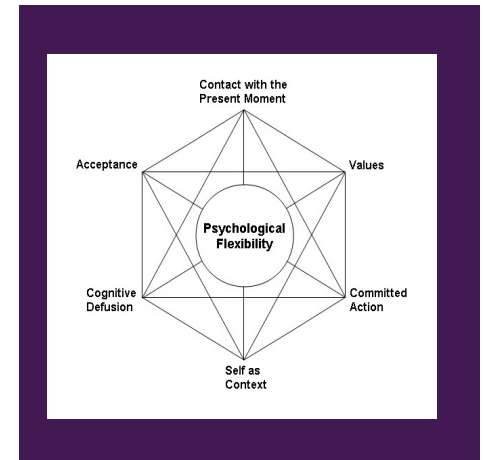
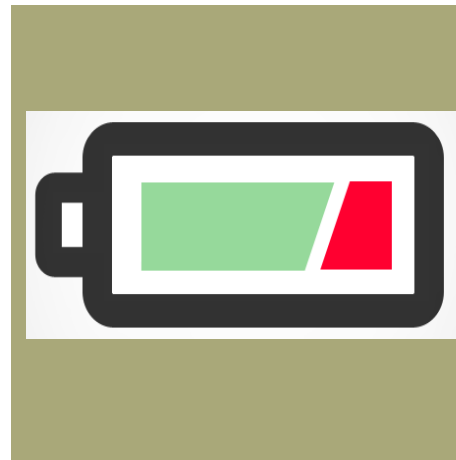




The ACT of Self-Care:

Tackling the Ethical Principle of Psychologist Self-Care Using an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) Approach

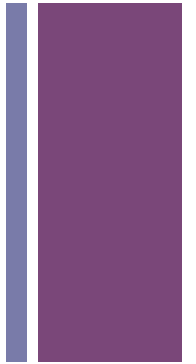


NCPA Spring Conference,
April 26, 2014

Mira Brancu, PhD &
Richard L. Ogle, PhD

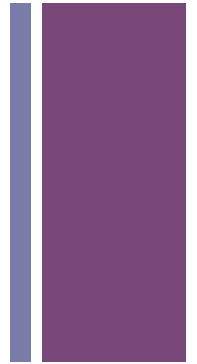
+ Objectives

- Identify at least 2 personal values that can enhance self-care practices.
- Develop a committed action plan, based on identified personal values, from an ACT perspective to deal with a current professional issue.
- Identify at least 2 ethical codes/principles related to self-care from the 2010 APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct that can be addressed through the use of the ACT model.





Sponsored by the NCPA Colleague Assistance Committee



Purpose

- Serving our members
- Integrity of the profession
- Protection of the public
- Confidential
- Peer Consultation Hot Line

Scope of Services

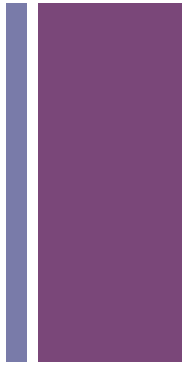
- Peer Consultation (e.g., professional stressors relative to client/patient work)
- Management of relationships with colleagues and other work setting issues
- Personal well-being issues
- Educational outreach



**+ 2010 APA Ethical Principles of
Psychologists and Code of
Conduct **Related to Self-Care****

+ Principle A: Beneficence and Nonmaleficence

*Psychologists **strive to be aware** of the possible effect of their own physical and mental health on their ability to help those with whom they work.*

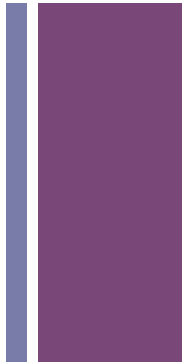




2.06

Personal Problems and Conflicts

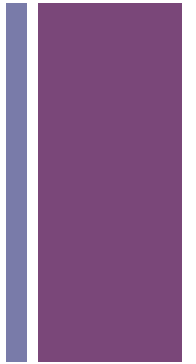
- Psychologists refrain from initiating an activity **when they know or should know** that there is a substantial likelihood that their personal problems will prevent them from performing their work-related activities in a competent manner.





2.06

Personal Problems and Conflicts



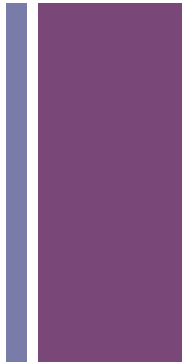
- When psychologists **become aware** of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work-related duties adequately, they **take appropriate measures**, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance, and **determine** whether they should limit, suspend, or terminate their work-related duties. (See also Standard 10.10, Terminating Therapy.)



3.04

Avoiding Harm

- Psychologists take reasonable steps to avoid harming their clients/patients, students, supervisees, research participants, organizational clients, and others with whom they work, and to minimize harm **where it is foreseeable** and unavoidable.

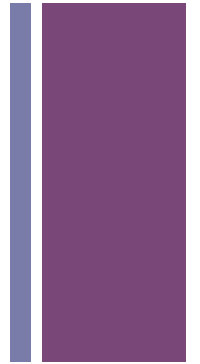




10.10

Terminating Therapy

- Psychologists terminate therapy **when it becomes reasonably clear** that the client/patient no longer needs the service, is not likely to benefit, or is being harmed by continued service.

