



ACT TRAINING LAB

A blueprint for bespoke CPD events for ACT trainers and advanced practitioners

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Why do we need a bespoke retreat?

- Sometimes as an ACT trainer we get into habits
- We can stagnate, we can get isolated, we can be lazy

- A trainers retreat can:
 - Enhance connection
 - Enhance quality
 - Push self development
 - Enhance creativity
 - Stimulate new learning
 - Make new discoveries about training the processes
 - Let you be observed in your training practices and get feedback from expert peers

The ACT Institute Retreat

- A specially designed training facility in Gothenberg
- Graciela's home
- Immersive experience from Friday to Sunday – eating together, sharing accommodation, exercising together, talking, experimenting, presenting, trying new things



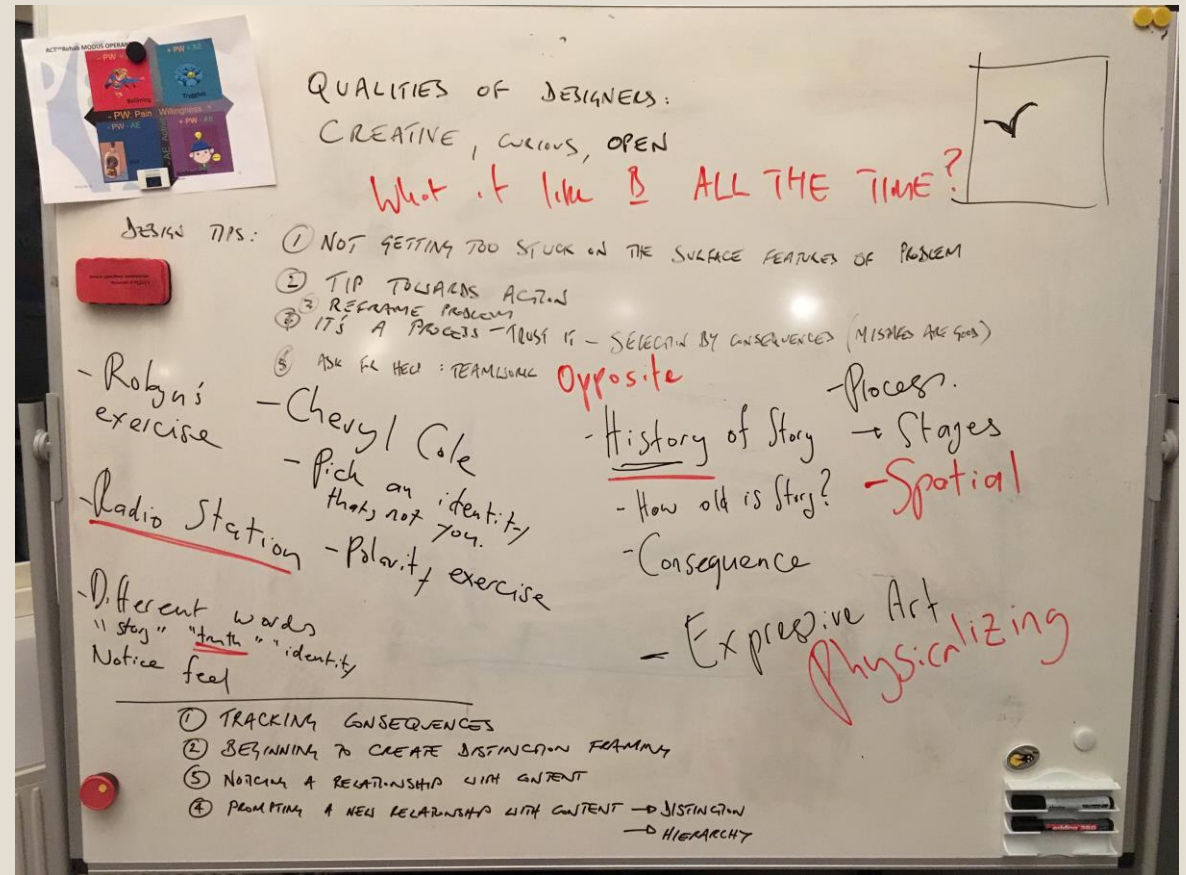
The ACT Institute Retreat



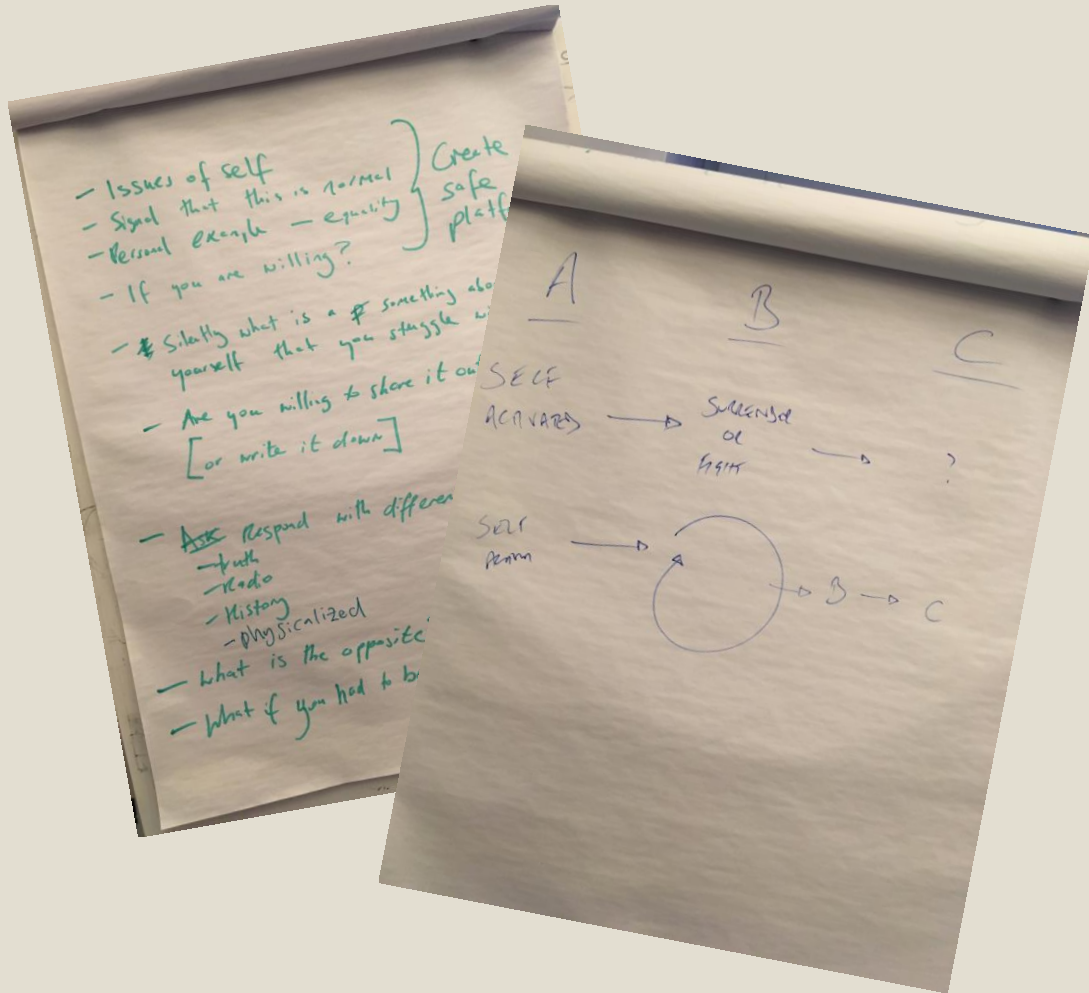
- Safe space
- Agreed work times and relaxation times
- Each of us leading a section, presenting something, getting feedback, trying out something new
- An invited group of trainers (?) [not sure what to say here but it does seem like its important to address the tension between invite only versus open. Open would be unmanageable]

Our experiments...

- An over view of how designers develop products
- New ways of working with self processes
 - A set of steps – the flowering self
 - An exercise in creating each trainees bespoke self as context exercise



Our experiments...

