**Client Behavior**

**What are the most central thoughts, feelings, memories, sensations, and situations that the client is avoiding and/or fused with?**

Thoughts:

Emotions:

Memories/Images:

Other:

**What behaviors does the client engage in to avoid or escape the events described in the previous step?**

Experiential avoidance can take many forms, such as overt behavior, internal verbal behavior, or combinations of the two. Examples:

* 1. *a. Internal avoidance behaviors* (e.g., distraction, excessive worry, dissociation, telling oneself to think differently, daydreaming)
  2. *b. Overt emotional control behaviors* (e.g., drinking, drugs, self-injury, thrill-seeking, gambling, overeating, avoiding physical situations or physical reminders)

*c. In-session avoidance behaviors* (e.g., topic changes, argumentativeness, aggressiveness, dropping out of therapy, coming late to sessions, always having an acute crisis that demands attention, laughing, focusing on the positive)

**How pervasiveness is experiential avoidance as a controlling factor in the client’s life?**

Limited 1 2 3 4 5 Very extensive

**What is the cost of avoidance on valued living? What domains of living is the client engaged in an excessively narrowed or constricted manner or completely absent from?**

ACT is fundamentally about helping clients create full, meaningful, vital lives. Thus, we want to investigate functioning across a broad range of domains of the client’s life. Consider the 2-3 domains where the client’s behavior is most narrowed and inflexible and where this constriction appears to result in ongoing suffering. These domains are where the therapist is most likely to have leverage for client behavior change. Describe how behavior is limited or constricted in each domain if applicable.

**Therapist behavior**

As you watch the role play, write down examples of therapist behavior in the following categories:

**1) Therapist develops client awareness of experiential avoidance**

**2) Therapist examines workability of experiential avoidance**

* Examine payoff in terms of long-term decreases in suffering. Has what the client has done to reduce or eliminate anxiety really reduced or eliminated anxiety in the long run?
* Workability in terms of values and life constriction resulting from the effort to deal with/control whatever problems they have identified.

**3) Validate Experience of Unworkability (creative hopelessness)**

Metaphors and stories used here usually focus on times when a great deal of effort is put forward with little pay off. Examples: