

The Perceived Impact of an Online Third Wave CBT Training among Postgraduate Students and Mental Health Professionals



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INTRODUCTION

- ❖ **Cognitive-behavioral approach (CBT)** *is one of the most widespread evidence-based approaches among graduate psychology students* (Lane-Herman 2012).
- ❖ A **third wave** has emerged (Hayes et al., 2011) and increasing number of students' and mental health professionals' are **interested in being trained** in third wave CBT.
- ❖ Despite this effectiveness of these approaches (e.g., ACT, BA, MBCT, DBT; Dimidjian et al., 2016), there is a need to better **disseminate, implement** and **assess** the impact of training among therapists and students (Herschell et al., 2010).

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ **Online training has various advantages** (accessibility, cost, flexibility) for students and professional (Bennett-Levy & Perry, 2009; Hubler et al., 2015) and it offers great potential in improving various outcomes (knowledge, satisfaction, self-efficacy, clinical use; Dimeff et al., 2015; Dimeff et al., 2009).
- ❖ Involving a more **experiential form** of CBT, the "new wave" have resulted in a paradigm shift in training (Crane et al., 2012): the approach applies as much to the therapist as it does to client (Hayes et al., 2011; Luoma et al., 2007).
- ❖ **ACT training can result in :**
 - ❖ ↓ **Professional burnout** (Luoma & Vilardaga, 2013; Veage et al., 2014)
 - ❖ ↑ **Stress management** (Pakenham, 2015a); increased self-compassion (Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012)
 - ❖ ↑ **Feeling of efficiency** (Luoma & Vilardaga, 2013; Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012)
 - ❖ ↑ **Psychological flexibility** (Luoma & Vilardaga, 2013; Pakenham 2015a; Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012).

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ While there is growing body of quantitative studies, **few qualitative studies** have explored participants direct experiences of learning third wave CBT training, especially in an online format and on a personal level.
- ❖ Using a interpretative phenomenological analysis, Wardley, Flaxman, Willig, & Gillanders (2016) investigated the experience of 8 participants undergoing three sessions of ACT training.
- ❖ The findings highlight three master themes, notably the **Impact and influence of ACT training** and the **Dual focus on the self and others**.

AIM OF THIS STUDY

- ❖ Though this research provides more in-depth understanding of the perceived impact of an experiential ACT training, **further research is needed** to better understand the impact and influence of a training in broader third wave approaches.
- ❖ The main purpose of this study is to better understand the ***perceived impact of a web-based online training on third-wave cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy on a personal level*** for those participating in this type of training.

METHODOLOGY INTERVENTION

PARTICIPANTS

- ❖ The sample included **48 participants** (out of 54 participants), of which **91%** were women, and the average age of participants was **36.3 years** (SD: 11.3 years).
 - ❖ One half (**50.0%**) were **health professionals from various disciplines** (medicine, social work, psychoeducation, etc.).
 - ❖ The other half (**50.0%**) were **graduate psychology students**.
- ❖ Registered in a doctoral course (3 credits) in the context of academic training or continuing education.
- ❖ **45 hours** from May 1st until July 8th 2018 and access was given to **all content at once**.

METHODOLOGY : INTERVENTION

Modules	Title
1	Introduction to CBT and third wave
2	Behavioral activation (BA)
3	Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT)
4	Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)
5	Functional analytic psychotherapy (FAP) and dialectic behavior therapy (DBT)
6	Summary and critics

METHODOLOGY : LEARNING STRATEGIES

Brief videos



Role-plays



PCL6109
LES PSYCHOTHÉRAPIES COGNITIVO-COMPORTEMENTALES FONDÉES SUR L'ACCEPTATION ET LA PLEINE CONSCIENCE

Mot de bienvenue

Je vous souhaite la plus cordiale bienvenue dans ce cours en ligne sur les psychothérapies fondées sur l'acceptation et la pleine conscience. Je compte bien pouvoir vous transmettre ma passion pour ces approches contemporaines.

Lire la suite

La pleine conscience nous aide à prendre conscience de ces pollutions cachées de nos esprits. Et à nous en protéger : elle nous permet de restaurer nos capacités d'introspection, et de nous reconnecter à nous-mêmes.

Christophe André, *Méditer jour après jour*

Experiential exercises

PCL-6109
LES PSYCHOTHÉRAPIES COGNITIVO-COMPORTEMENTALES FONDÉES SUR L'ACCEPTATION ET LA PLEINE CONSCIENCE

Interviews with experts

Pierre Philippot, Ph. D., professeur de psychologie à l'Université catholique de Louvain (Belgique) et psychologue.

skype

01:23 / 08:16

Question 1
Quelles sont les activités que vous menez actuellement à votre centre de recherche clinique?

