



The Relentless Changing Environment

You can't stop the future
 You can't rewind the past
 The only way to learn the secret
 ...is to press play. *Jay Asher*

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The **Workplace** has been described as **Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous. VUCA**; an acronym adopted by strategic business leaders to describe the relentless, changing environment which have become the new normal in today's workplace. Those who remain successful adopt strategies to overcome the situations we face daily. Internal and external, business and personal conditions impact the work place; from natural disasters, economic upheaval, terrorism, individual tragedy, illness, and the loss of family members. These things can paralyze our lives and livelihood. There is a call for flexibility, resilience, and development of inner strength so that we are better equipped to survive and thrive in turbulent times.

The **Psychological Flexibility Model** is a tool that increases awareness in **how to notice, name, and**

neutralize a volatile, uncertain, complex or ambiguous situation and elevate perspective (drawing copious solutions from many vantage points in life).

KEY MOVEMENTS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY

Acceptance vs. Avoidance

Acceptance is a misunderstood word. It is not about accepting something that we don't like. Rather, it is a vital embrace of the moment in which we find ourselves "now." It is willful self-instruction to live in "our own" experience. This becomes the instrument to check whatever life throws at us – a method to see our way through the problem, not avoiding or running or numbing. Avoidance is trying to get rid-of, or escape-from unwanted "private experiences." A private experience is any experience you have that no one else knows about unless you tell them. These include: painful thoughts, feelings and memories. They come in the form of internal and external barriers

Defusion vs. Fusion

Fusion is the inability to see because we are stuck in the middle of the emotions of our story. It is like having a cement block in front of our eyes. **Defusion** is the ability to speak to our story from an *observing place* in order to gain perspective and see solutions.

Being Connected With Self and Others

Connection acquires the perspective of *self* in the context of real life. We absorb data through our five



senses; eyes, ears, touch, taste and smell. After we assimilate data, automatically we begin to interpret the data based upon all of our past life experiences. If we are not connected *with self*, we will not be able to *notice how* the data we unconsciously absorb impacts our emotions. Thus, being unaware - we usually become *reactive* rather than *proactive*.

Values and Committed Action

Values are *chosen qualities of ongoing action*. We use values when looking for internal guidance, when motivation for action is lacking, as a precursor to goal setting and action plans. Values also help to facilitate acceptance, add richness, fulfillment and meaning to life. We can ask ourselves, "What is it that I truly value?" Values are a direction we want to travel in. So...if I want to go west, I need to start moving westward. Otherwise, I stay stuck in a particular place or possibly "go south." A value reflects how we desire to be and be known. If I desire to be kind and known as a kind person, then I will act kindly toward others, myself, or the situation. A clue for identifying a value is that we can usually turn it into an adverb, "Kindly, I spoke to my boss, when inwardly I was irritated." Values and goals can be confused; goals are different from values; goals are specific steps along the way. A goal or intention is a specific action we can take in the service of something that we truly value.

Without values - behavior is experienced without freedom of choice; as I "have to" do this or that. Without values, our actions have a sense of rigidity. It can easily fall under aversive (disliking) control and reinforced by certain agenda(s) or certain outcome(s). If we are doing something only to achieve a specific outcome and not because of the process of "living life" as part of a valued path, there is suspension of internal motivation and life becomes a grind, a drag, empty, void of meaning, "just to get the paycheck or whatever." If we can understand how behavior is linked to values, there is a quality that emerges as "owning the process," it then becomes our choice and inherently we experience life as more flexible. Being intentional with this type of awareness opens an opportunity to enjoy the process of life rather than simply checking off another "must do," on a list. To continue right from where we are, we can ask ourselves, "What is it that I can do to move toward what I value?"

Credits:

Adaptation of ACT Principles. <http://www.contextualscience.org>
VUCA: <http://www.ere.net/2012/01/16/vuca-the-new-normal-for-talent-management-and-workforce-planning/>

For more information regarding
How to implement
Psychological Flexibility Tools
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Remember to utilize your EAP Benefits

WHAT kind of issues can be taken to EAP?

ANYTHING which affects one's personal and professional life.

The EAP counselors are trained, seasoned professionals in the mental health field.

We are ready to help individuals experiencing a variety of personal problems, financial and legal worries, emotional concerns and problems caused by alcohol and drug abuse.

If your issue goes beyond our scope of competency an appropriate referral will be made.

HOW does the EAP work?

The request for assistance may be made by calling **402.598.8511** or email Crystal@CrystalandAssociates.com to schedule an appointment.

All inquiries and visits of employee seeking counseling assistance *will be kept confidential and will not be included in your personnel file.*

This cost of this service is covered by your employer and is an added benefit designed as a personal benefit.

Visit our website: CrystalandAssociates.com
You do not have to have a major issue to call regarding an inquiry.