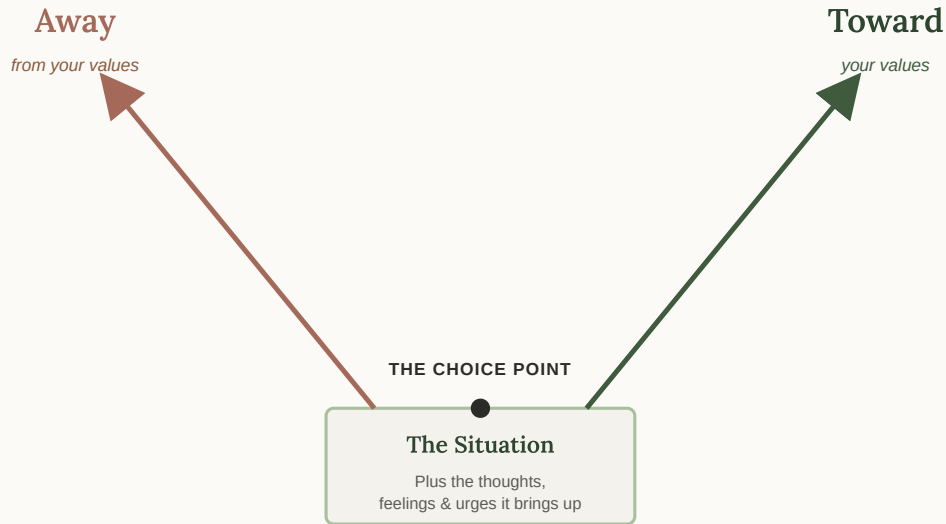


The Choice Point

EVERY MOMENT OFFERS TWO DIRECTIONS

In any difficult moment, once thoughts and feelings show up, there is often a choice — even if it doesn't feel like one at the time. This simple map from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy helps make that choice visible.



Away Moves

Actions that move you away from your values, often aimed at escaping or avoiding difficult thoughts and feelings in the moment.

- Avoiding the conversation you need to have
- Scrolling instead of starting the task
- Snapping at someone out of frustration
- Cancelling plans to avoid discomfort

Toward Moves

Actions consistent with the person you want to be, taken even while the difficult thoughts and feelings are still present.

- Having the conversation, even if it's uncomfortable
- Starting the task despite feeling anxious
- Pausing before responding when frustrated
- Showing up, even when it would be easier not to

USING THE CHOICE POINT

The situation and the thoughts or feelings it brings up are not the choice — they simply are what they are. The choice is in the direction you move next. Noticing you're at a choice point, even briefly, opens up the possibility of choosing differently.

Three Steps at the Choice Point

N

NOTICE

Notice the situation, and the thoughts, feelings or urges showing up in response to it.

O

OPEN UP

Make a little room for whatever is present, rather than immediately trying to push it away.

P

PURSUE WHAT MATTERS

Choose an action — even a small one — that moves you toward your values, alongside whatever you're feeling.

You can't always choose what shows up. You can often choose which direction you move in response.

SOURCES

Ciarrochi, J., Bailey, A. & Harris, R. (2013). *The Weight Escape: How to Stop Dieting and Start Living*. Penguin.
Harris, R. (2019). *ACT Made Simple* (2nd ed.). New Harbinger Publications.