Question 2
Qu'est-ce que la recherche scientifique sait sur les mécanismes d'action de la pleine conscience?

Question 3
Modèle explicatif de l'impact de la pleine conscience sur les processus psychologiques impliqués dans les psychopathologies.

GRILLE D'OBSERVATION DES ACTIVITÉS ET DE L'HUMEUR

Heure	Dimanche	Lundi	Mardi	Mercredi	Jeudi	Vendredi	Samedi
5h - Activité							
Humeur							
6h - Activité							
Humeur							
7h - Activité							
Humeur							
8h - Activité							
Humeur							
9h - Activité							
Humeur							
10h - Activité							
Humeur							
11h - Activité							
Humeur							
12h - Activité							
Humeur							
13h - Activité							
Humeur							

Forum

Re: 1. Votre avis sur le cas de Philippe
par [\[Nom\]](#), vendredi 8 juin 2018, 09:34

Personnellement, je trouve que la TAC était très utile pour le cas de Philippe. Les outils utilisés ont été efficaces pour ce client. Connaissant maintenant la TAC, je ne crois pas que j'opterais pour une autre intervention. Cependant, me connaissant, je crois que j'aurais mis un peu plus d'emphasis sur l'explication de la thérapie. J'aurais probablement insisté sur la compréhension qu'il est important de briser l'évitement. Au sens où, à court terme cela peut être bénéfique mais pas à long terme. De plus, j'aurais eu tendance à vouloir aider mon client avec ses ruminations par l'activation en pleine conscience et en lui offrant plus d'explications sur ce que sont les ruminations.

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Re: 1. Votre avis sur le cas de Philippe
par [\[Nom\]](#), samedi 9 juin 2018, 11:02

J'aurais également adopté ce type d'approche. Étant donné la présence des ruminations et de l'état dépressif, je crois qu'il aurait pu être difficile d'adresser directement les différentes épreuves que Philippe traversait présentement (rupture amoureuse, perte d'emploi). Cela aurait pu mener à une forme de rumination dans la séance de toutes les difficultés qu'il vit présentement étant donné qu'il n'a pas beaucoup d'énergie et qu'il a beaucoup d'émotions négatives qui l'empêchent d'avoir une plus grande perspective (distance) sur ce qu'il vit. En agissant sur l'activation comportementale, il peut alors reprendre de l'énergie et retrouver certaines émotions positives qui permet alors dans une autre étape d'aborder avec plus de perspective les épreuves de sa vie.

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METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

- ❖ The data collected was taken from **written assignment** of approximately 12 to 16 pages, focused on the lessons learned during the training :
 - ❖ "How did you apply the methods of acceptance and mindfulness **in your life** or in your clinical practice?"
- ❖ This project was approved by the Research Ethics Board.

METHODOLOGY

ANALYSIS STRATEGY

- ❖ A **content analysis** (Bardin, 1977a) was conducted from the 48 reflective pieces.
- ❖ Through an **induction process**.
- ❖ Themes and sub-themes were created and organized with **NVivo 11**, from the various personal perceived impacts reported by the online training participants.

THEMES

1. Improvements on third-wave therapeutic processes

2. Symptom improvement

3. Increase positive experiences and one's quality of life

4. Experiment negative experiences

SUB-THEMES

1. Develop greater awareness of the present moment and attentional flexibility
2. Be consistent with one's actions and values
3. Struggle less with one's experience
4. Rediscover one's values
5. Distance oneself from thoughts
6. Adopt an observation position
7. Be kind to oneself

1. Stress reduction
2. Reduction of fatigue and exhaustion
3. Pain relief
4. Reduction in the tendency to procrastinate

1. Well-being and the immediate experience
2. Integration of a personal self-care practice
3. Personal growth
4. Feeling of pride and personal accomplishment
5. Interpersonal relationships
6. Creativity
7. Sense of security

1. Pitfalls in the implementation of methods for oneself
2. Emotional repercussion of the application of experiential exercises