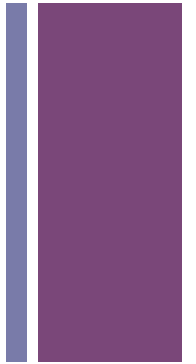




2.03

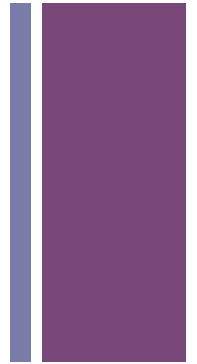
Maintaining Competence

- Psychologists undertake **ongoing efforts** to develop and maintain their competence.



+ The Bridge Between Ethics, Self-Care, and ACT Principles

- **Involves Awareness**
 - *strive to be aware*
 - *when they know or should know*
 - *become aware*
 - *where it is foreseeable*
- **Involves Committed Action**
 - *take appropriate measures*
 - *determine*
 - *ongoing efforts*
- **But Guidelines Do Not Include:**
 - **What We Should Be Aware of**
 - **How to Make Determinations**
 - **What Information to Weigh**



+ Self-Awareness: The Stress-Distress-Impairment Continuum

- Stress: Happens to everyone
 - In personal life: physical and emotional
 - At work
 - Can be chronic



+ Self-Awareness: The Stress-Distress-Impairment Continuum

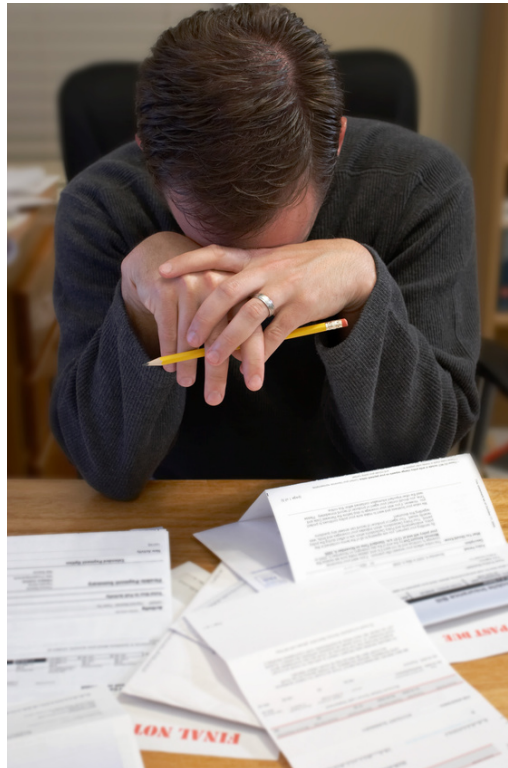
- Distress: The subjective state of experiencing anxiety, pain, or suffering.



“We talked about the strange man yanking your ears last week. We need to look at what else is bothering you.”

+ Self-Awareness: The Stress-Distress-Impairment Continuum

- Impairment: An objective reduction in professional functioning and performance (doing a poor job). May include subjective experience of distress.




+ Mindfulness: A Move Toward More Proactive Approaches

Mindfulness-based practices and principles (MPPPs) can:

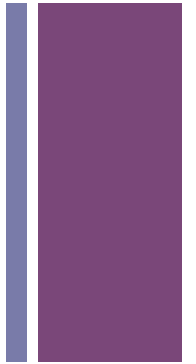
- *enhance psychologists' functioning*
- *serve to greatly reduce the likelihood of progression through the stress-distress-continuum stages*
- *minimize the addition of new self-care commitments*
- *maximize the manageable and integrated transformation of existing ways of thinking, doing, and being.*

(Wise, Hersh, & Gibson, 2012)



+ Acceptance and Commitment
Therapy Principles:
The ACT of Self-Care

+ The Goal of ACT




■ Psychological Suffering:

- *When we avoid experiencing our internal reactions and acknowledging unwanted thoughts in the present moment.*

■ Goal of ACT:

- To reduce suffering through psychological flexibility by behaving consistently with values even in the presence of unwanted internal experiences.
- ACT offers guidance to reconnect daily to our values and limit psychological suffering.



