

## How does ACT translate in to our clinical practice?

## Psychological inflexibility

- Pain –both psychological and somatic hinders flexible thinking. One becomes more rigid and concrete in ones thinking.
- We use this understanding, when meeting with patients and their families.
- This translates in to the knowledge that we have to provide some assistance for them in order to be able to reflect on their own thinking.
- We have to create the nessesary structure for the conversations, using visual techniques and metaphores.

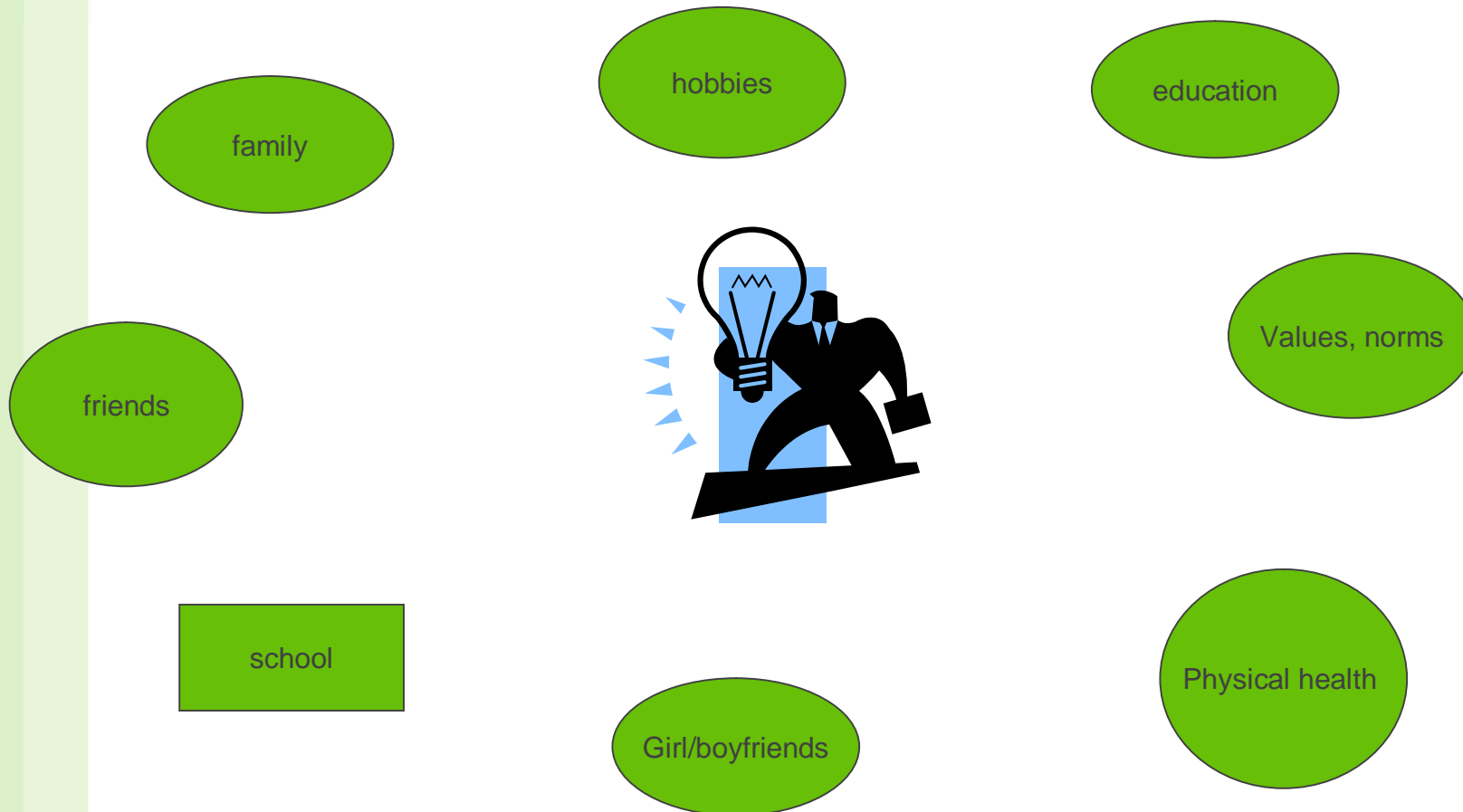
## Inflexible thinking is a common handicap for all with a psychiatric disease

- Assessment of the patients ability to work therapeutical used to be the first step before a psychotherapy was decided upon.
- But this understanding of psychological inflexibility enables us to do assesment on which techniques are nessesary for each individual patient. Making it possible to work therapeutical with all our patients.
- These techniques are not connected to a specific diagnosis, but can be used in different ways for all kinds of patients and problems.

