

## Acceptance and Commitment Therapy External vs internal control

### Validation of external control

In the external world, control works very well.

- If I don't like my coffee cup, I can throw it out.
- If I don't like the color of a wall, I can paint it.
- If I am scared of something, I can run away from it.

But what do we do when we have a feeling we don't like? Or a thought? Or a body sensation? We can't run from those. In fact, if we try to run from these kinds of things, they just chase us. If we fight them, they just get stronger. It makes sense that we try these things, but maybe they just don't work.

Perhaps the best thing to do is to sit with them.

### Prediction

One way we try to control is through prediction. Prediction is a very powerful skill.

As a species, we are fairly weak. We don't have big teeth. We don't have big claws. We aren't all that strong. We aren't very fast.

What we do have, however, is the ability to predict. We can sit with a problem, think up twenty solutions to that problem, test out all twenty in our minds, and figure out the one or two that are most likely to work. All without lifting a finger.

Prediction does some very powerful things in many areas of the physical world, but many aspects of our lives are very complex and partly beyond accurate predictability.

A good way to think about predictions: the mind makes many predictions. Some of them are right and some are wrong.