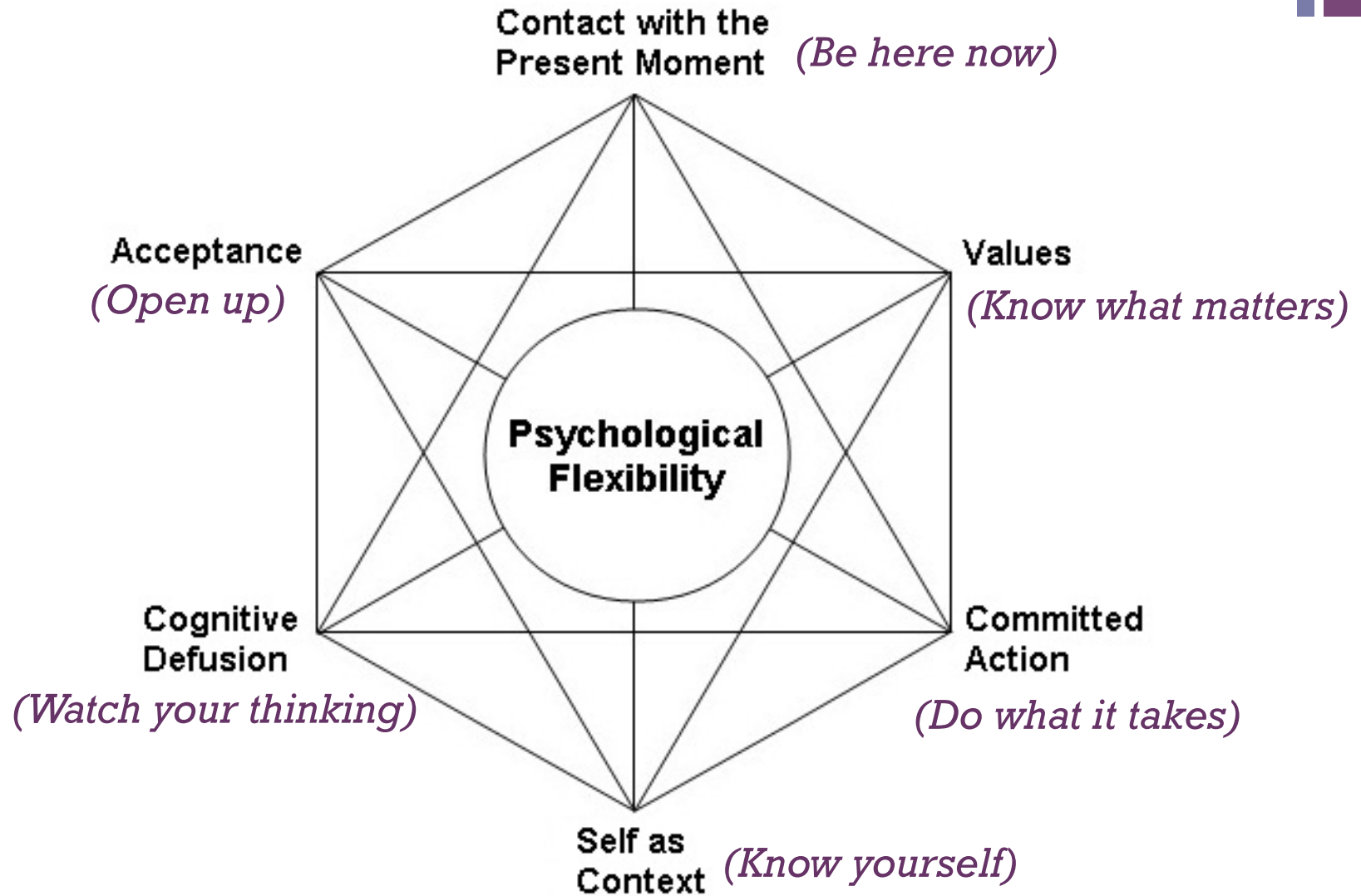
Experiential avoidance is considered destructive when it inhibits values-based action.

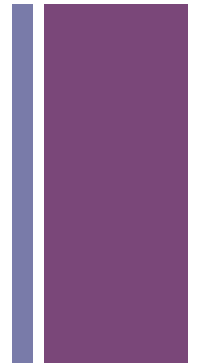
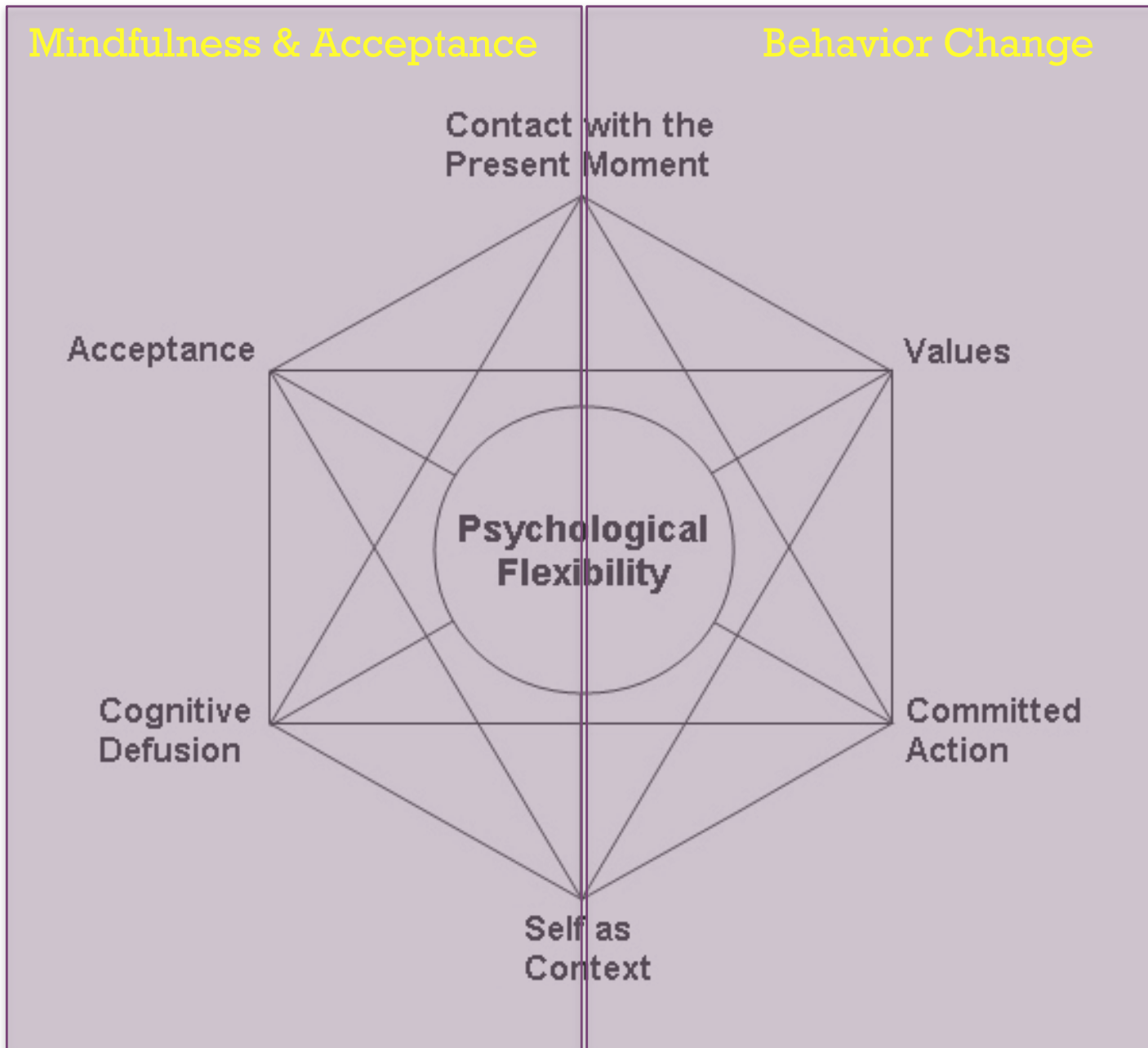
(Ruiz, 2010; Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012)

