



Rumi's Teaching and Acceptance Commitment Therapy: A Psychotherapeutic Integration

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Rumi's Teachings and Acceptance Commitment Therapy: A Psychotherapeutic Integration **Rumi'nin Öğretileri ve Kabul-Kararlılık Terapisi: Psikoterapötik Bir Bütünleşme**

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Abstract:

Maulana Jalaleddin Rumi was a thinker and poet who lived in the 13th century. In his works, he delved into the depths of the human soul and emphasized themes of acceptance and love. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which developed in the field of psychotherapy in the same period, is a psychotherapy approach that aims to develop the psychological flexibility of individuals. While Maulana offers deep insights into a person's inner world, he emphasized that an individual can achieve inner peace through acceptance and awareness. This understanding is similar to the basic principles of ACT.

This study examines acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) from the philosophical perspective of Maulana Jalaleddin Rumi. Emotionalrages people to make peace with difficult thoughts and feelings and to confront these emotional difficulties rather than running away from them. Maulana's teachings of "Be" or "Be here and now" are quite meaningful within this framework of psychological flexibility. In Maulana's teachings, it is frequently emphasized that a person should accept their inner conflicts and live in the moment.

ACT bases this perspective on developing a more conscious and accepting attitude towards one's inner experiences. Furthermore, Rumi's understanding of "Be what you are" parallels ACT's principles of "Values" and "Personal Goals." ACT focuses on individuals identifying the values in their lives and acting in accordance with these values. Rumi's teachings also emphasize that a person should live a life that is in harmony with their inner values. As a result, Rumi's teachings such as acceptance, patience, inner peace, and living in the moment overlap significantly with acceptance and commitment therapy. Both approaches suggest that individuals adopt a more open, accepting, and values-focused approach to inner experiences in order to increase their psychological well-being.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the similarities between Rumi's teachings and ACT and how they can be combined from a psychotherapeutic perspective. This study can provide a foundation for future research to more comprehensively investigate the connection between Rumi's teachings and ACT therapy. New research on how this combined model might work in different cultural contexts and therapeutic settings will provide important contributions to both theory and practice.

Keywords: Maulana, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Rumi's Teachings, Spirituality and psychotherapy, inner peace

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Özet

Mevlâna Celaleddin Rumî, 13. yüzyılda yaşamış bir düşünür ve şairi. Eserlerinde insan ruhunun derinliklerine inmiş, kabul ve sevgi temalarını vurgulamıştır. Aynı dönemde psikoterapi alanında gelişen Kabul ve Kararlılık Terapisi (ACT), bireylerin psikolojik esnekliğini geliştirmeyi amaçlayan bir psikoterapi yaklaşımıdır. Mevlâna, bir kişinin iç dünyasına dair derin içgörüler sunarken, bir bireyin kabul ve farkındalık yoluyla iç huzura ulaşabileceğini vurgulamıştır. Bu anlayış, ACT'nin temel ilkelerine benzerdir. Bu çalışma, kabul ve kararlılık terapisini (ACT) Mevlâna Celaleddin Rumî'nin felsefi bakış açısıyla incelemektedir. ACT, insanları karmaşık düşünceler ve duygularla barışmaya ve bu duygusal zorluklardan kaçmak yerine onlarla yüzleşmeye teşvik eder. Mevlâna'nın "Gel" veya "Kim olursan yine de gel!" öğretileri, bu psikolojik esneklik çerçevesinde oldukça anlamlıdır. Mevlâna'nın öğretileri, bir kişinin iç sıkıntılarını kabul etmesi ve anda yaşaması gerektiğini sıklıkla vurgular. ACT, bu bakış açısını kişinin içsel deneyimlerine karşı daha bilinçli ve kabul edici bir tutum geliştirmeye dayandırır.

