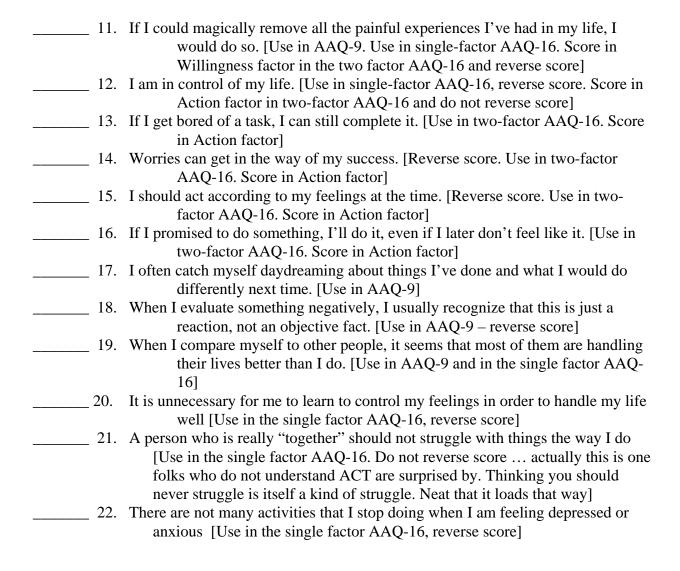# The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire –
All Validated Versions of the AAQ I

Below you will find a list of statements. Please rate the truth of each statement as it applies to you. Use the following scale to make your choice.

1----------------2----------------3----------------4----------------5----------------6----------------7
| never
true | very seldom
true | seldom
true | sometimes
true | frequently
true | almost always
true | always
true |

_____ 1. I am able to take action on a problem even if I am uncertain what is the right thing to do. [Use in AAQ-9, reverse score. Use in single-factor AAQ-16, reverse score. Score in Action factor in two factor AAQ-16 and do not reverse score]

_____ 2. When I feel depressed or anxious, I am unable to take care of my responsibilities. [Use in AAQ-9. Use in single-factor AAQ-16. Score in Action factor in two factor AAQ-16 and reverse score]

_____ 3. I try to suppress thoughts and feelings that I don't like by just not thinking about them. [Use in single factor AAQ-16. Score in Willingness factor in two factor AAQ-16 and reverse score]

_____ 4. It's OK to feel depressed or anxious. [Use in single factor AAQ-16 and reverse score. Score in Willingness factor on two factor AAQ-16 and do not reverse score]

_____ 5. I rarely worry about getting my anxieties, worries, and feelings under control. [Use in AAQ-9, reverse score. Use in single-factor AAQ-16, reverse score. Score in Willingness factor in two factor AAQ-16 and do not reverse score]

_____ 6. In order for me to do something important, I have to have all my doubts worked out. [Use in single-factor AAQ-16. Score in Action factor in two factor AAQ-16 and reverse score]

_____ 7. I'm not afraid of my feelings. [Use in AAQ-9, reverse score. Use in single-factor AAQ-16, reverse score. Score in Willingness factor in two factor AAQ-16]

_____ 8. I try hard to avoid feeling depressed or anxious. [Use in single-factor AAQ-16 and do not reverse score. Score in Willingness factor in two factor AAQ-16 and reverse score]

_____ 9. Anxiety is bad. [Use in AAQ-9. Use in single-factor AAQ-16. Score in Willingness factor in the two factor AAQ-16 and reverse score]

_____ 10. Despite doubts, I feel as though I can set a course in my life and then stick to it. [Use in single-factor AAQ-16, reverse score. Score in Action factor in two-factor AAQ-16 and do not reverse score]

_____ 11. If I could magically remove all the painful experiences I've had in my life, I would do so. [Use in AAQ-9. Use in single-factor AAQ-16. Score in Willingness factor in the two factor AAQ-16 and reverse score]

_____ 12. I am in control of my life. [Use in single-factor AAQ-16, reverse score. Score in Action factor in two-factor AAQ-16 and do not reverse score]

_____ 13. If I get bored of a task, I can still complete it. [Use in two-factor AAQ-16. Score in Action factor]

_____ 14. Worries can get in the way of my success. [Reverse score. Use in two-factor AAQ-16. Score in Action factor]

_____ 15. I should act according to my feelings at the time. [Reverse score. Use in two-factor AAQ-16. Score in Action factor]

_____ 16. If I promised to do something, I'll do it, even if I later don't feel like it. [Use in two-factor AAQ-16. Score in Action factor]

_____ 17. I often catch myself daydreaming about things I've done and what I would do differently next time. [Use in AAQ-9]

_____ 18. When I evaluate something negatively, I usually recognize that this is just a reaction, not an objective fact. [Use in AAQ-9 – reverse score]

_____ 19. When I compare myself to other people, it seems that most of them are handling their lives better than I do. [Use in AAQ-9 and in the single factor AAQ-16]

_____ 20. It is unnecessary for me to learn to control my feelings in order to handle my life well [Use in the single factor AAQ-16, reverse score]

_____ 21. A person who is really "together" should not struggle with things the way I do [Use in the single factor AAQ-16. Do not reverse score … actually this is one folks who do not understand ACT are surprised by. Thinking you should never struggle is itself a kind of struggle. Neat that it loads that way]

_____ 22. There are not many activities that I stop doing when I am feeling depressed or anxious [Use in the single factor AAQ-16, reverse score]

Notes: This 22 item version can be used to score all four validated versions of the AAQ in existence. The multiple versions are confusing in several areas.