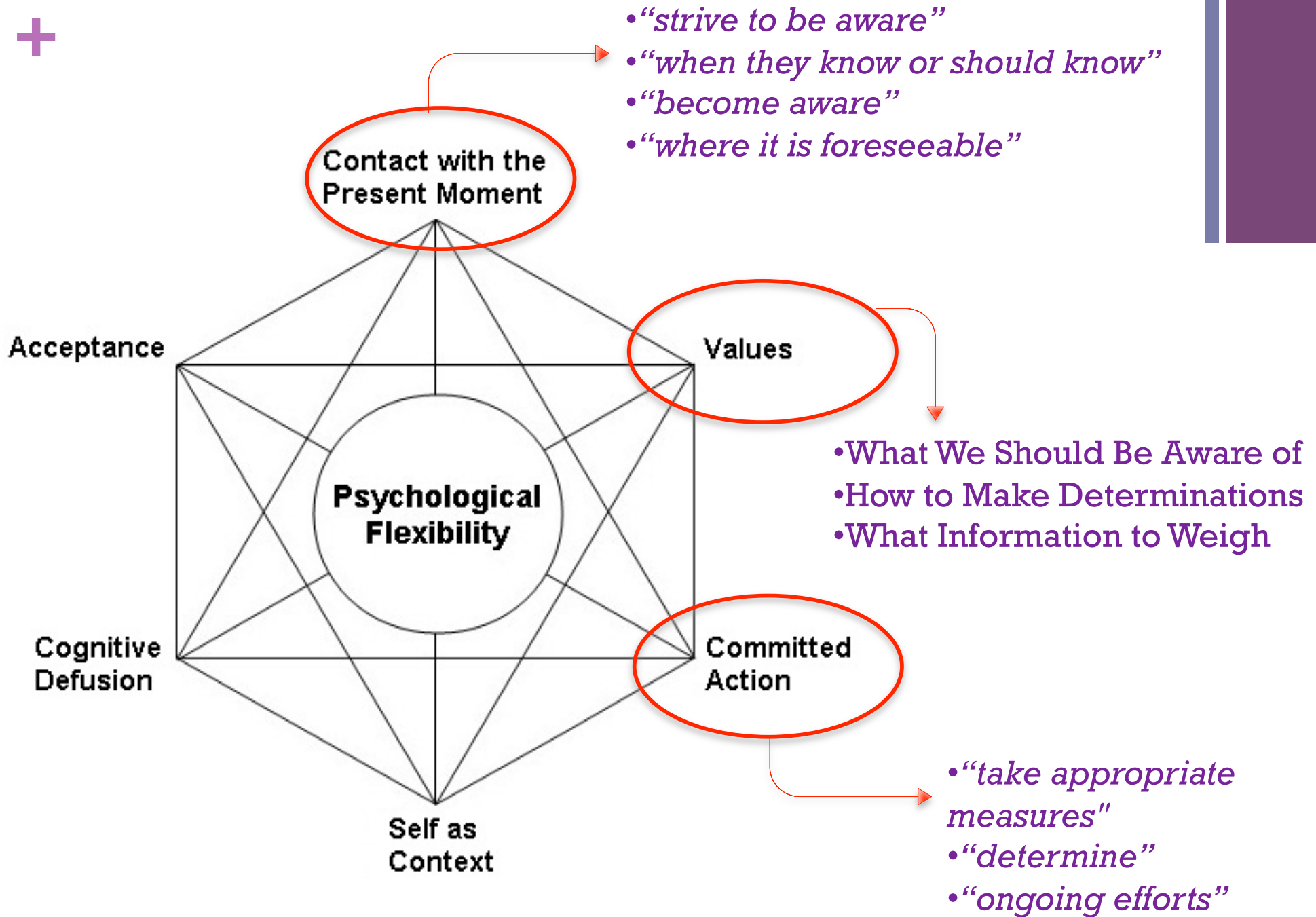
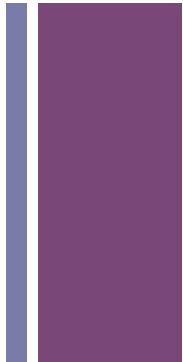


ACT Hexaflex:

Mindfulness, Acceptance, Values, & Committed Action







+ The Effect of Improved Mindfulness on Therapist Self-Care

- Mindfulness interventions have been shown to:
 - Increase therapist self-compassion¹
 - Increase therapist empathy²
 - Lead to better therapist outcomes³
 - Lead to stronger bond with clients⁴

¹(Shapiro et al., 2007)

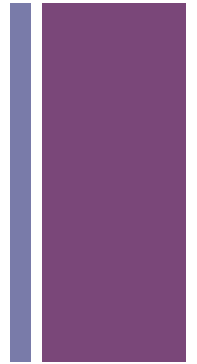
²(Shapiro et al., 1998)