Ayrıca, Rumî'nin "Olduğun gibi görün!" anlayışı, ACT'nin "Değerler" ve "Kişisel Hedefler" ilkeleriyle paralellik gösterir. ACT, bireylerin hayatlarındaki değerleri belirlemelerine ve onlara göre hareket etmelerine odaklanır. Rumî'nin öğretileri ayrıca insanların içsel değerleriyle uyum içinde yaşamaları gerektiğini vurgular. Sonuç olarak, Rumî'nin kabul, sabır, iç huzur ve anda yaşama gibi öğretileri, kabul ve kararlılık terapisine önemli ölçüde örtüşmektedir. Her iki yaklaşım da bireylerin psikolojik iyilik hallerini artırmak için içsel deneyimlere karşı daha açık, kabul edici ve değerlere odaklı bir yaklaşım benimsemelerini önermektedir. Bu çalışma, Rumî'nin öğretileri ile ACT arasındaki benzerlikleri ve bunların psikoterapötik bir bakış açısıyla nasıl birleştirilebileceğini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, Rumî'nin öğretileri ile ACT terapisine arasındaki bağlantıyı daha kapsamlı bir şekilde araştırmak için gelecekteki araştırmalar için bir temel sağlayabilir. Bu birleşik modelin farklı kültürel bağlamlarda ve terapötik ortamlarda nasıl çalışabileceğine dair yeni araştırmalar teori ve pratiğe katkıda bulunacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Mevlâna, Kabul ve Kararlılık Terapisi, Rumî'nin Öğretileri, Maneviyat ve psikoterapi, iç huzur

Introduction

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which has been at the forefront of psychotherapy in recent years, has emerged as an innovative approach that aims to help individuals establish a healthy relationship with their thoughts and feelings (Yavuz, 2015).

While ACT encourages individuals to accept their difficulties and lead a life in accordance with their values, it follows a path in parallel with Rumi's deep spiritual teachings.

Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) is a psychotherapy approach that helps people establish a healthy relationship with their negative thoughts and emotions, focusing on living a life with their subjective values (Yavuz, 2022).

The existence of human beings is shaped by a process of acceptance and decision-making that continues from birth to death. These stages play a decisive role in the individual's capacity to cope with the difficulties in his life, emotional resilience and inner peace (Ulubay and Güven, 2022). With his thoughts and teachings, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi offers a rich perspective on the inner journey and understanding this process in depth. His philosophy deals with the spiritual development of human beings by combining acceptance and willpower (Ak, 2023).

This article aims to create a psychotherapeutic integration by combining Rumi's philosophical teachings with the therapeutic model of the ACT. A more holistic therapeutic model is proposed, linking Rumi's

perspective that delves deep into the human psyche and ACT's practical, value-oriented therapeutic methods.

In the article, firstly, the basic principles of ACT will be explained, and then an examination of how these principles can be combined with the teachings of Rumi will be presented. Finally, the potential benefits of this combined model in terms of psychotherapeutic practices will be discussed.

Thus, it is thought that it will facilitate an in-depth understanding of the benefits to be obtained from the combination of Rumi's spiritual teachings and modern psychotherapy techniques, and at the same time, it will provide therapists and psychotherapy practitioners with a more effective and comprehensive approach to the spiritual healing of individuals.

Methodology:

In this study, a compilation study was used in qualitative research methods. A compilation study is a study created by examining the literature studies on a specific subject. Then, resources were scanned from libraries, books, magazines and articles related to the topics (Aslan and Aydın, 2015). In writing an article, it's important to clearly state the purpose, the rationale, the questions we aim to answer, as well as the case studies used this article is the purpose of the article will be further clarified through a case analysis. **Case analysis** refers to a detailed examination of a particular situation, event, or case, often used to illustrate theoretical concepts, provide insights, and support decision-making processes. In academic and professional settings, it typically involves identifying the problem, analyzing relevant data, and offering solutions or recommendations. Case analysis is commonly used in fields such as business, law, medicine, and social sciences (Yin, 2018).

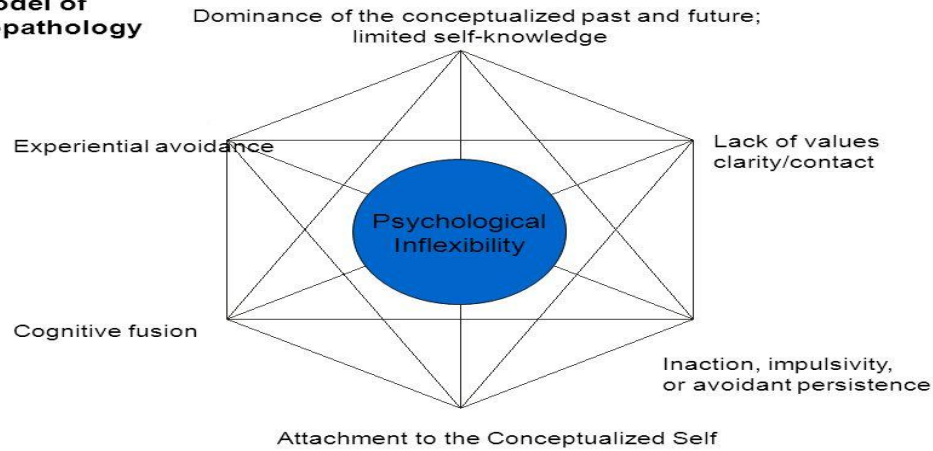
In this section, the basic principles of acceptance and commitment therapy are explained with the teachings of Rumi.

