# 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 client 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.
- Use metaphors to undermine language-based avoidance repertoires to improve client engagement.
   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
- Inplement 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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# Looking to improve your therapy approach?

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Each time he/she arrives, you use the same tools and techniques you've used for so long - and mostly successfully - but this one client is testing your skills. Now, you can begin to integrate Acceptance and **Commitment Therapy (ACT)** into your practice – and see improved outcomes.

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- Substance Abuse
- Eating Disorders • Trauma Personality Disorders

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# Speaker

# M. Joann Wright, Ph.D., is the founder of ACT One, an online presence dedicated to offering supervision, consultation, presentations, training and therapy utilizing the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) model. She is a peer-reviewed ACT trainer and an

Association of Contextual and Behavioral Sciences (ACBS) Fellow. Dr. Wright is the co-author of Learning ACT for Group Treatment: An Acceptance and Commitment

Therapy Skills Training Manual for Therapists (Context Press; 2017) and Experiencing ACT from the Inside Out: A Self-Practice/Self-Reflection Workbook for Therapists (The Guilford Press; 2019). Both books are aimed at assisting other therapists with their ACT work.

Dr. Wright has created both an ACT-based intensive anxiety outpatient program and a doctoral training program which focused on contextual behavioral sciences. A sought-after instructor, she has served as the director of a university counseling center and has taught graduate courses at several universities. Joann is dedicated to teaching and delivering ACT in order to help people reduce the suffering in their lives.

### Speaker Disclosures

Financial: M. Joann Wright is the founder of ACT One. She has a working relationship with Linden Oaks Medical Group and is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Midwestern University. Dr. Wright is an author for New Harbinger Publications, Inc. and The Guilford Press. She also receives a speaking honorarium from PESI, Inc.

Non-financial: M. Joann Wright is a fellow of the Association of Contextual and Behavioral Sciences (ACBS).

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11:50-1:00 Lunch (on your own)

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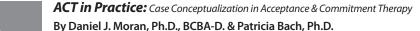
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