³(Grepmaier, Mitterlehner, Loew, & Nickel, 2007; Grepmaier, Mitterlehner, Loew, & Bachler, et al., 2007)

⁴(Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012)

+ How ACT Applies to Psychologist Self-Care

- Enough stress or bad timing can lead any of us to get stuck.
- Emotional avoidance (psychological suffering) leads to loss of sense of fulfillment and connection to personal values.
- ACT teaches how to practice what you preach (Bennett-Levy, Lee, Travers, Pohlman, & Hamernik, 2003), which can enhance both skills and self-care (Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012)
- Mindfulness and acceptance processes are related to greater self-compassion, which is likely to enhance self-care (Brown et al., 2007; Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012).
- Engaging in values exploration and connecting it to committed action is one way to engage in self-care through awareness of values and discrepancies...

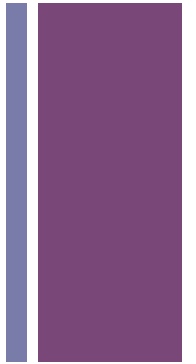






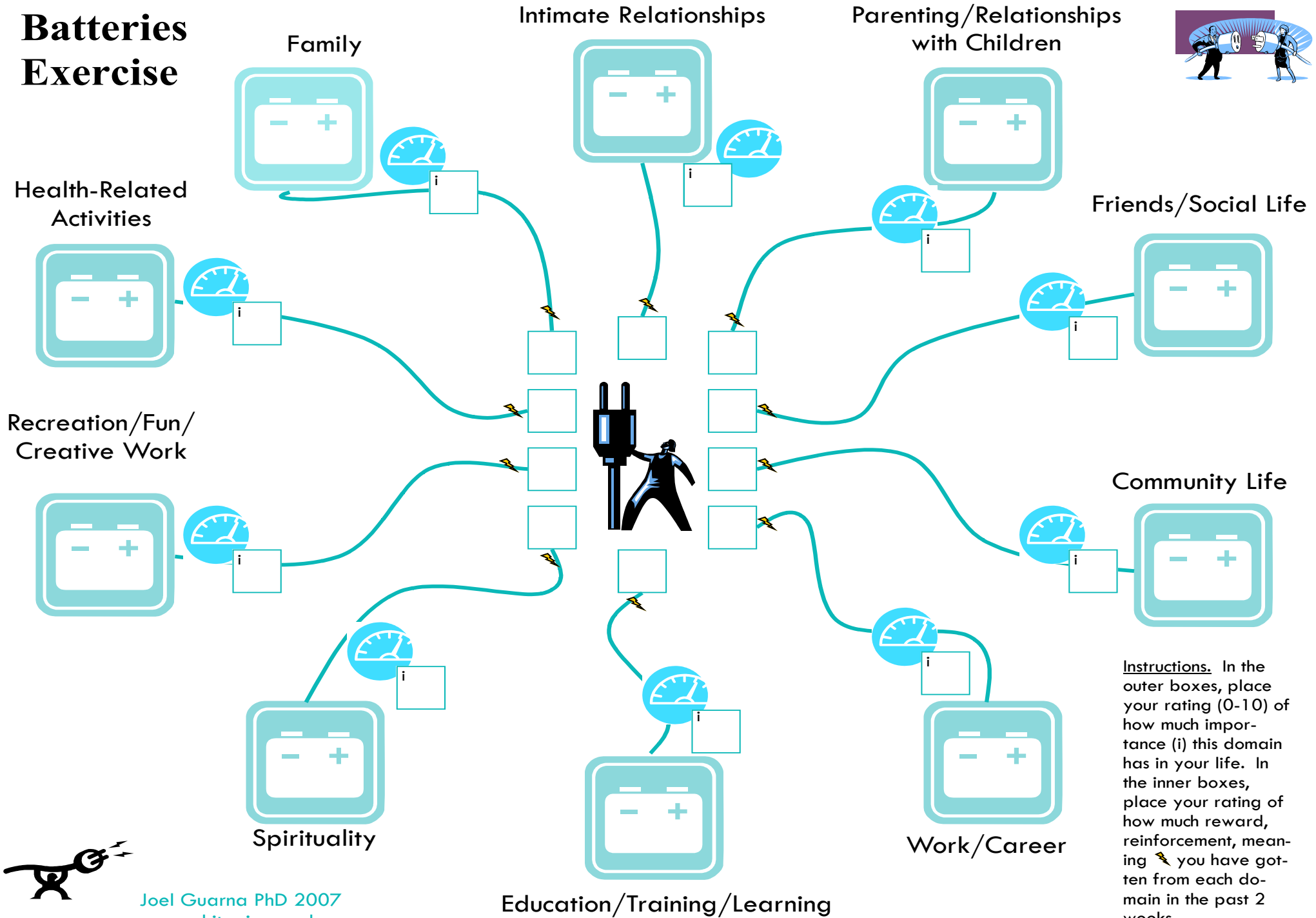
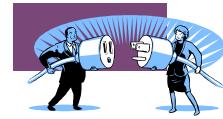
+ Values

+ Values Exercise



- Pick the sheet you'd get the most value out of
- Identify one of the larger discrepancies that is most salient to you right now
- Write down 3 changes you can make in your life to reduce the discrepancy
- Paired Discussion
- Whole Group discussion