RESULTS

Theme 1 : Therapeutic processes

(7) Sub-themes	Excerpts
1 Develop greater awareness of the present moment and attentional flexibility	“I’m more aware of how my breathing is affected by my internal life.” (Participant 27, p. 10, health care professional)
2 Be consistent with one’s actions and values	“I learned to be more aware of the link that exists between these behaviors, my values and my emotions when I act.” (Participant 12, p. 8 student)
3 Struggle less with one’s experience	“I welcomed my emotions and thoughts wholeheartedly, without looking to avoid them.” (Participant 13, p. 5, health care professional)
4 Rediscover one’s values	“By conducting the exercise on the values and objectives, I realized how much my relationships meant to me.” (Participant 20, p. 4, health care professional)
5 Distance oneself from thoughts	“It allows me to distance myself from his thoughts and better live with them.” (Participant 1, p. 5, student)
6 Adopt an observation position	“All in all, although difficult, this exercise was very relevant and helps to take a step back from what we’re experiencing.” (Participant 10, p. 6, student)
7 Be kind to oneself	“With the principles of this course in mind, I told myself to stop. I felt compassion for myself and accepted this pain. Moreover, it decreased at that moment.” (Participant 29, p. 3, health care professional)

RESULTS

Theme 2 : Symptom improvement

(4) Sub-themes	Excerpts
1. Stress reduction	“This state now helps me to go to work without being completely overwhelmed by my emotions and stress.” (Participant 3, p. 4, health care professional)
2. Reduction of fatigue and exhaustion	“Plan fun activities that reduce psychological and physical fatigue.” (Participant 6, p. 2, health care professional)
3. Pain relief	“So, when I felt severe pain, I told myself that the pain was a wave. This thought was reinforced by the fact that each time, at a given moment, the pain decreased.” (Participant 27, p. 3, health care professional)
4. Reduction in the tendency to procrastinate	“I also like to remember the passengers on the bus. Actually, this image is useful to redirect the work at hand to try to stop procrastinating.” (Participant 14, p. 11, student)

RESULTS

Theme 3 : Increase positive experiences and one's quality of life

(7) Sub-themes	Excerpts
1. Improvement of well-being and the immediate experience	“In other words, acting according to my values gives me satisfaction and a sense of well-being.” (Participant 12, p. 8, student)
2. Improvement or integration of a personal self-care practice	“I enjoyed the exercise and now I can do 5 or 10 minutes almost every day.” (Participant 29, p. 3, health care professional)
3. Improvement of personal growth	“The training helped broaden the range of strategies available to improve myself.” (Participant 40, p. 12, health care professional)
4. Improvement of a feeling of pride and personal accomplishment	“It helped increase the confidence I have in my abilities and gave me a sense of personal accomplishment.” (Participant 48, p. 17, student)
5. Improvement of one's interpersonal relationships	“By sharing my observations with my spouse, it helped transform the pattern that I'd been in for a long time.” (Participant 26, p. 6, health care professional)
6. Improvement of creativity	“These experiences helped me... better develop my intuitive and creative side.” (Participant 23, p. 13, student)
7. Improvement of one's sense of security	“Cognitive defusing gave me a sense of security.” (Participant 27, p. 3, health care professional)

RESULTS

Theme 4 : Experiment negative experiences

(2) Sub-themes	Excerpts
1. Pitfalls in the implementation of methods for oneself	“... a lack of time.” (Participant 11 and 17, student)
2. Emotional repercussion of the application of experiential exercises	“... I underestimated how much I ruminate in my life.” (Participant 27, p. 2, health care professional) “... I am having trouble focusing on the present moment.” (Participant 21, p. 2, health care professional)

DISCUSSION

- ❖ This research finds numerous personal perceived impacts of online training combining various third-wave CBT approaches :
 - ❖ The **development or improvement** of various **related processes** during the third-wave of the CBT
 - ❖ The **reduction** of **adverse psychological symptoms** (stress, fatigue, procrastination, pain)
 - ❖ **Increase** in the various **positive experiences and quality of life** (self-care, personal growth, etc.)
 - ❖ **Experience** of some **negative experiences** (application of the method for oneself, emotional repercussion, etc.)
- ❖ Results are quite consistent with the quantitative literature (Luoma & Vilardaga, 2013; Pakenham 2015a; Stafford-Brown & Pakenham, 2012; Veage et al., 2014) and with Wardley et al., (2016) interpretative analysis that reflected on the experiential nature of ACT and its benefits in participant life and practice.

DISCUSSION

❖ LIMITATIONS

- ❖ Social desirability
- ❖ No distinction between students and professional
- ❖ No interrater agreement
- ❖ No quantitative data or data on the maintenance of benefits over time

❖ CONCLUSIONS

This study is meant to contribute to the **development of knowledge**. It has **many innovative elements** related to the personal perceived impacts of experiential online training combining various third-wave CBT approaches including :

- ❖ **Qualitative analysis of student work**
- ❖ **Study of the impact of online training**
- ❖ **Implication : third wave as self-care strategies!**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ❖ Thanks to all the participants who generously gave their time to this study.
- ❖ This paper reports on research conducted during a D.Ps. In Psychology (Luc Bourassa, 2018).

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