

# FACE COVID

*A set of practical steps for  
responding effectively to the  
Corona crisis,  
using the principles of  
Acceptance & Commitment  
Therapy (ACT).*



*An abbreviated version of the original text  
by Russ Harris ~ author of The Happiness Trap.*

# FACE

**‘FACE COVID’ is a set of practical steps for responding effectively to the COVID-19 crisis, using the principles of Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT).**

## **F = Focus on what’s in your control**

You can’t control what happens in the future. You can’t control the Corona virus itself or the world economy or how your government manages this whole sordid mess. And you can’t magically control your feelings, eliminating all that perfectly natural fear and anxiety. But you can control what you do - here and now. And that matters.



## **A = Acknowledge your thoughts & feelings**

Silently and kindly acknowledge whatever is ‘showing up’ inside you: thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, sensation, urges. Take the stance of a curious scientist, observing what’s going on in your inner world. And while continuing to acknowledge your thoughts and feelings, also ....



## **C = Come back into your body**

Come back into and connect with your physical body. Find your own way of doing this. You could try some or all of the following, or find your own methods:

- Slowly push your feet hard into the floor.
- Slowly press your fingertips together
- Slowly stretch your arms or neck, shrug your shoulders.
- Slowly breathe



## **E = Engage in what you’re doing**

Get a sense of where you are and refocus your attention on the activity you are doing.

Try Dropping Anchor:

Notice 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear. Notice what you can smell or taste or sense in your nose and mouth. Notice what you are doing.



# COVID

## **C = Committed action**

Committed action means effective action, guided by your core values; action you take because it's truly important to you; action you take even if it brings up difficult thoughts and feelings. Repeatedly, ask yourself 'What can I do right now - no matter how small it may be - that improves life for myself or others I live with, or people in my community?' And whatever the answer is - do it, and engage in it fully.



## **O = Opening up**

Opening up means making room for difficult feelings and being kind to yourself. Difficult feelings are guaranteed to keep on showing up as this crisis unfolds: fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, guilt, loneliness, frustration, confusion, and many more. We can't stop them from arising; they're normal reactions. But we can open up and make room for them: acknowledge they are normal, allow them to be there (even though they hurt), and treat ourselves kindly.



## **V = Values**

Committed action should be guided by your core values: What do you want to stand for in the face of this crisis? What sort of person do you want to be, as you go through this? How do you want to treat yourself and others?



## **I = Identify resources**

Identify resources for help, assistance, support, and advice. This includes friends, family, neighbours, health professionals, emergency services. And make sure you know the emergency helpline phone numbers, including psychological help if required.



## **D = Disinfect & distance**

Disinfect your hands regularly and practice as much social distancing as realistically possible, for the greater good of your community. And remember, we're talking about physical distancing - not cutting off emotionally.





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