Let it Go, Let it Go: Experiencing Thought Defusion
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Disclosures
- Relevant financial relationship(s)
  - Scott: PSHA invited speaker – travel, lodging, honorarium; Co-Founder, 3C Digital Media Network, LLC; Act to Live podcast
  - Jaime: PSHA invited speaker – travel, lodging, honorarium; Act to Live podcast
- Relevant nonfinancial relationship(s)
  - Scott: Professor at the University of Akron – Akron, OH
  - Jaime: Private Practice – Frisco, TX; adjunct instructor – University of North Texas – Denton, TX

**Because this course is experiential in nature, handouts will be available via email AFTER the completion of the course.**

Summary
Where do thoughts come from? What power do we give our thoughts? What impact can these thoughts have on our daily lives and the lives of our clients? This session will explore the concept of thought fusion - the natural and automatic tendency to cling to our thoughts. By developing a better understanding of the power we give our thoughts and the language we use when talking with ourselves and others, we can learn to create space between ourselves and our thoughts, thus reducing their power.

Clinicians can assist clients who stutter, or those with other communication disorders, with learning to create space between themselves and their thoughts by teaching them to explore their thoughts in a more objective fashion. By creating space, our clients can also develop the willingness to accept all thoughts and emotions that may arise in a given moment without judging or clinging to them. This may allow themselves to see an array of options and increase psychological flexibility (the ability to create choices in thoughts and behaviors).

During this experiential training, presenters will guide attendees through exercises meant to observe their thoughts and the language they use that can influence emotions and physical reactions. Additionally, presenters will provide functional activities related to Thought Defusion that participants can use to complement their current clinical practices. All individual and small group activities will be followed by large group debriefings/discussions, so that participants can ask questions and learn from each other.
**Thought Defusion**  
*(Applications of language)*

**External application of language**
- If you “think” you are hungry, what do you do? **YOU EAT**
- If something smells in your house, what do you do? **YOU LOOK FOR IT**
- If you don’t like your cell phone, what do you do? **GET A NEW ONE**
- If your car breaks, what do you do? **GET IT FIXED**

**Internal application of language rules**
“If I don’t want a thought, I can EASILY get rid of it every time.”
True or False?

**ACT Theory:** The more we try to suppress a thought, avoid a thought, or fight thoughts, the more it comes back (Ciarrochi & Bailey, 2008; Sullivan, Rouse, Bishop, & Johnson, 1997).

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**Thought Defusion**  
*Word Prisons (Kelly Wilson)*

How often do you use these words?

- Should
- Shouldn’t
- Must
- Can’t
- Have to
- Right
- Wrong
- But
- Fair
- Unfair
- Everyone
- No one
- Always
- Never
- All
- None