Basic Processes of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy



Psychological flexibility consists of six basic processes and this flexibility is expressed as a hexagon, (Figure 1).

ACT Model of Psychopathology



Psychological inflexibility consists of six basic processes and this flexibility is expressed as a hexagon, (Figure 2).

1. Psychological Flexibility and Psychological Rigidity

Psychological flexibility in acceptance and commitment therapy refers to being flexible in our approach to the world we live in, in realizing our dreams and in facilitating our adaptation to the changing world. Acceptance and commitment therapy emphasizes that we need to be aware of our positive and negative experiences in order to achieve psychological flexibility (Usta, 2017).

Psychological flexibility consists of six basic processes and this flexibility is expressed as a hexagon. Acceptance, cognitive dissociation, contact with the present moment, dedicated action, self as context, and values are important components. Each of these basic processes is interconnected, so none of them can be separated or abolished (Kamış and Karaaziz, 2024).

Maulana's phrase "Whatever you are, come again" can be given as an example of the concept of Acceptance, which is one of the foundations of psychological flexibility.

The concept of psychological rigidity, which is accepted as the opposite of psychological flexibility, refers to the fact that individuals have more difficulty in fully comprehending the reality of the moment they are in, while trying to harmonize their behavior with the present and their personal values (Hayes and Schenk, 2004).

Psychological rigidity helps individuals relax and regulate their emotions in the short term by aiming to escape from unwanted and painful inner experiences, but when they are permanent, individuals face disharmony and poor quality of life (Tavakoli, Broyles, Reid, Sandoval and Correa-Fernández, 2019, akt. Kamış and Karaaziz, 2024).

Rumi emphasizes that one should not get attached to temporary emotions or fixed thoughts. The individual who is obsessed with rigid thoughts exhibits psychological rigidity. Maulana's phrase "I was raw, I was cooked, I was burned" advises to gain flexibility by separating from rigidity. In conclusion, Rumi's teachings distinguish between psychological flexibility and rigidity, explaining that an individual must accept their inner experiences and that this acceptance is a key to personal development. When a person develops a

flexible approach to their emotions and thoughts, they can live their life in a healthier and more peaceful way.

1.1 Acceptance and experiential avoidance

In Maulana's teachings, the necessity of accepting oneself as one is emphasized is emphasized. The ACT helps individuals accept their thoughts and feelings without judgment. This approach allows individuals to become more insensitive to the negative thoughts that arise in their minds. Welcoming the negative experiences of the person as they are, giving up describing the negative situation as a personality, and separating the negative result from oneself by evaluating it only in that event without generalizing it to his life is the basis of acceptance (Kara, 2020).

Maulana's saying "*either look as you are or be as you seem*" is one of the powerful examples of self-acceptance. This phrase speaks of the importance of accepting oneself and being at peace with oneself. Self-acceptance is possible by getting rid of the masks they wear. Self-acceptance is also one of the factors that make it easier for a person to live in harmony with his environment.

Experiential avoidance, on the other hand, is the behavior of people in order to escape from their feelings and thoughts, even though their inner experiences such as thoughts, emotions, physiological symptoms, memories, etc., are ineffective and dysfunctional. This may provide instant relief to the person, but in the long run it can cause more psychological destruction. ACT aims to help people get rid of these behaviors and develop healthier coping strategies (Yavuz, 2015).

When we examine Maulana's teachings, he emphasizes the importance of accepting emotions instead of running away from them with the phrase "*Live whatever emotions you are in, because every emotion brings you one step closer to the truth*" (Fikriyat, 2020).