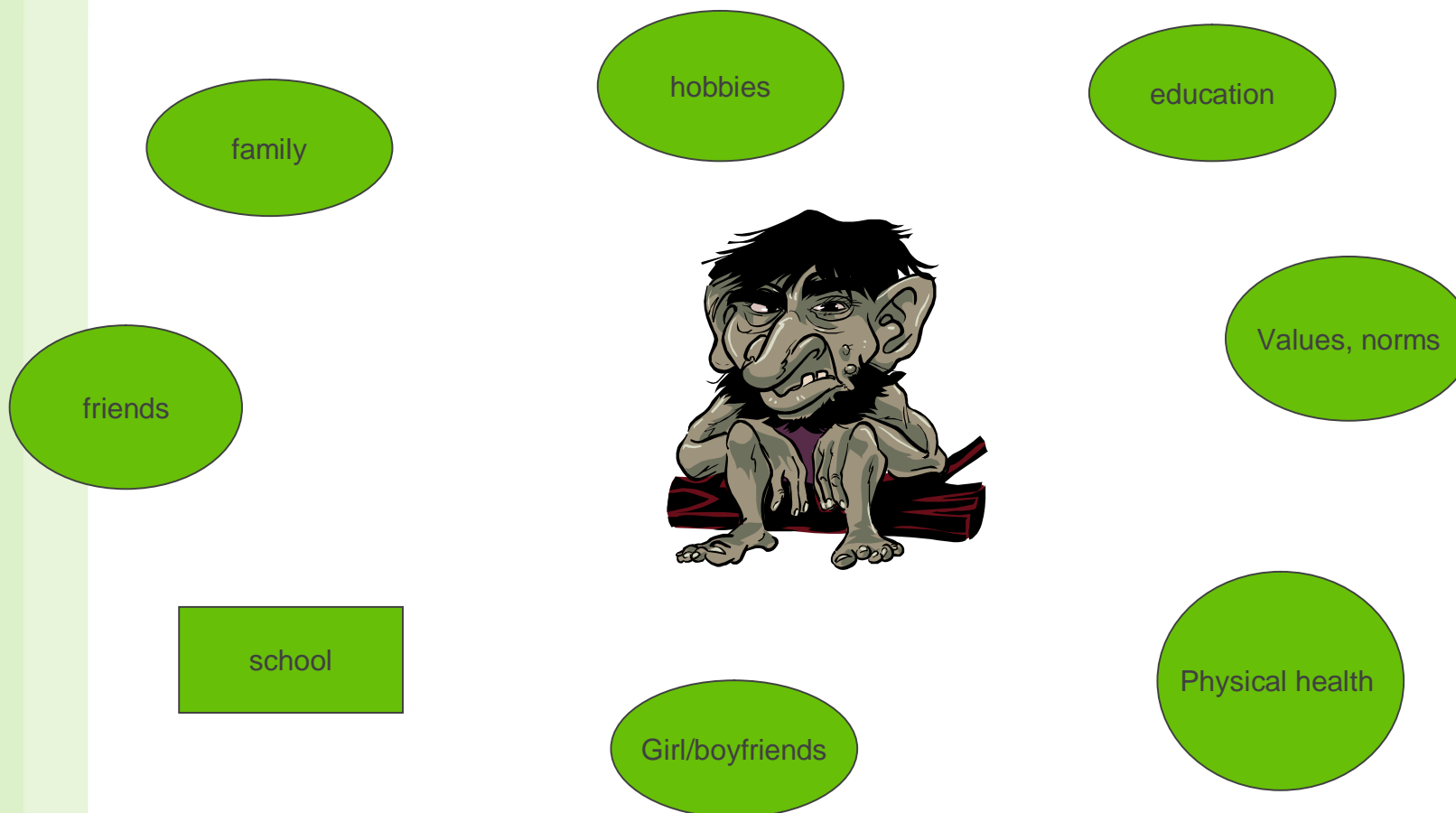
## ”Another Kierkegaard”:

- If you want to help a person, you have to start by meeting the person in their thoughts and understandings of their world.
- ACT-talk: The therapist and parents has to accept, that certain private thoughts can not initially be rejected.
- Example: The Asperger way of thinking can not be removed, but one can learn to reflect and decide on the workability of that way of thinking.

# Helping-bobles for children: Ask for dreams, hopes and desires:



# Helping-bobles for children: Ask for the Aspergers plans for your life:



## The *Where-are-you-going-line*?

**Promise:** Reduce the painful thoughts from OCD. Be thin and happy.



**Your values:** school, friends, activities

**The costs:** No school, no friends, no activities

**The costs:** OCD-thoughts, physical discomfort. Feeling enormous.

## The *Where-are-you-leading-line?*

**Problem:** seeing my child so unhappy.

**Promise:** I am an empathetic parent, I alleviate my child's pain

**Costs:** leave from work, no grown-up-time, a dependent child forever.



**Values:** Being a supportive parent, support independence

**Costs:** My own pain caused by seeing my child suffering, the risk of failure, parent-blaming thoughts



## Conclusions:

We can use the ideas of:

- Accept the permanence of the problem.
- Help create a distance between the child and the problem. Then the child and parents can evaluate the problems effects on their lives.
- Make it possible for the child and parents to decide on new better, but intuitively more difficult approaches to their lives.

# Questions and reflections from the audience