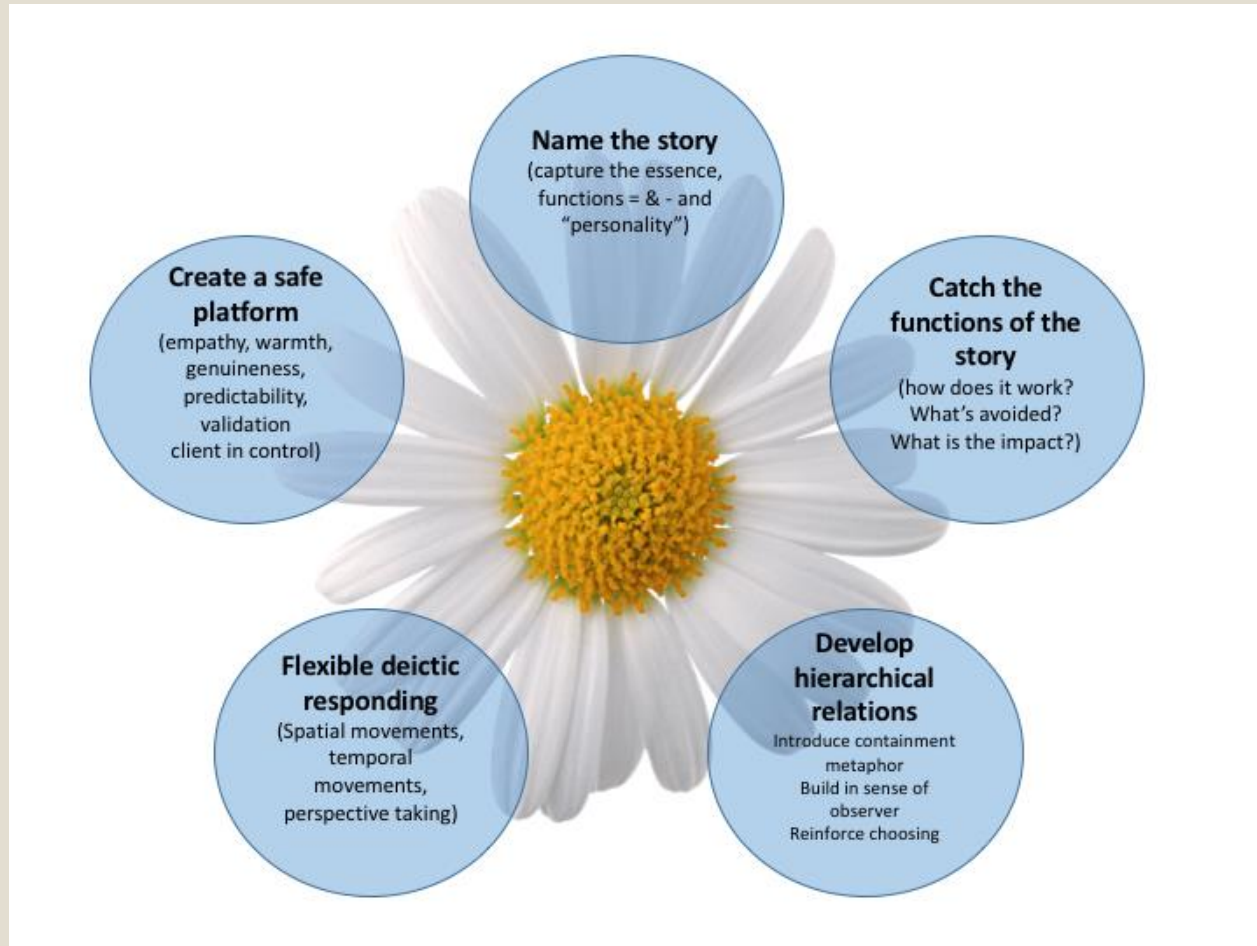


- A newly designed exercise we co created, using RFT framings of opposition, hierarchy, and deictics to play with responses to limiting self narratives
- Bringing more focus to evidence based principles of assessment and triage, rather than treatment
- Language and ways of presenting ACT that is more inclusive of non psychologists
- Incorporating more movement and body awareness into trainings
- Exploration of methods of scientizing training, generating training based research

The design process...

1. Don't get too stuck on the surface features of the problem
2. Tip towards action
3. Reframe the problem
4. Trust the process – selection of solutions by consequences
(mistakes are good)
5. Ask for help - teamwork

New ways of working with self



1. Track consequences
2. Notice relationship with self content
3. Prompt a new relationship with content:
4. Distinction framing
5. Hierarchical framing

New ways of working with self

- A co created experiential exercise based on having people respond to their own self narrative by deriving variety of frames:
 - Person generates some sticky self content and says it aloud e.g. "I'm unworthy of love"
 - Trainer asks a series of questions that the person 'tries on' to see how it affects their sense of the narrative
 - "What is the opposite of unworthy?" [OPPOSITIONAL FRAMING]
 - "What parts of you stay hidden when this part of you is present?" [HIERARCHICAL & DISTINCTION]
 - "What would your life look like if this part of you were never present?" [HIERARCHICAL & DISTINCTION AND CONDITIONAL]
 - Debrief the experience of the hearing and responding, tracking awareness of subtle shifts in how they are experiencing the original narrative

New ways of working with self

- Training people to make their own bespoke Self as Context Exercise
 1. Enhance attention: here, now, five senses
 2. Enhance awareness of the noticing
 3. Help shift perspective: Spatial, temporal, person,
 4. Enhance awareness of continuity of noticing in steps 1 – 3
 5. Close experience with reflection on the learning that has occurred in this experience
- Using these steps in a workshop to have participants craft their own self as context exercises and have them read to themselves by a partner, to experience how it lands.