The parallels between Rumi's teachings and ACT are quite evident in the concepts of acceptance and experiential avoidance. Both Rumi and ACT emphasize making peace with inner experiences, accepting them rather than running away from them, and finding spiritual serenity as you accept them. Rumi's understanding of "accept, let go, and surrender" is a powerful guide to understanding ACT's therapeutic approaches.

1.2 Contact with the Moment and Loss of Contact with the Moment:

Rumi adopts the understanding of "Live in the moment". ACT also encourages individuals to experience the present moment by using mindfulness techniques. This helps reduce stress and anxiety. Focusing on the moment means being in conscious contact with the time and place and situation. It is one of the basic strategies of mindfulness-based therapies. Focusing on the moment leads to the beginning of the awareness process and being aware of the whole process (Ak, Eşen and Özdengül, 2014).

Maulana's poem "New Day" emphasized focusing on the moment and living in the moment.

How good it is to migrate from one place every day,

How nice it is to be put somewhere every day,

How pleasant it is to flow without clouding or freezing.

Gone with yesterday, my dear.

Whatever words there belong to yesterday

Now we need to say something new (Wikiquote).

The loss of contact with the moment is the individual's move away from being in the present moment. The person may be under the pressure of the past and the future by thinking about the negative experiences he has had in the past or worrying about what may happen in the future. This situation causes the individual to miss what is happening in his current life (Vangölü and Özok, 2022,).

The world is three days: yesterday, today, tomorrow.

Yesterday has passed, tomorrow has not yet arrived.

So, live with today.

1.3 Cognitive Dissociation and Cognitive Unification:

Negative cognitive processes cause negative function on the behavior of individuals. Cognitive dissociation is the ability of a person to distance himself from negative thoughts and to avoid judging himself with negative thoughts (Kara, 2020).

Cognitive dissociation aims to reduce the dysfunctional effects of thoughts on behavior. Cognitive Dissociation is one of the six processes in the 'Psychological Flexibility' model, which emphasizes the psychological well-being of the ACT (Yavuz, 2015).

Maulana emphasizes that the thoughts of individuals are temporary and changeable. The view that thoughts and emotions are not part of our selves, but only impressions formed in the moment, parallels cognitive dissociation. Cognitive unification, on the other hand, means that an individual creates his own mental rules based on his thoughts, and these rules lead to maladaptive behavior. (Vangölü and Özok, 2022).

The poem of Mevla's guest house coincides with cognitive dissociation. In the poem, it is emphasized that people should accept their thoughts and feelings as guests.

It's like a guest house for humanity,

Every morning a new guest arrives.

A joy, a sorrow, a cruelty,

A moment of awareness comes a joy that comes out of nowhere (Anthology, 2024).

1.4 Connecting to the Contextual Self and the Conceptual Self

Contextual self: It is the awareness of one's own negative emotions, thoughts and behaviors (Kara, 2020, p.386). Connecting to the conceptual self, on the other hand, people tend to generate negative thoughts about themselves. For example, these thoughts such as I am bad, I am incompetent can be reinforced from time to time by those around them. If the person's level of attachment to these thoughts is high, it is to have a negative effect on the person. ACT aims to reduce the relationship between the self and these thoughts. In order to achieve this, it teaches to contact the here and now (Yavuz, 2015, p.25).

Rumi emphasizes the importance of understanding one's inner world and spiritual state. The saying "*to know yourself is to know everything*" expresses the value of self-awareness. Observing the self in the ACT allows the individual to objectively evaluate their thoughts and feelings (Ekşi and Kaya, 2016).

1.5 Contact with values and weakness of contact with values:

In Maulana's philosophy, values are the basic elements that guide the life of the individual and give meaning and purpose. Values have a great influence on the inner peace of the human being, his relationships and social interactions. Values offer the chance to live a more meaningful life for the individual and society. For this purpose, ACT aims to make people realize their values (Bor, 2024).

The weakening of contact with values occurs as a process. The person is under the influence of cognitive association and experiential avoidance during the coping phase of his psychological problems. (Batten, 2011, akt. Uğur, 2018).

Rumi encourages the individual to discover his essence.

What is the value of the person? –

It's what he's looking for!

If you are looking for the host of souls, know that you are souls.

If you're chasing a bite of bread, you're a loaf of bread.

If you can understand the meaning of this hidden, witty word,

You understand that what you are looking for is you, you.

As you search for the pearl in the mine, you mine (fikriyat, 2020).

