

What is ACT?
A Brief Introduction to Acceptance & Commitment Therapy

By Joel Guarna, PhD & Elizabeth Kubik, PhD

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Go to www.whitepineinstitute.com/mepa.htm to download slide presentation

ACT IN CONTEXT

What is ACT?

Behavioral Activation + Motivational Interviewing + Mindfulness

A comprehensive model of therapy that includes some unique and some borrowed techniques

Outcome and process research on ACT

Relational Frame Theory

Underlying Philosophy and assumptions

ACT is Mindfulness-Based Therapy, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Clinical Behavioral Analysis

ACT falls closer to the behavioral end of the CBT spectrum (vs the cognitive end)

TODAY'S WORKSHOP

Brief introduction with focus on "how to" and clinical application

Cursory discussion of theory and model

Case Examples

Experiential Exercises

Go to www.whitepineinstitute.com/mepa.htm for handouts, slides, links, and more

EXERCISE: The Lemon & The Glass

Illustrates how normal language processes (Fusion and Avoidance) can cause suffering

Therapeutic Posture – radical respect for clients' values

TARGETS OF ACT

1. Ineffective change agenda
2. Experiential avoidance
2. Inability to differentiate self and behavior from private events
3. Inability to make and keep a commitment to actions consistent with valued life directions

Targets of ACT Said Simply (FEAR):

Fusion
Evaluation
Avoidance
Reason-Giving

THE “HEXAFLEX” MODEL OF THE SIX CORE PROCESSES

1. Contact with the Present Moment
2. Acceptance**
3. Defusion**
4. Self-as-Context
5. Values
6. Committed Action

***We will focus primarily on Acceptance and Defusion today*

Psychological Flexibility is the goal of these processes

ACT PROCESSES AND INTERVENTION

Acceptance

An alternative to experiential avoidance
Active embrace of whatever shows up (private events) as you live a rich, full, committed life

Examples: “sitting with” the feeling, exposure, Quicksand Metaphor, Thought Card, Ball and Chain, Chinese Handcuffs

Defusion

Learning to observe our thoughts → decreased behavioral regulatory function of thought
Focus on “workability” of thought not content
ACT vs Traditional CBT: ACT is more accepting of the content of the thought

Examples: Falling Leaves metaphor, voices (singing, caricature), Hand Exercise, Fish in Water, Identify the forms of private experience, thought labeling, thanking your mind

WHAT IS ACT AGAIN BACK TO THE HEXAFLEX

Acceptance and Mindfulness Processes: Acceptance, Defusion, Contact with the Present Moment, Self-as-Context

Commitment and Behavior Change Processes: Values, Committed Action, Contact with the Present Moment, Self-as-Context

Show Up, Let Go, Get Moving
Living a rich, full, life with less struggle!

CASE STUDIES