Enhanced focus on assessment and triage

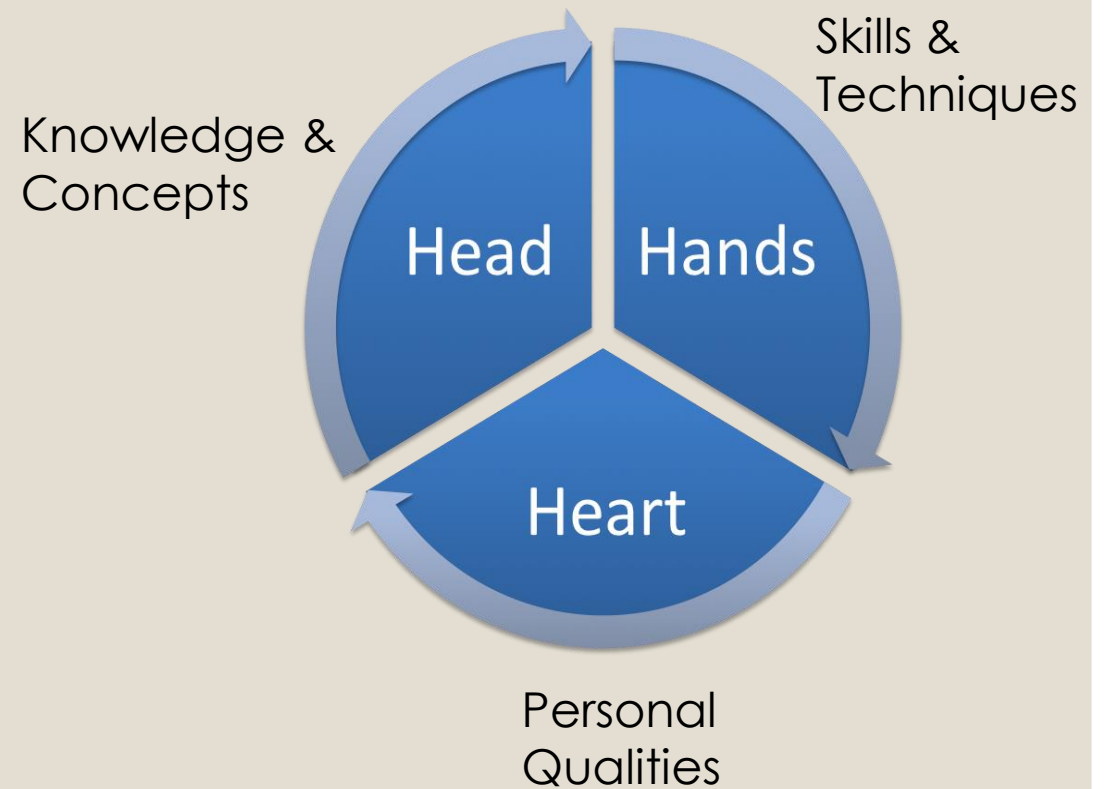
- Combining data, robust statistics and clinical experience to make assessment and triage more evidence based
- Pain acceptance can lead to clustering people in four broad conceptualisations of how they are dealing with pain.
- Each of the four response styles is associated with a different pattern of psychosocial and behavioural needs
- Each responds differently to standard intervention

Movement and body awareness

- [I think we need some photographs or images here, or a very brief symposium participant movement experience]

Scientizing training

- Lots of training work but no consistent approach to measurement
- Mainly satisfaction or experience, but little quantitative evaluation
- Development of the Mindful Healthcare Scale
- The Brief Acceptance Measure
- The ACT Knowledge Questionnaire – Revised
- Skills measurement still a tough nut



How has the Training Lab influenced our trainings?



Reflections on what we have learned

- Have clear objectives on what you want to do with your time
- Have a structure worked out but check in regularly to collectively agree on sticking to the structure or departing to explore something
- Seek agreement and collective decision making about the relative balance between curiosity, playfulness, creativity, 'looseness' and structure, outcome, task focus.
- There is as much value in just getting to know your fellow trainers as there is in the other 'outcomes' of the retreat.
- There is an urgent need to develop a clearer infrastructure and format for the continuing education of ACT Trainers
 - Including regular peer review
 - Development opportunities
 - Observation and feedback
 - Community building

Conclusions

- A really valued experience
- Transformative of practice
- Lots of practical changes of how we do things
- Greater confidence in linking training to basic science and in using RFT concepts
- Creating strong bonds
- Greater confidence in exploring parts of the work with playfulness and curiosity
- Stronger sense of the interconnectedness of our community of trainers