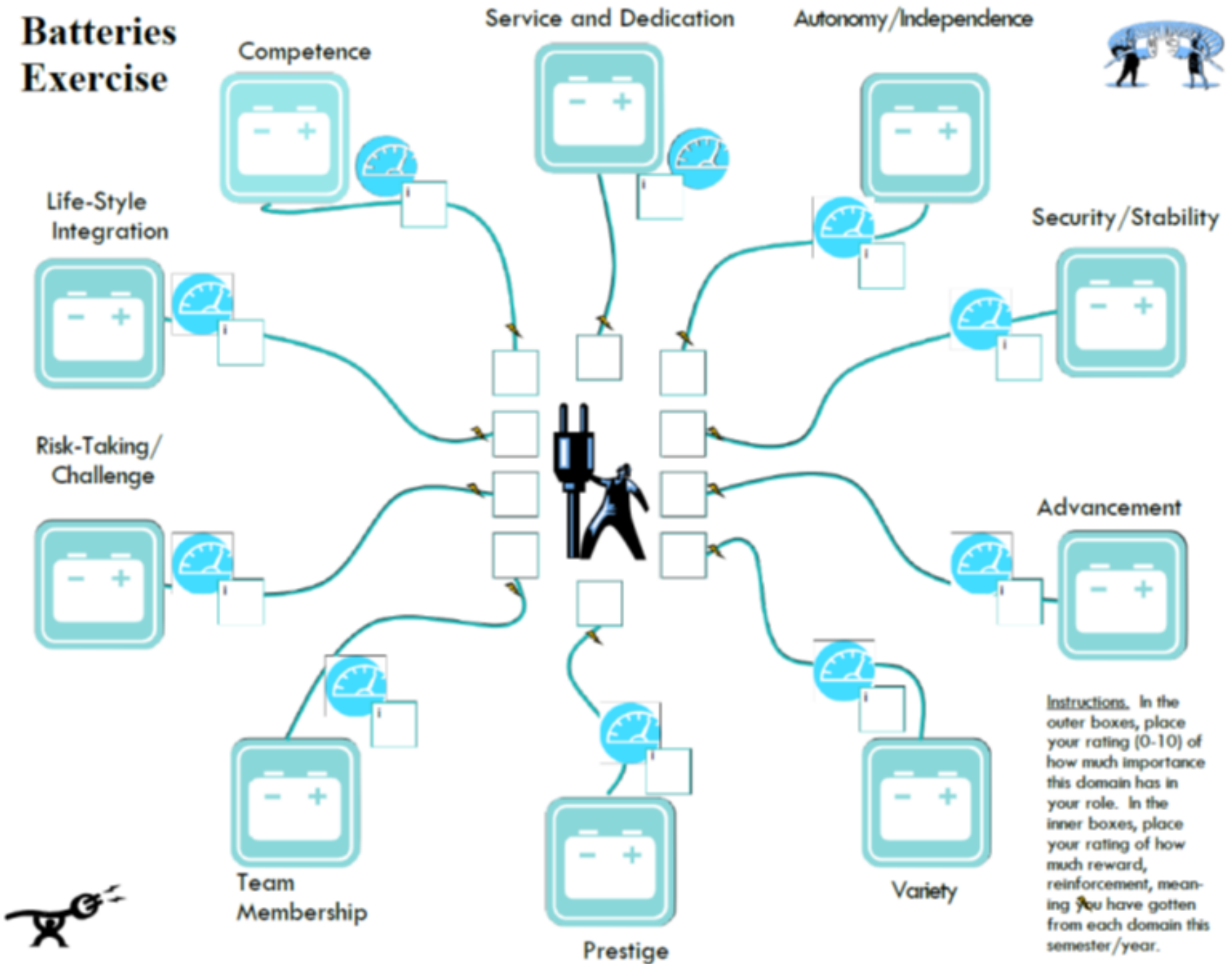
Batteries Exercise



Instructions. In the outer boxes, place your rating (0-10) of how much importance (i) this domain has in your life. In the inner boxes, place your rating of how much reward, reinforcement, meaning ⚡ you have gotten from each domain in the past 2 weeks.

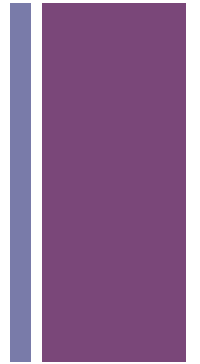


Batteries Exercise

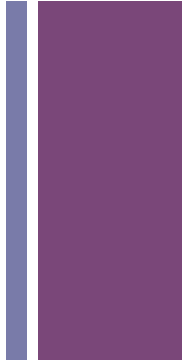


+ Values Awareness and Self-Care

- Staying aware of values allows you to:
 - know how you want to operate in a specific context,
 - become quickly mindful of discrepancies, and
 - make committed informed actions
 - in order to take care of yourself



