

The ACT Matrix

A simple map for noticing what shows up and choosing what matters next.

A map, not a score. Start with one recent, manageable moment. The Matrix helps you sort what you notice inside and outside, then see whether an action moves you away from or toward what matters to you. There are no “good” or “bad” entries.

1 MAP ONE MOMENT — add a few words anywhere; change or skip what does not fit.

OUTSIDE WORLD · WHAT YOU CAN NOTICE WITH YOUR FIVE SENSES

A Away actions What actions or behaviors do you do when difficult inner experiences show up and move you away from what you want? _____ _____ _____	T Toward actions What actions or behaviors can you do that would move you closer to what you want? _____ _____ _____
I Difficult inner experiences What thoughts, memories, emotions, or body sensations show up and pull you away from what you want? _____ _____ _____	V Values Who and what matters to you? What do you desire? What do you want your life to be about? _____ _____ _____

← AWAY FROM WHAT MATTERS TOWARD WHAT MATTERS →


ME, NOTICING
flexibly responding to life

INSIDE WORLD · THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, MEMORIES & BODY SENSATIONS

The vertical line separates what you notice with your senses from what shows up inside. The horizontal line asks about the direction of action in this moment.

Notice the function, not the flaw. An action can bring short-term relief and still move you away from what matters. “Away” is a direction on this map, not a judgment about you.

Choose one **next direction**

You do not have to get rid of an inner experience before you choose a small, values-guided action.

1 · Notice

Pause long enough to name what you can sense outside and what is showing up inside.

2 · Locate

Ask what the action is doing: is it moving you away from or toward what matters?

3 · Choose

Make the toward move small, specific, and possible with the experience still present.

2 A BRIEF EXAMPLE — not the only way to respond.

Moment: A friend does not reply. **Inside:** “They are upset with me,” disappointment, a tight chest. **Value:** connection. **Away action:** stop replying for days. **Toward action:** take two slow breaths, then send a short message: “I noticed I felt disappointed. I hope you’re okay.” The feeling may still be there; the action is simply a different direction.

Your one-moment Matrix

Choose a recent, manageable situation. A few words is enough.

Away action

What did I do that moved me away from what matters?

Toward action

What could move me one step closer to what matters?

Difficult inner experience

Thoughts, feelings, memories, or body sensations I notice:

Values

Who or what matters here? What kind of person do I want to be?

One small experiment

When this moment shows up again, I am willing to try this toward action for the next five minutes:

I will: _____

You set the pace. If this brings up more than you want to hold right now, you can pause, pass, or return later. Orient to the present through your five senses, and seek individualized support from your clinician or a trusted support when useful.