



“FACE COVID”: AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO COVID-19



**Toronto
Film
School**

Dr. Russ Harris is a well-known practitioner and trainer of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which aims to increase “psychological flexibility” where an individual is able to remain in the here and now despite the presence of unwanted thoughts and feelings. Using ACT, Dr. Harris has created effective and helpful steps for individuals to respond to COVID-19. These steps are abbreviated as “FACE COVID”.

FOCUS ON WHAT’S IN YOUR CONTROL.

While it is easy to spend time thinking about worries and fears, we must acknowledge that we cannot foresee what the future may hold. We must acknowledge that these worries and fears are normal and that by being in the present moment, we can take action in our behaviours, as well as in our thoughts and feelings, to be effective by following “A, C, and E”, preferably in a slow cycle lasting around 2-3 minutes:

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS.

Without judgment, take a third-person standpoint on any thoughts or feelings, sensations or memories, that you may be experiencing,

COME BACK INTO YOUR BODY.

Actively “move into” and connect with your body – by breathing slowly, stretching your arms, or pushing your feet on the floor, and

ENGAGE IN WHAT YOU’RE DOING.

Focus your attention on where you are in the current moment and on the activity at hand – What do you notice in your environment around you? What can you hear, smell, taste, or feel?

COMMITTED ACTION.

Be driven to act committedly – allow your innermost values and the things that are meaningful to you to guide your behaviour, even in the face of unwanted thoughts and feelings. Ask yourself what you can do wholeheartedly in this moment to take care of yourself and those around you.

OPENING UP.

Be kind to yourself while allowing unwanted thoughts and feelings such as anxiety, fear, and frustration to run their course. Remind yourself that these feelings are normal. By looking after yourself, you are in better shape to look after those around you.

VALUES.

Consider what values align with your behaviour and goals. Ask yourself what motivates you to work hard or what kind of person you want to become and consider how you can carry out these values in your everyday life, even in the face of difficulties.

IDENTIFY RESOURCES.

Ensure that you have contact information from family, friends, and community resources such as health professionals and emergency services, and are connected with others. Also ensure you are attaining information from a “reliable and trustworthy source” with regards to COVID-19 (consider The World Health Organization: [World Health Organization COVID-19 page](#), or your local government’s website).

DISINFECT AND DISTANCE PHYSICALLY.

Ensure that you wash your hands regularly and engage in social distancing wherever possible.

This sheet has been adapted from a longer work by Dr. Russ Harris, available [here](#).