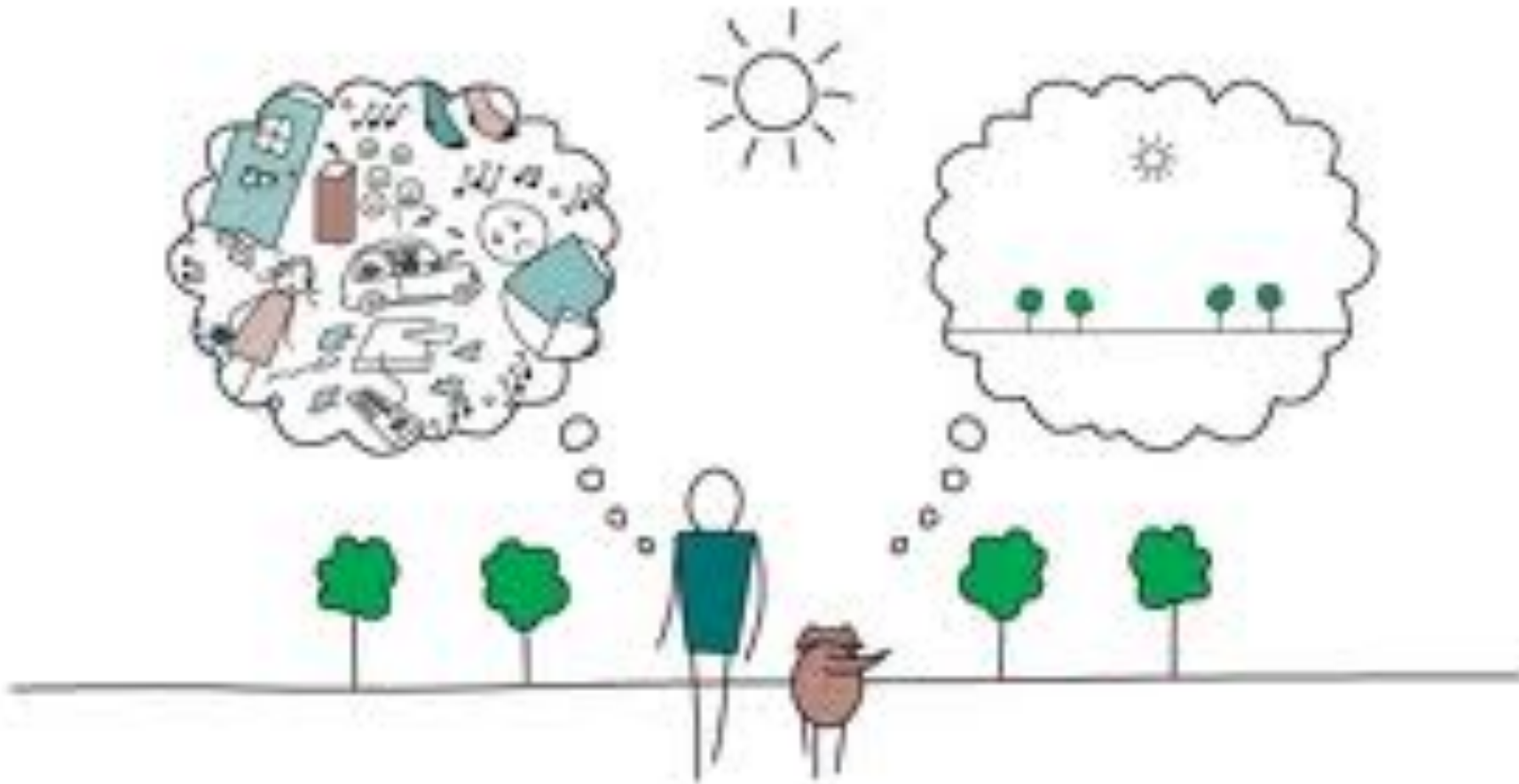
+ Coaching Perspective



- Time when you were being consistent with values – how felt like?
- Time when weren't – what got in the way?
- The importance of present moment awareness...



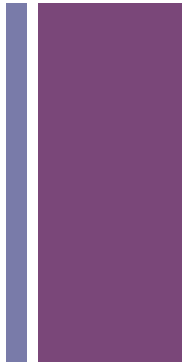
Present Moment Awareness



Mind Full, or Mindful?

+ Present Moment Awareness Exercise

- Groups of 3
 - Therapist
 - Client
 - Voice in your head
- Role-play a difficult session
 - Unengaged client
 - Frustrated client
- Voice in head chatters the whole time
- Listen for Rich to pause you