1.6 Determination and Avoidance, Avoidance, Impulsivity in Value-Oriented Behaviors:

It refers to individuals taking action according to their own values. This helps the person identify meaning and goals in their life. When a person realizes what is important, he takes steps in accordance with these values. Taking action in determination makes a positive contribution to increasing the self-confidence of individuals. As they act in accordance with their values, the perception of self-efficacy develops, and it is thought that they give courage in coping with difficulties (Yavuz, 2015).

People with high psychological rigidity engage in escape and avoidance behavior to reduce the effect of negative experiences (Yavuz, 2015). Such behaviors are actions that prevent the individual from realizing his potential, prevent him from living a life in harmony with his inner balance and values, and cause him to fall into constant distress in the difficulties he encounters (Sevindik and Karaaziz, 2024).

Rumi mentions that it is important to accept and face life's challenges. As with the ACT, individuals must act and dare in accordance with their values, even when faced with uncomfortable emotions. The saying "fire shows the gold underneath" expresses that difficulties reveal the true values of man. Maulana advises to choose the path of acceptance and transformation instead of escaping and avoiding.

It is possible to explain the similarities and contrasts between Maulana's teachings and ACT. These two approaches aim to develop a deep awareness of the individual's relationship with his/her inner world and to target personal development, but they are separated by some fundamental differences.

Table 1. Similarities and contrasts between Maulana's teachings and ACT

Feature	Maulana's Teachings	ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy)	Similarity/Contrast
Philosophical Foundation	Sufism, love, inner journey, and oneness with existence	Psychotherapeutic approach, acceptance, and mindfulness	Similarity: Awareness and acceptance of inner experience
Goal	Spiritual maturation, closeness to God, and finding peace	Achieving psychological flexibility and living in accordance with one's values	Similarity: Personal development and pursuit of peace Construct: "Not only towards Allah, but also towards whatever values and beliefs one holds, one should strive to approach them"
Relationship with Emotional Difficulties	Transcendence over emotions and events, acceptance	Awareness of emotions and thoughts, making peace with them	Similarity: Acceptance of mental and emotional experiences
Approach to Mental Events	Thoughts, ego, and self are temporary; everything's essence is love and unity	Thoughts and emotions are temporary; detachment from them (acceptance)	Similarity: Acknowledgment that thoughts and emotions are transient and changeable
Behavior Toward Inner Experiences	Finding peace in each moment, transcending ego and self	Detachment from inner experiences (acceptance), not reacting to them	Contrast: Maulana emphasizes transcendence and surrender, while ACT emphasizes detachment and engagement in action
Values and Goals	Divine love, serving God, and finding the right path for humanity	Living a life consistent with personal values	Similarity: Living in harmony with values Contrast: Getting closer to the person one wants to be by serving whatever one believes in instead of serving God.
Self-Discovery	Discovering one's existential meaning, love, and unity	Discovering one's values and meaning, living in alignment with them	Similarity: Exploration of personal meaning and awareness
Relationship with Emotional and Mental Pain	Accepting pain as a spiritual lesson and transcending it	Accepting pain and difficult emotions as inevitable and living with them	Similarity: Acknowledging that pain is inevitable, but the methods of transcending or dealing with pain differ between the two approaches

Case Study

Ali, 28 years old, works as a classroom teacher in a private school. From his childhood, his family emphasized to him that he had to be successful and perfect. Manipulative sentences such as "You should be the best," "You should never leave your job to chance," "You should work hard and be successful" constantly appear in Ali's life as sentences he hears from his family. His family always praised his success at school and expected him to strive above his potential by setting high standards. These expectations caused Ali to grow up with a feeling of inadequacy. Being successful in a job only made him an admired person, but he saw these successes as an external reward rather than an internal approval. In other words, everything he did had to be done to gain the appreciation of others.

Ali continued this perfectionist approach in his work and made a special effort to ensure that his own students were the most successful class in the school. Every day, he told his students that they had to be

successful and did his best to make them work harder by giving them homework above their performance. When his classmates received low grades on exams, he blamed himself and felt "not good enough." This situation was a complete disaster for him. When we look at his life in general, he blamed himself for the smallest mistakes and felt exhausted. He often felt worthless and saw success over others as a necessity. His restlessness increased and he began to experience frequent headaches and sleep problems.

