

Outline

The ACT Model

The nature of human suffering
"Healthy normality" is a myth
Language: The double-edged sword
Undermine unhelpful thoughts
Aiming for psychological flexibility and why
The ACT hexagon model

Limitations of the Research and Potential Risks

Children and adolescents
Acute, florid hallucinations
Catatonic depression
Individuals with an adverse reaction to mindfulness exercises

Acceptance

Strengthening a willingness to have emotions
The opposite of acceptance is experiential avoidance
Experiential avoidance throughout the lifespan
Why acceptance is important
Case example: Teenage shyness & hoarding

Defusion

Look at thoughts rather than from thoughts
Deal with automatic thoughts
The power of words
The problem with cognitive fusion
Address CBT-based disputation techniques with defusion
"Taking your mind for a walk" exercise
Case example: Eating disorders & social phobia

Perspective-Taking

Understand the "Self" in ACT
Self-as-content, self-as-perspective, self-as-context
Observer self-exercise
Deal with identity issues
Case examples related to PTSD & childhood sexual trauma

Mindfulness

Contacting the present moment
Why being in the here-and-now is critical for mental health
Relationship between mindlessness and psychopathology

Meditation, mindfulness and mindful action
Exercises for mindful action
Case example: Anger, personality disorders, alcoholism

Values Work

The positive side of language
Identifying core values
Differentiate values and goals
Writing values-based treatment goals
The ethics of values clarification
Establishing the life line
Case example: Heroin addiction, bipolar disorder

Committed Action

Define "commitment" objectively
Integrate evidence-based therapy with ACT
Develop ACT-based behavior therapy treatment plans
Improve behavioral activation with ACT
Accelerate exposure therapy with ACT
Case example: Depression, agoraphobia

Pulling It All Together

Hexaflex model for psychological flexibility
Ask the "ACT Question" for self-help and case conceptualization
Inflexahex model: Diagnosis from an ACT approach
Case example: Obsessive-compulsive disorder

Incorporate ACT into Your Own Approach

Social skills training
Applied Behavior Analysis
Inpatient treatment programs systems
Exposure and ritual prevention
Behavioral activation
Parent management training
Executive coaching

The Mindful Action Plan

ACT simplified
Passengers on the bus: The classic ACT group exercise
How ACT can make you a better therapist

Objectives

1. Demonstrate effective use of the six core processes of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to help clients advance psychological flexibility.
2. Illustrate clinical techniques for increasing psychological flexibility in clients using ACT.
3. Utilize acceptance approaches with avoidance problems to strengthen a client's willingness to have emotions.
4. Implement clinical skills to help clients effectively handle automatic cognitions.
5. Utilize effective ACT exercises in therapy to aid clients with developing new skills to engage in the present moment and move past struggles.
6. Assess and clarify a client's values in order to develop an effective treatment plan and avoid potential clinical problems.
7. Integrate ACT into different therapeutic styles and methods as an approach to managing symptoms.
8. Create committed action plans for clients with anxiety disorders to improve level of functioning.
9. Use metaphors to undermine language-based avoidance repertoires to improve client engagement.
10. Utilize clinical strategies to develop an ACT-based behavior therapy plan as it relates to treatment outcomes.
11. Implement emotional, behavioral willingness and exposure techniques with clients to reduce experiential avoidance.
12. Apply ACT techniques to the treatment of specific disorders including depression, anxiety, trauma and personality disorders.

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