

## Evaluation of the Avoidance and Fusion Questionnaire for Youth (AFQ-Y)

- And Psychological Inflexibility in Adolescence

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**LIFECOMPASS**

## Overview of presentation:

1. Why measure psychological in/flexibility?
2. What is psychological in/flexibility?
3. Psychometric Properties of the Avoidance and Fusion Questionnaire for Youth (AFQ-Y)
4. Next step, in an on-going study see if;
  - a) Are there higher levels of Psychological inflexibility among inpatient youth?
  - b) Can a short ACT-group-treatment help inpatient youth?
  - c) Are improvements mediated by increased psychological flexibility?



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## Why measure psychological in/flexibility?

There are many good reasons for identifying a theoretically driven construct that mediates improvements, some are;

1. It makes it possible to demonstrate by which process an intervention is effective (i.e. psychological in/flexibility)
2. When we know what processes makes a treatment effective, this gives theoretical indications for how a treatment might be improved.
3. If we can identify a stable theoretically driven construct, we can better identify and help existing populations with burdened children and adolescents.



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## Experiential avoidance as a core process



Overviews: Biglan, Hayes & Pistorello, 2008;  
Chawla & Ostafin, 2007; Hayes et al., 2006.

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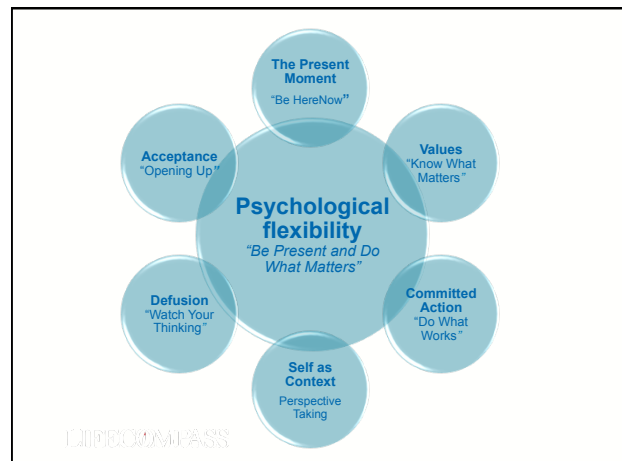


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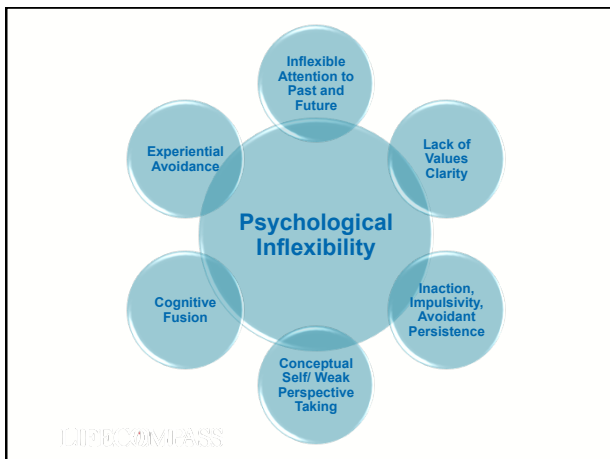
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## Psychological flexibility is...

... the ability to contact the present moment more fully as a conscious human being, and to change or persist in behaviour when doing so serves valued ends.



CIPCOM/ASS



CIPCOM/ASS

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## Why test AFQ-Y again?

- ✓ Has been tested once:  
*Greco, L. A., Baer, R. A., & Lambert, W. (2008). Psychological inflexibility in childhood and adolescence: Development and evaluation of the Avoidance and Fusion Questionnaire for Youth. Psychological Assess., 20(2), 93-102*
- ✓ The results have not yet been replicated by an independent group of researchers.
- ✓ Two (independent) publications in peer-reviewed journals is a standard for high quality.
- ✓ To test the generalizability to another country and its language and culture (Sweden).



AFQ-Y8

We want to know more about what you think, how you feel, and what you do. Read each sentence. Then, circle a number between 0-4 that tells how true each sentence is for you.

	Not at all True	A little True	Pretty True	True	Very True
1. My life won't be good until I feel happy.	0	1	2	3	4
2. My thoughts and feelings mess up my life.	0	1	2	3	4
3. The bad things I think about myself must be true.	0	1	2	3	4
4. If my heart beats fast, there must be something wrong with me.	0	1	2	3	4
5. I stop doing things that are important to me whenever I feel bad.	0	1	2	3	4



## Setting and participants

- ✓ All adolescents included in the study were admitted to inpatient units at The National Board of Institutional Care (NBIC).
- ✓ NBIC, a Swedish government agency that delivers institutional care and treatment for young people (12-20 yrs.) with problems where other interventions have proved insufficient



## Setting and participants

- ✓ 160 adolescents with ages 15-20 years (mean of 17.2)
- ✓ Recruited to a quasi-experimental outcome study examining the possible effects of an ACT group-intervention as an addition to treatment as usual (TAU).
- ✓ A total of nine units located all over Sweden recruited participants, (5 ACT, 4 TAU)
- ✓ Males 59%, females 41%
- ✓ 91 adolescents got ACT+TAU, 59 got TAU without ACT.