Conceptualization of the Case

Table2: Application of the psychological flexibility and psychological rigidity model to the case from the Maulana Perspective

PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION MODEL	MAULANA PERSPECTIVE
Acceptance/Experiential Avoidance	In Maulana's teachings, "Don't complain, accept!" The word reflects exactly this concept. At the beginning of therapy, Ali tended to ignore his anxieties, perfectionist thoughts, and feelings of guilt towards himself. However, Maulana's advice included giving Ahmet the message of "accept your feelings and make peace with them".
Cognitive Dissociation/Cognitive Unification	Initially, cognitive fusion was very strong in Ali's life. Ali accepts his thoughts and concerns as a reflection of reality, and even a small mistake he makes makes him feel like "I am inadequate" or "I am a failure".It was evoking thoughts. Ali was so united with these thoughts that he saw his thoughts as part of his own identity. Maulana's saying "Control your thoughts, otherwise your thoughts will control you" focuses on cognitive disassociation, contrary to the cognitive unification situation experienced by Ali.
Contact with the Moment/Loss of contact with the Moment	In Ali's life, especially in his struggle with anxiety and perfectionism, the loss of contact with the moment was quite evident. Ali was constantly thinking about the mistakes he had made in the past, making it difficult to stay in the moment. Maulana accepts being able to fully experience the "now" as a basic teaching in finding one's inner peace. During the therapy process, "I still have my anxieties, but I don't dwell on them anymore. The pains of the past and the anxieties of the future do not affect me. "I live in the moment and this gives me inner peace." He was made to stay in the moment by working on it.
Values/ The weakness of the bond established with value	Ali's core value was based on the idea of success and perfection. This situation caused him to move away from human values such as love and peace. Maulana's teaching that "True love and peace are found not outside, but in the love and values within us" made an important contribution to the process of establishing contact with the values in Ali's life.

Stability in values / evasion	Ali was fighting perfectionism to achieve the successes in his career, but he could not find inner satisfaction and peace. According to Maulana's perspective, the path to inner peace lies in living in a way that is consistent with one's values. When Ali began to show determined behavior with values, he was able to discover his own inner strength by getting rid of past perfectionism.
Conceptual Self/Contextual Self	Maulana advises in his teachings that one should develop a broader perspective by discovering one's contextual self. During therapy, Ali understood the difference between conceptual self and contextual self, which brought him inner freedom. He began to shape his life by giving up identifying himself with external labels and focusing on his inner values.

Discussion

At the beginning of therapy, Ali tended to ignore his anxieties, perfectionist thoughts, and feelings of guilt towards himself. In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, this situation appears as experiential avoidance. Experiential avoidance is an important psychological engagement model that triggers the psychopathology of many cases (Sevindik and Karaaziz, 2024). At this point, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy aims to teach the client to accept the existing situation instead of revealing experiences to change or avoid it (Ulubay and Güven, 2022). In Maulana's teachings, "Don't complain, accept!"The word " reflects this concept exactly. This advice of Maulana includes giving Ali the message of "accept your feelings and make peace with them". In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, the concept of acceptance is processed not only with exercises but also with important discourses suitable for our culture (Uğur, 2018). Ali's reminding himself of sentences like these in moments when he realizes experiential avoidance will enable him to internalize the concept of acceptance both for the therapy process and for his life outside (Dursun and Akkaya, 2022).

Initially, cognitive fusion was very strongly seen in Ali's life. Ali accepted his thoughts and concerns as a reflection of reality, and even a small mistake he made made him think like "I am inadequate" or "I am a failure". Ali was so united in these thoughts that he saw his thoughts as part of his own identity. In acceptance and commitment therapy, cognitive fusion shapes people's thoughts in line with their own mental beliefs and rules (Yavuz, 2015).Maulana's saying "Control your thoughts, otherwise thoughts will control you" focuses on cognitive dissociation, contrary to the cognitive unification situation experienced by Ali. The concept of cognitive dissociation, in the context of acceptance and commitment therapy, means that the person keeps his thoughts, and mental experiences separate from himself and does not identify with them. It enables the individual to realize that his thoughts are temporary mental events and not to identify with these thoughts as "I" or "mine" (Işık and Demir, 2024).