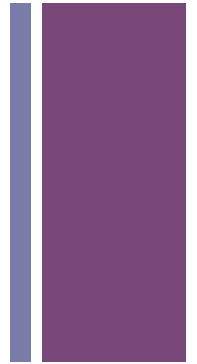


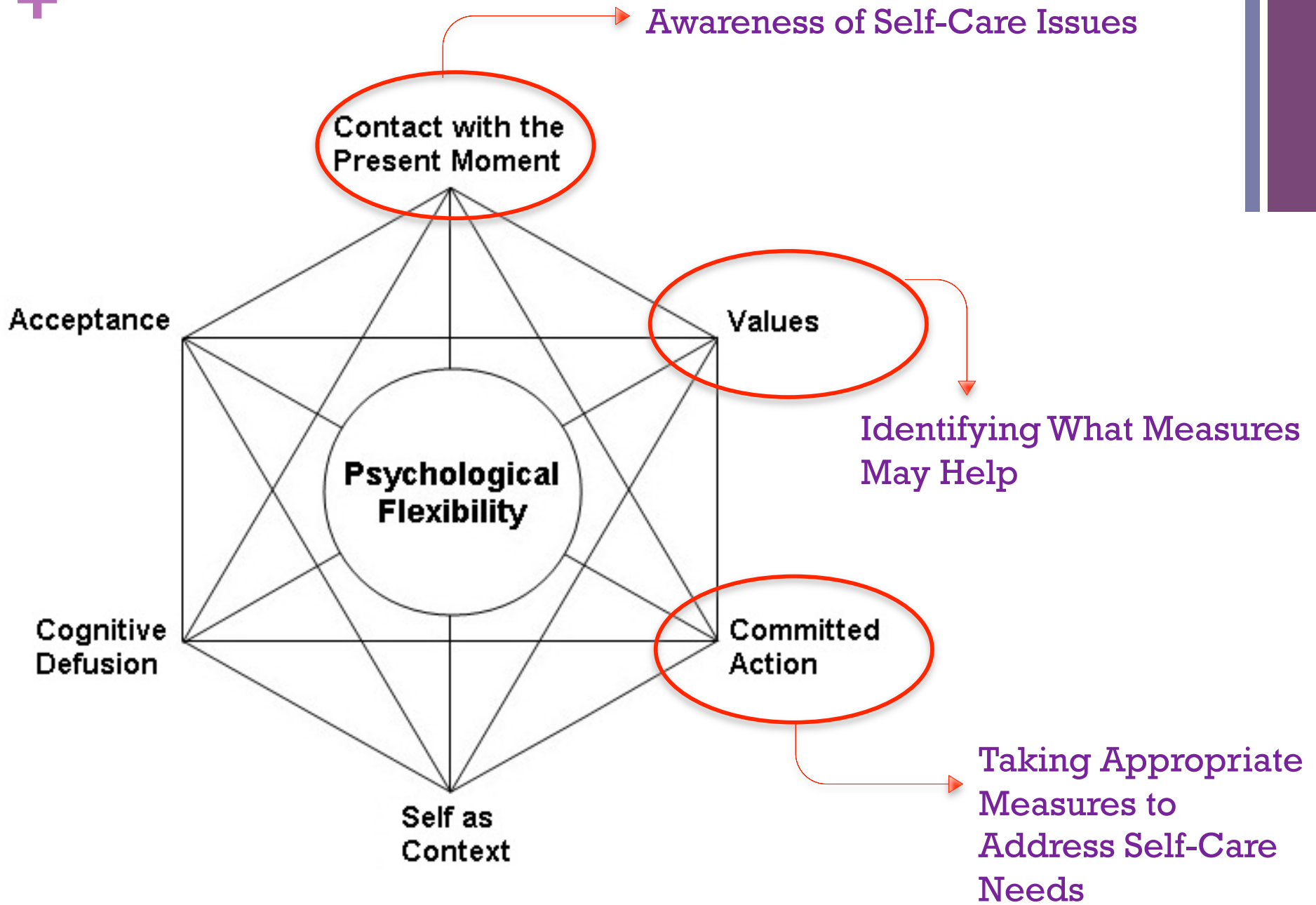
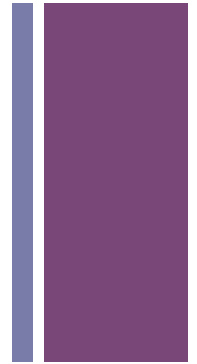
+ Present Moment Awareness During Therapy Sessions

- Managing difficult patients/sessions by bringing values into present moment awareness?
- What is the values-congruent response in any given difficult moment? What's it like after the session? Between sessions? During the week? Throughout the year? At the end of your career?
- Are you implementing the self-care techniques that will lead you to feel proud and satisfied at the end of a therapeutic relationship or the end of your career that you walked the valued path?

+ Ethics of Self-Care Through ACT Principles

- Ethics of Self-Care
 - Involves **Present Moment Awareness**
 - *strive to be aware*
 - *when they know or should know*
 - *become aware*
 - *where it is foreseeable*
 - Involves **Committed Action**
 - *take appropriate measures*
 - *determine*
 - *ongoing effort*
- Can Make Determinations For **Committed Action** Through Awareness of **Values**

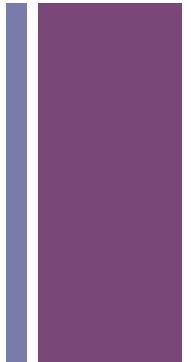






References

- Hayes, S.C., Strosahl, K.D., & Wilson, K.G. (2012). *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: The process and practice of mindful change*: New York: Guilford Press.
- Luoma, J.B, Hayes, S.C., & Walser, R.D. (2007). *Learning ACT: An Acceptance and Commitment Therapy manual for therapists*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.
- American Psychological Association. (2010). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, *57*, 1060-1073.
- Shapiro, S.L., Brown, K.W., & Biegel, G.M. (2007). Teaching self-care to care-givers: Effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction on the mental health of therapists in training. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, *1*, 105–115.
- Shapiro, S.L., Schwartz, G.E., & Bonner, G. (1998). Effects of mindfulness-based stress reduction on medical and premedical students. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, *21*, 581–599.
- Grepmaier, L., Mitterlehner, F., Loew, T., Bachler, E., Rother, W., & Nickel, M. (2007). Promoting mindfulness in psychotherapists in training influences the treatment results of their patients: A randomized, double-blind, controlled study. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, *76*, 332–338.
- Grepmaier, L., Mitterlehner, F., Loew, T., & Nickel, M. (2007). Promotion of mindfulness in psychotherapists in training: Preliminary study. *European Psychiatry*, *22*, 485–489.
- Stafford-Brown, J & Pakenham, (2012). The effectiveness of an ACT informed intervention for managing stress and improving therapist qualities in clinical psychology trainees. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *68*, 592–613.
- Wise, E.H., Hersh, M.A., & Gibson, C.M. (2012). Ethics, self-care and well-being for psychologists: Reenvisioning the stress-distress continuum. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *43*, 487–494.



+ Three Ways to Contact Us

- Contact the NCPA office during regular office hours:
 - (919) 872-1005
- Leave a message on our Peer Consultation Line:
 - (919) 785-3969
- Send an email message:
 - NCPA.CAC@gmail.com

<http://ncpsychology.com/psychologists/colleague-assistance-helpline/>

