ACT Worksheet: Navigating Hard Decisions with Clarity

Intro: Why ACT for Tough Choices? Hard decisions—like switching jobs, ending a relationship, or moving cities—often tangle us in ”what ifs,” fears, and overthinking. Remember: Every choice has a cost (what you give up) and a reward (what you gain), and there’s no ”perfect” path without trade-offs. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) empowers you by helping you decide the price you’re willing to pay—aligning with your values, not avoiding discomfort. As Ellen Langer wisely said, ”Don’t make the right decision, make the decision right.” This worksheet guides you to weigh pros/cons as costs/rewards, rate their value, accept the unease, and commit to meaningful action. You’re not choosing ”right” or ”wrong”—just what’s worth the investment for your life. Take 20-30 mins in a quiet spot; revisit as needed.

Quick Guide

- Clearly state your decision.
- List pros/cons as rewards/costs for each option, rate 1-10 (1=low importance, 10=core to your life).
- Tie to values, accept the price tag, and plan action.
- Rate overall clarity before/after (1-10).

1. Name the Crossroads

What hard decision are you facing? (e.g., ”Stay in current job or pursue dream role?”)

Option A: _____
Option B: _____(or ”Do nothing/Status quo”)

Clarity Before Worksheet (1-10): _____

2. Weigh It: Rewards, Costs, and Value Check

For each option, list 3-5 rewards (pros/gains) and costs (cons/sacrifices). Rate each item’s importance to your values (1-10: How much does this align with what matters most, like growth, connection, or integrity?). This highlights the ”price” you’re willing to pay.

Option A:

Rewards/Costs	Type (Reward/Cost)	Value Rating (1-10)	Why This Rating? (Tie to Values)

Total Value Score (Average): _____

Option B:

Rewards/Costs	Type (Reward/Cost)	Value Rating (1-10)	Why This Rating? (Tie to Values)

Total Value Score (Average): _____

3. Values Anchor: What's Your Compass?

Quick values recall: Top 3 that guide this decision? (e.g., Adventure, Stability, Authenticity)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do scores reflect these? Which option's "price" feels worth paying for your values? _____

4. Accept the Edge: Defuse & Embrace

Decisions stir anxiety—"What if I regret it?" Label unhelpful thoughts (e.g., "Regret Radio"). Notice discomfort without fighting—it's the cost of growth.

Stuck Thought: _____
Defused Label: _____(e.g., "Future-Freakout FM—tune out.")

Body Scan: Where's the unease? (e.g., Knot in stomach.) Breathe: "I notice this, and it's okay—part of choosing boldly."
After: Discomfort (1-10): Before _____ / After _____

5. Step Forward: Your Value-Aligned Plan

Based on values/scores, lean toward: _____(Option A/B/Hybrid)

First Step (Small & Doable): _____(e.g., "Research roles for 15 mins today.")
Timeline: _____
Support Needed: _____(e.g., Talk to mentor.)

Clarity After (1-10): _____

Final Scene: One Insight

What's clearer now? (e.g., "Values trump fear—Option A aligns with growth, and the cost is manageable.") _____

Pro Tip: As Ellen Langer reminds us, "Don't make the right decision, make the decision right"—focus on how you'll live it out with intention. Decisions aren't final acts—revisit with compassion. You're building a values-rich life, one brave choice at a time!