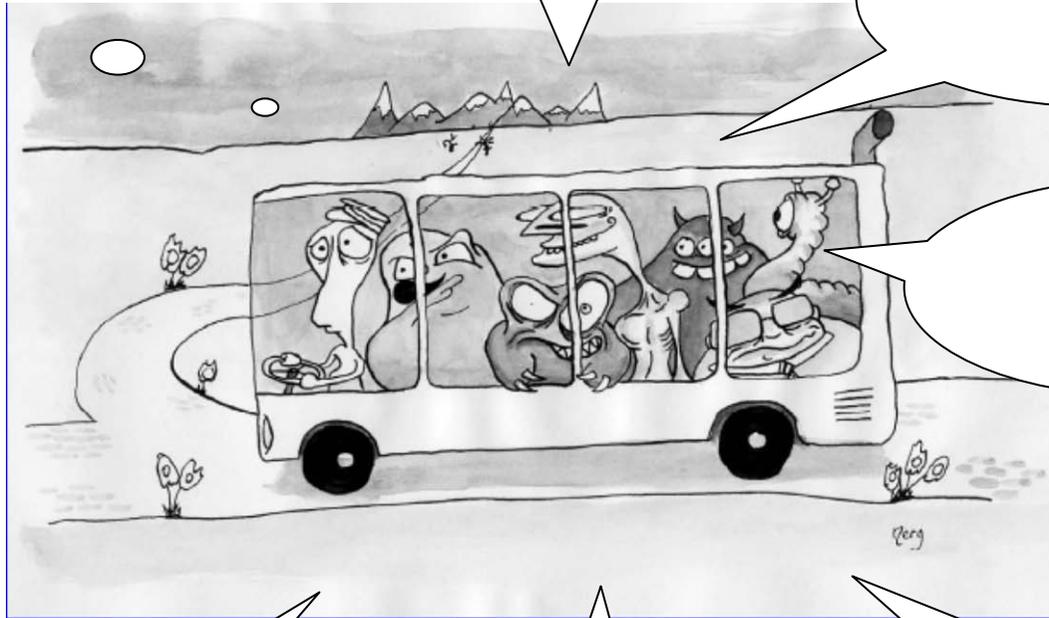


Passengers that might show up as I work towards my goal:

Passengers on the Bus Worksheet

Value:

Action related to your value:

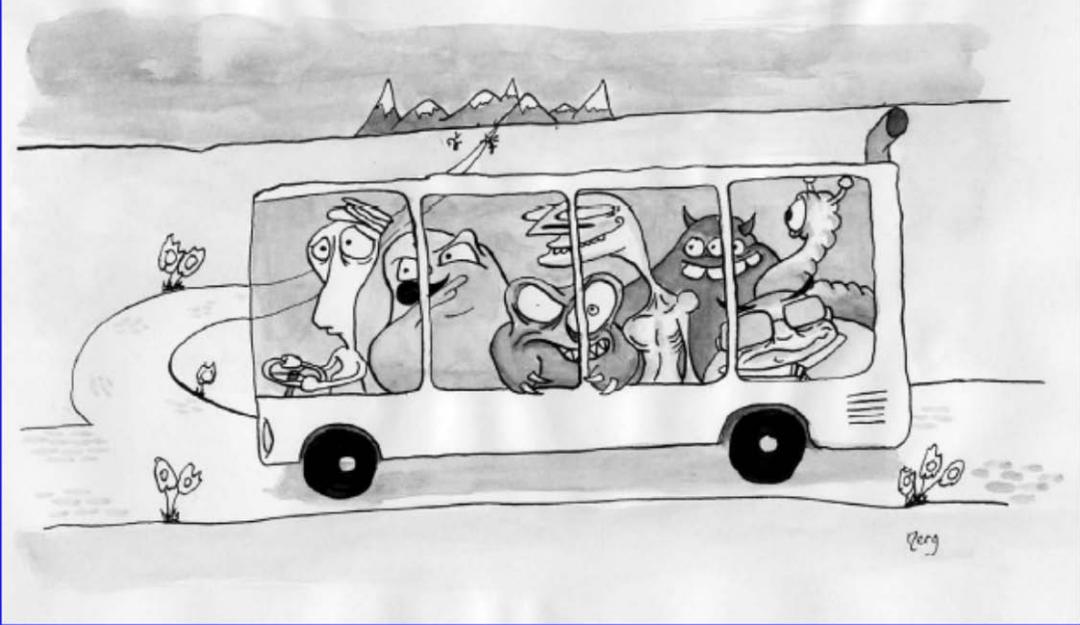


Three large empty speech bubbles for writing responses.

My Values and Goals

My goals are to:

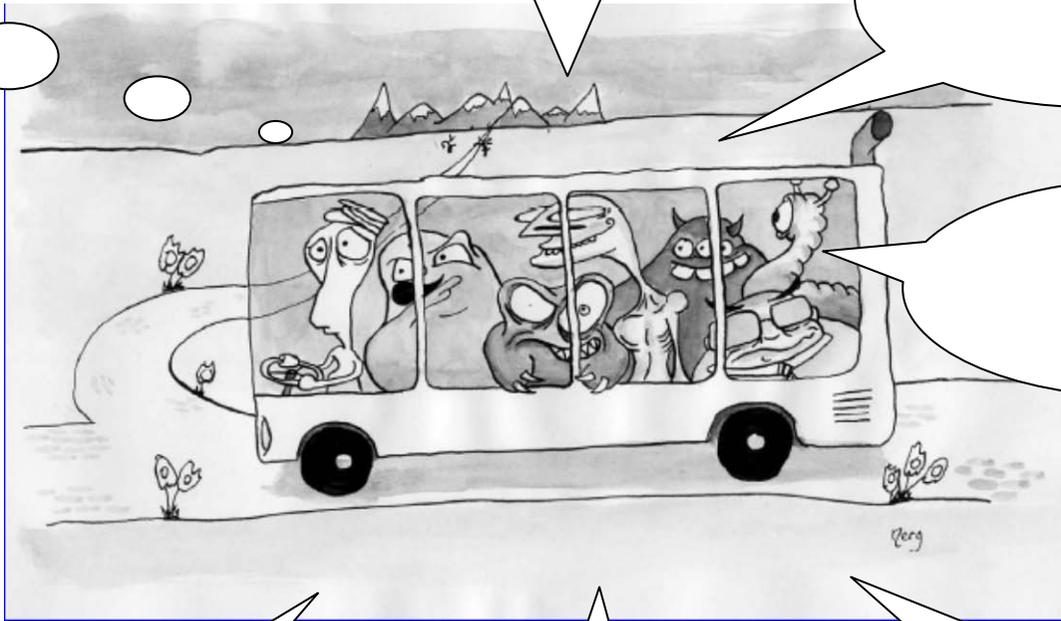
My actions to move me closer to my goals:



My values guiding these goals and actions:

My Passengers

Values:



Speech bubbles for describing the passengers:

- Top center speech bubble
- Top right speech bubble
- Middle right speech bubble
- Bottom left speech bubble
- Bottom center speech bubble
- Bottom right speech bubble