



ACT Now...

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy ...an introduction

Have you ever asked yourself:

- Why do I feel so low?
- Why am I anxious?
- Why can't I make it through the day without doubting myself?

Or have you ever heard yourself saying:

- I'm not good enough
- I'm a disappointment
- I should be doing more with my life.

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then fear not, you are not alone.

One of the more common issues that people present with in counselling is that of feeling 'not good enough'.

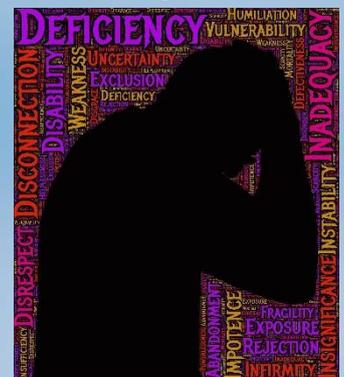
In our material driven, fast-paced society, it's very common to feel that you are not achieving enough...

... always in 'the rat race' but never getting past first gear.

You might criticize yourself and tell yourself:

'You should be doing better!'

And, you might find yourself longingly comparing your life to the lives of your friends who seem to have 'it all'.



And yet...

Many clients who have come to our practice wanting counselling, have been those very individuals who you might think 'have it all'.

And they have the same things in common:

- **Plagued with self-doubt**
- **Wracked with anxiety**
- **Always chasing the next 'win'**
- **And always, always believing:**
'If I do xxxx then I will be happy/satisfied/relaxed and life will be good/better/complete'.



But even if they manage to get what they want, or do what they want...life just doesn't seem to 'get better' or 'feel complete'.

Why is that???

When you have underlying feelings of anxiety or worthlessness you can often push yourself to extremes.

**Always thinking that by achieving something more, something you can show the world, you will essentially 'prove yourself'.
And that this will somehow make life better or more fulfilling.**

This misguided understanding often comes from a deep-seated sense of inadequacy, formed in childhood.

We are praised for the things we achieve, the talent we have or the competitions we win... rather than being praised simply for the person we are, the sense of humour we develop or the kindness we show to others.

It's too easy to assume that we simply know that we are a 'good person'...



...instead, more often than not, it is our unconscious beliefs developed in our childhood, about our lack of confidence or self-worth, that are in control.

These strongly held and deeply held unconscious beliefs will drive us in the direction of always wanting more, or always wanting to be different, in an effort to 'be more' or 'be different'.

Much of our society seems to be driven by the desire to present in a certain way to be admired and valued, or to acquire praises and recognition for our achievements. While this is not necessarily harmful, it can inadvertently develop into what I call a cycle or 'pattern of feelings of failure':



We set out to achieve something, or look or dress a certain way to get praise and admiration from others. But, when this doesn't happen...and invariably, sooner or later it won't...then we experience feelings of distress and anxiety.

This then causes us to become stuck and unmotivated... which in turn perpetuates the feelings of failure or worthlessness.

So how do we break this cycle??

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy can go a long way in helping you overcome this cycle of worthlessness...

Ciara Togher

www.insyncforlife.com.au