In Ali's life, especially in his struggle with anxiety and perfectionism, the loss of contact with the moment was quite evident. Ali was constantly thinking about the mistakes he had made in the past, making it difficult to stay in the moment. Loss of contact with the moment means that the individual loses connection with his current experiences, feelings and thoughts in acceptance and commitment therapy. This means that the person does not experience the present moment by getting stuck between past events or future anxiety (Akyaka, 2022).Maulana accepts being able to fully experience the "now" as a basic teaching in finding one's inner peace. During the therapy process, "I still have anxiety, but I don't dwell on them anymore. The pains of the past and the anxieties of the future do not affect me. "I live in the present and this gives me inner peace" is ensured to stay in the moment by working on it. In the context of acceptance and commitment

therapy, contact with the moment is to stay in the present and establish oneself from the shadow of the past and the future (Yalnız 2019).

Ali's core value was based on the idea of success and perfection. This situation caused him to move away from human values such as love and peace. In acceptance and commitment therapy, this means a weakness in the connection with values. This situation causes the individual to be unable to clearly define his/her internal values or to exhibit behaviors in accordance with these values (Ulubay and Güven, 2022). Maulana's teaching that "True love and peace are found not outside, but in the love and values within us" makes an important contribution to the process of establishing contact with the values in Ali's life.

Ali was fighting perfectionism to achieve the success in his career, but he could not find inner satisfaction and peace. This corresponds to the concept of escape and avoidance in acceptance and commitment therapy. The concept of escape and avoidance refers to individuals' tendency to escape from their internal experiences. This is an attempt to distance oneself emotionally or mentally (Akdemir, 2018). According to Maulana's perspective, the path to inner peace is through living in a way that is consistent with one's values. When Ali began to show determined behavior with values, he progressed towards discovering his own inner strength by getting rid of past perfectionism.

Throughout the therapy, Ali's understanding of the difference between the conceptual self and the contextual self brought him inner freedom. By giving up defining himself with external labels and focusing on his inner values, he began to shape his life. In his teachings, Maulana advises that people should develop a broader perspective by discovering their contextual self. In acceptance and commitment therapy, the conceptual self appears as the understanding of the self in which the person defines himself with his thoughts, feelings, beliefs and external labels. Contextual self, on the other hand, allows the person to create a broader and more flexible perception of identity, independent of his internal experiences. Contextual self allows the person to develop a healthier self-perception.

Conclusion

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) from Rumi's perspective offers a deep understanding of inner peace and psychological flexibility. There is a strong parallel between Rumi's teachings, his emphasis on accepting one's inner experiences and living in the moment, and the basic principles of ACT.

Rumi emphasizes the importance of accepting the difficulties that exist in human life. The saying "everything passes" emphasizes accepting temporary negative life experiences and emotions. In ACT, this understanding also suggests that individuals accept disturbing thoughts without criticism. Rumi's understanding of "appreciating the present moment" encourages individuals to live in the moment and focus on their current experiences. This is one of the fundamental elements of ACT. Mindfulness allows individuals to experience the moment by observing their thoughts and feelings. Rumi often expresses the importance of these moments in individuals' spiritual development. Living in the moment helps individuals to overcome the effects of past negative experiences and to avoid future anxieties.

As a result, Rumi's philosophy has a deep connection with the basic principles of acceptance and commitment therapy. Rumi's teachings help individuals find inner peace, cope with challenges, and live a meaningful life. In this context, ACT supports individuals' spiritual and emotional development, while Rumi's profound teachings inspire individuals to live more fulfilling lives. Thus, a solid foundation is created for both individual and social transformation.

This article discusses the similarities, differences, and psychotherapeutic potential of Rumi's teachings and Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT), two different but deeply integrated approaches.

The most obvious similarity between Rumi's teachings and ACT therapy is their emphasis on acceptance and value-oriented living. While Rumi's Sufi understanding emphasizes that people should be accepted as they are, ACT also recommends that individuals accept their negative thoughts and emotional pain and use this acceptance to live a more value-oriented life. However, the differences between Rumi's teachings and ACT cannot be ignored. Spiritual and mystical elements are at the forefront in Rumi's teachings. ACT, on the other hand, focuses on individuals developing healthier and more value-oriented behaviors in life rather than spiritual teachings. The integration of both approaches into therapeutic practice may vary depending on the therapist's personal preferences and therapeutic context. At this point, it would be useful to conduct more research and applied studies on how both approaches can better support each other. However, the integration of the two approaches should be structured carefully and implemented in a way that takes advantage of the strengths of both systems.

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