

# A parent of a child with disabilities : A case presentation

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## Introduction

Many parents of children with PDD experience chronic stress caused by their feelings of responsibility toward their children combined with a sense of guilt and shame. Much research indicated parents of child with disability had many mental health problems. However, there were also many parents having strong resilience. We think ACT help parents to do valued-action even when they faced the difficulties. This research reports the progress of ACT intervention for a parent of a child with severe disabilities.

## Methods

**Participants:** The participant was a mother (45y) living with her husband and two children, a 12-years-old daughter and a 3-years old son having severe disabilities. He could not stand alone and had no meaningful speech. Case formulation was completed to the point of ACT. Experiential exercises were introduced to the parent on the basis of the case formulation. Intervention sessions lasting 40 minutes were held once a week and a total of 12 sessions were conducted.

**Measures:** Four measures BDI-II, POMS (Profile of Mood States), DACS (Depression and Anxiety Cognition Scale) and AAC-II were analyzed to investigate the effects of the intervention at the time of the first, seventh, and final sessions. All dialogues of the session were transcribed, and the transcript was coded into 12 categories, consisting of six psychological flexibilities and six psychological inflexibilities. The relations among these 12 categories were analyzed using the SPSS Text-Analysis.

## Results

The BDI-II score, which was 12 at the first session, decreased to 8 at the seventh and 4 at the final session. On the POMS, the scores of Anger-Hostility and Fatigue, which were “moderately high” at the first session, decreased to the usual level at the seventh session, and Vague increased remarkably by the final session. On the DACS, the Future Denial score, which was “high” at the first session, improved to the usual level. AAQ-II was 41 points at the first, 42 at seventh, and 46 at the final session. The text-analysis revealed that as the sessions proceeded, the amount of the parent’s psychological inflexibility reduced. She attended to social events with her colleagues again and went to swim with her daughter.

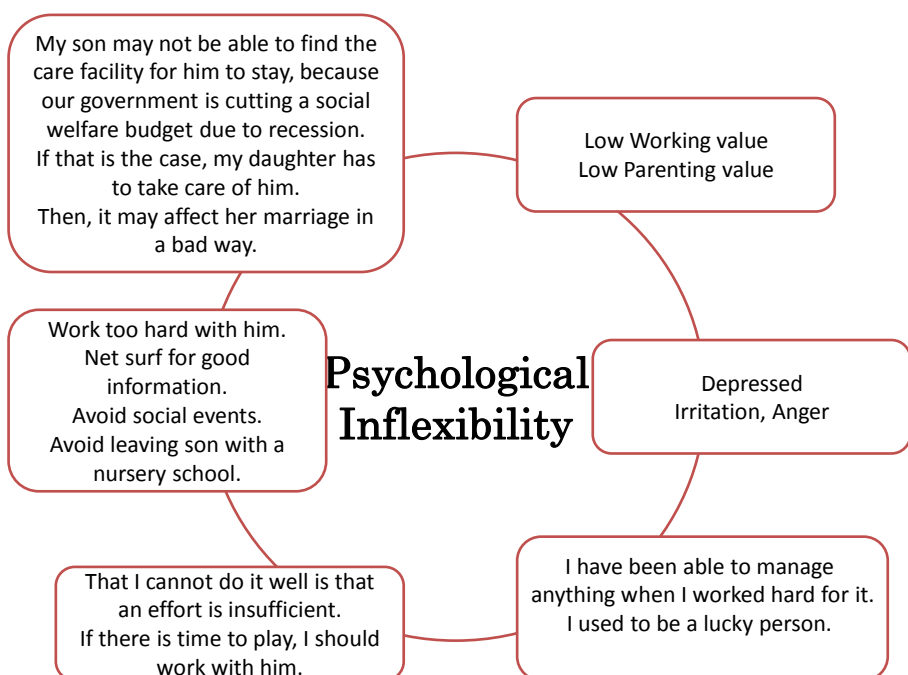


Fig.1 Case Formulation

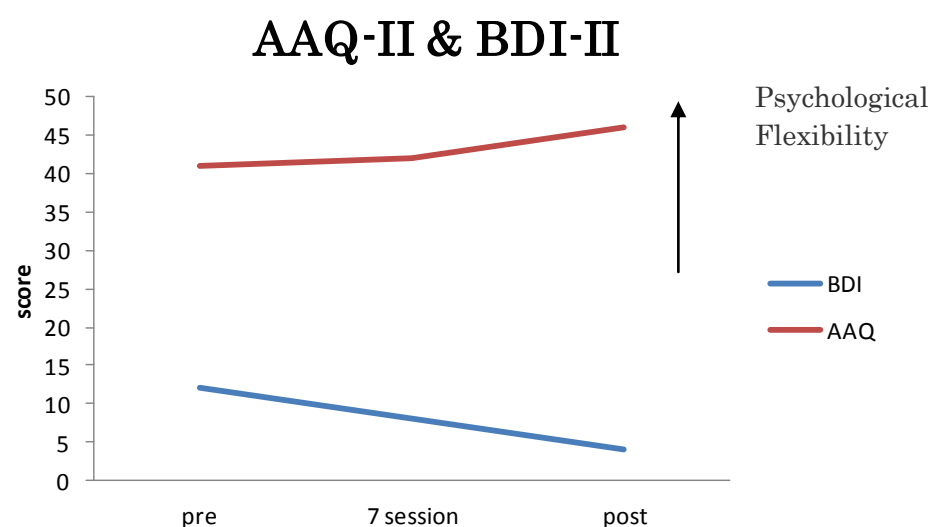


Fig.2 Changes of AAQ-II & BDI-II

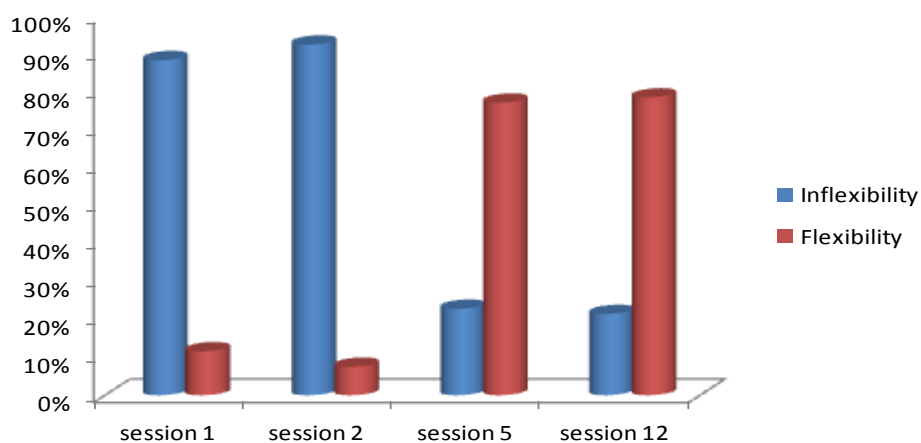


Fig.3 Text Analysis of Dialogue

## Discussion

It is very important for parents to learn behavioral parenting skills such as positive reinforcement, prompts, and shaping. However, parents may tend to avoid challenging behaviors, accordingly reinforcing them. When it is the case, a stress coping skill is the prerequisite for a parent to learn parenting skills. These results show that ACT is useful in helping parents of children with disabilities to increase their psychological flexibility.

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