

1 · 0–2'	2 · 2–5'	3 · 5–9' · Explore	4 · 9–14' · Intervene	5 · 14–18' · Values and task	6 · 18–20'
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Session segment	Example prompt (say it your way)	Rubric line it evidences
1. Open and agree A shared goal 0–2 min	Agree the focus "Does that sound like a useful way to use today?"	C3 Agreed a shared goal out loud
2. Her picture The avoidance pattern 2–5 min	Name the processes "It sounds like avoiding it has protected you, and cost you."	C1 Named the inflexibility processes
3. Explore Workability 5–9 min	Workability "How has avoiding it been working for you?" Catch the rule "It sounds like you're waiting until you're sure. What is that costing you?"	C1 Asked the workability question C1 Surfaced the 'not until I'm certain' precondition
4. Intervene One ACT process, done 9–14 min	Give the rationale "Can I explain why I'd like to try something with you?" Ask consent "Would you be willing to try something with me now?" One process, done "Notice where you feel it. Can you make a little room for it?" Don't reassure "I can't promise certainty. Can we work with that?"	C2 Gave a rationale before the intervention C3 Sought consent before the experiential piece C2 Delivered one process experientially C2 Avoided the reassurance trap
5. Values and task A values-linked step 14–18 min	Values "What matters to you? Who do you want to be?" Willingness first "Could you take it with you, rather than wait for it to go?" Small step "What's one small step you could take this week?"	C1 Linked to values in her own words C1 Willingness before certainty C2 Agreed a values-linked step
6. Close Her words last 18–20 min	One take-away "What's the one thing you're taking from today?"	C3 Closed with a take-away

Rachael

- 56-year-old woman
- Lives with her partner of 28 years, Rob
- Two adult children; two young grandchildren nearby
- School librarian three days a week; on extended leave, not yet back

Referral

- Referred by the colorectal surgery team for support after colorectal cancer treatment and a permanent stoma
- Continuing to support her adjustment using ACT

Medical history and stoma

- Locally advanced rectal cancer, treated six months ago
- Chemoradiotherapy first (neoadjuvant), then surgery
- Permanent colostomy; no sign of recurrence
- Routine follow-up: colorectal team and stoma nurse
- Medically, adjusted well

Distress and fears

- Significant distress about living with a permanent stoma
- Growing confidence with practical stoma care at home
- Highly anxious about leaving home: fear of leaks, odour and embarrassment

Avoidance pattern

- Has withdrawn since surgery: declines friends, stopped family outings, choir and her walking group
- Long periods planning around the stoma and checking supplies
- Avoids places without a bathroom close by
- Out only for medical appointments and groceries

Assessment: ratings and scores

- Experiential avoidance: moderate to severe
- Anxiety: clinician-rated moderate (leaks, odour, embarrassment)
- Mood: mild to moderate, linked to lost activities
- Body image concern: moderate
- Social participation: moderate impairment
- Psychological flexibility: reduced
- PHQ-9 9 · GAD-7 15 (severe range)
- Outcome-measure summary available

Her goals

- Get back to meaningful activities despite ongoing uncertainty about the stoma
- More confidence in social situations
- Reconnect with family, friendships and independence
- Willingness to have hard thoughts and feelings while taking small, values-consistent steps

People

- Rob
- Her children and two grandchildren
- A close group of friends she used to see often