Direction: People have used the AAQ in various contexts and it has sometimes been scored so that high scores equal high experiential avoidance or so that high scores equal high acceptance/willingness. In a non-clinical context (e.g., Bond's two factor solution was used in an I/O context) the high scores equal high acceptance/willingness works. In a clinical context the high scores equal high experiential avoidance works. That's why items are reversed or not depending on the version.

Versions: This overall version can be used to generate the scores all for validation versions: the single factor, 9-item solution; the single factor, 16 item solution (described on page 561 in the Hayes et al validation study); Bond and Bunce's 16-item dual factor solution; or Bond and Bunce's 16 item single factor solution. Whew.

They are all very, very highly correlated, but they do have some slightly different operating characteristics.

The validation study for the 9-item and the 16-tem single factor version is:

Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D., Wilson, K. G., Bissett, R. T., Pistorello, J., Toarmino, D., Polusny, M., A., Dykstra, T. A., Batten, S. V., Bergan, J., Stewart, S. H., Zvolensky, M. J., Eifert, G. H., Bond, F. W., Forsyth J. P., Karekla, M., & McCurry, S. M. (2004). Measuring experiential avoidance: A preliminary test of a working model. *The Psychological Record, 54*, 553-578.

The validation study for the 16-item dual factor version with 3 rewritten items (and a single factor version based on those same items) is in the *Journal of Applied Psychology.* The reference is:

Bond, F. W. & Bunce, D. (2003). The role of acceptance and job control in mental health, job satisfaction, and work performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88,* 1057-1067.

If you want to use it for the Hayes et al single factor, 16 item solution go to the *Psychological Record* validation article and that will tell you which 16 to use … in order not to be too confusing the "16 item" references above are referring only to the Bond and Bunce versions.

If you want to use it for Bond and Bunce's single factor solution, you can just sum the two subscales (he actually did that in one part of the Bond and Bunce study). Frank found that the two factors had a latent factor and he encourages using the single factor scale for that reason (he's published a few things using it that way). When you use the Bond and Bunce versions score those so that up is bad.

Confused? That's why we are creating an AAQ-II. Frank Bond is heading up that effort internationally (**f.bond@gold.ac.uk**) and we have a version BUT it is not published yet so it is a bit risky to use it.

Which version to use: large population studies work with any of these. For process of change studies, probably either of the 16 item versions would work better than the 9 item just because it gives you more room to move. If you use this 22 item version, though, you can reconstruct all four methods of scoring, so just using this and deciding later seems fine.

There is no need to ask permission to use this instrument. Do ask permission if you want to translate it because we would not want multiple versions in any given language, and to avoid that we need to keep track. We will approve any careful and needed translation efforts.

Here is the AAQ II. It's alpha is generally much better than any of the AAQ I version because the items are simpler

AAQ-II

Below you will find a list of statements. Please rate how true each statement is for you by circling a number next to it. Use the scale below to make your choice.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
never true	very seldom true	seldom true	sometimes true	frequently true	almost always true	always true

1. Its OK if I remember something unpleasant.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. My painful experiences and memories make it difficult for me to live a life that I would value.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I'm afraid of my feelings.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I worry about not being able to control my worries and feelings.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. My painful memories prevent me from having a fulfilling life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I am in control of my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Emotions cause problems in my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. It seems like most people are handling their lives better than I am.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Worries get in the way of my success.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. My thoughts and feelings do not get in the way of how I want to live my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Here is the scoring (set so that up is good)

AAQ-II Scoring

HIGHER SCORES INDICATE GREATER PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY.
ITEMS WITH AN 'R' NEXT TO THEM ARE REVERSED FOR SCORING PURPOSES.

Below you will find a list of statements. Please rate how true each statement is for you by circling a number next to it. Use the scale below to make your choice.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
never true	very seldom true	seldom true	sometimes true	frequently true	almost always true	always true

1. Its OK if I remember something unpleasant.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. My painful experiences and memories make it difficult for me to live a life that I would value. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I'm afraid of my feelings. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I worry about not being able to control my worries and feelings. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. My painful memories prevent me from having a fulfilling life. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I am in control of my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Emotions cause problems in my life. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. It seems like most people are handling their lives better than I am. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Worries get in the way of my success. R	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. My thoughts and feelings do not get in the way of how I want to live my life.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Here are the preliminary data on the AAQ II

Construct validity
  6 data sets: N ranged from 206-854
  Reliability: .81 - .87
  Variance accounted for by the one factor: 40 - 46
  Scree plot also indicates one factor

With the exception of 1 item across 2 studies, all loaded on the factor at > .40.
The one exception loaded at .38 in one study and .26 in another

Criterion-related validity
Total DASS score: -.601**
Depression Anxiety Stress Scales:
Depression: -.593**
Anxiety: -.484**
Stress: -.561**
SCL-10R: -.673***
BDI II: -.75**
BAI: -.59**
General Health Questionnaire: -.31**
Correlates at least to a 'medium' extent with the SCL-90 subscales.

Other

Social desirability
Marlowe-Crown: $r = .17$ ($p = .14$)

White Bear Suppression Inventory:
-.582***

BUT we have not yet used the scale in mediational studies (etc) so there is a certain amount of hoping and praying if you use it that way.