## Reliability – Does AFY-Q measure in consistent way

### 1. Test-retest to check stability (2 weeks apart)

Results show high reliability;  
 AFQ-Y17,  $r = 0.86$ ,  $p < 0.001$   
 AFQ-Y8,  $r = 0.83$ ,  $p < 0.001$

### 2. Internal consistency by Cronbach's alpha

The AFQ-Y demonstrated a good level of internal consistency;  
 AFQ-Y17 had an alpha value of 0.93  
 AFQ-Y8 had an alpha value of 0.90



## Reliability – Does AFY-Q measure in consistent way

### 3. Internal consistency by principal component analysis (PCA) with an oblique rotation

#### AFQ-Y17

Has a strong first factor. A one-factor solution can be accepted. However, item 5 and 14 don't fit the scale so well.

#### AFQ-Y8

Show a clear one-factor solution  
 (items 5 & 14 are dropped in AFQ-Y8)



## Reliability

versus

## Validity



A questionnaire can measure in a reliable way, **BUT** measure something totally different from what we are interested in



Does AFQ-Y measure what it is intended to measure?  
 (psychological inflexibility)

## Validity – Does AFY-Q measure psychological inflexibility

	AAQ-II	BDI-Y	BAI-Y	BSCI-Y
AFQ-Y	0.799***	0.744***	0.690***	-0.44***
AFQ-Y8	0.804***	0.749***	0.691***	-0.45***

\*\*\* =  $p < 0.001$

Highest correlation with AAQ-II which assess the same construct  
 (concurrent validity)





**Validity – Does AFY-Q measure psychological inflexibility**

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Overlaps with depression and anxiety, but is not same as depression or anxiety. Under 0.3 = no overlap, over 0.9 = same as. (convergent validity)






**Validity – Does AFY-Q measure psychological inflexibility**

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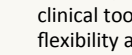
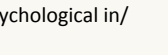
AFQ-Y correlates negatively with “good self-concept”, meaning, AFQ-Y measures something different/opposite. (discriminant validity)

**Conclusion - Psychometric Properties of the AFQ**



This validation of the AFQ-Y17 and AFQ-Y8 by independent researchers shows;

- Both AFQ-Y17 and AFQ-Y8 measures in a reliable way (reliability).
- Both AFQ-Y17 and AFQ-Y8 captures a latent construct we call *Psychological inflexibility* (validity)
- Both AFQ-Y17 and AFQ-Y8 works well in Sweden.
- AFQ-Y8, had almost as good psychometric properties as the 17-item scale, the short version is recommended for application where the length of measure is a concern.
- The AFQ-Y (both 8- and 17 items) may be a valuable clinical tool in reflecting changes in psychological in/ flexibility among adolescents.



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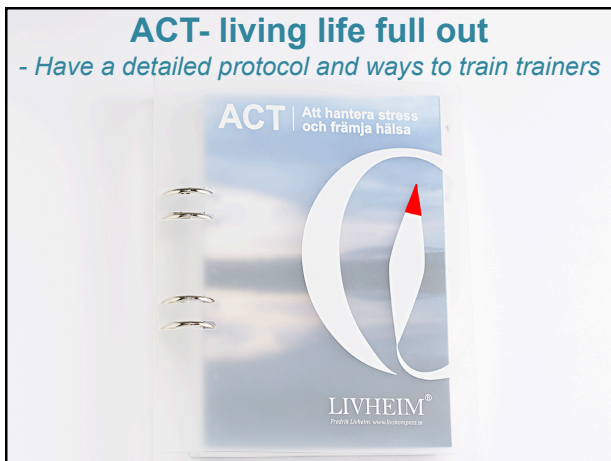



**ACT- Living life full out**



**Session 1:** What do I consider important in life?  
**Session 2:** What do I consider important in life?  
**Session 3:** What's stopping me? How to deal with this?  
**Session 4:** What's stopping me? How to deal with this?  
**Session 5:** To be kind to myself  
**Session 6:** How can I create the life I want to live? How to deal with difficulties on the way?





### Times we have measured

- ✓ **Before interventions**
  - During interventions (2 weeks in)*
  - During interventions (4 weeks in)*
- ✓ **After interventions**
- ✓ **1.5 years after interventions** (long term follow up)

### Outcome measures

- ✓ **Becks youth scales**
  - ✓ Anxiety
  - ✓ Depression
  - ✓ Anger
  - ✓ Antisocial behaviour
  - ✓ Self concept
- ✓ **Alcohol use (AUDIT), Drug use (DUDIT), Objective measures?**
- ✓ **Experiential avoidance** (Acceptance and Action Questionnaire, AAQ)
- ✓ **AFQ-Y, 17 items**, (Avoidance and Fusion Questionnaire for Youth)
- ✓ **SDQ** (Strength and difficulties Questionnaire, teacher & student)
- ✓ **SRD** (Self Reported Delinquency)
- ✓ **Loads of background variables**

### Registers as outcome measures inpatient (SiS) (1.5 years after inclusion)

- ✓ **Outpatient register** (kontakter med vård + mer eller mindre valida diagnoser)
- ✓ **Inpatient register** (om man skrivs in, vårdtider mm)
- ✓ **The crime register** (domstolsbeslut, "släpar" 1.5 år)
- ✓ **Social services for youth** (LVU, registrering av kotnader mm)
- ✓ **Drugs and medication register**

## Thank you!

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