**Recommendations for Contextual Behavioral Science Open Science Initiatives**

The Association for Contextual Behavioral Science (ACBS) Task Force on the Strategies and Tactics of Contextual Behavioral Science Research was formed in response to the recommendation of the ACBS Publications Committee, which believed that the association, the field, and potential authors of the *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science* (JCBS) could benefit from a clear statement of the nature and needs of the Contextual Behavioral Science (CBS) research program. One of the aims of the Task Force was to recommend steps in the Open Science effort consistent with CBS sensitivities and research strategy. The first step for the Task Force was the creation of a white paper on strategies and tactics of CBS research which has now been published (Hayes et al., 2021). The Open Science aims of the Task Force were to follow directly from the white paper recommendations for science practices and provide recommendations for a progressive CBS approach to Open Science issues. The Open Science subcommittee of the Task Force, composed of Louise McHugh (Chair), Dermot Barnes-Holmes, Stefan G. Hofmann, Maria Karekla, and Steven C. Hayes, met in late Spring and Early Summer of 2021 and created the following list of recommendations for Open Science practices that align with the scientific aims of CBS. We deliberately used the term “recommendation” rather than the term “standard.” These recommendations are meant as active encouragements to be deployed by JCBS in a thoughtful fashion with periodic exceptions made for specific reasons, not a set of mindless regulations decoupled from their larger purposes.

These recommendations were then sent to the Task Force on the Strategies and Tactics of Contextual Behavioral Science Research for comment and after refinement were unanimously approved by the Task Force. They are thus being conveyed to the ACBS Board for approval and for conveyance to the Publications Committee and such other methods of promulgation as may be determined by the Board.

**ACBS Open Science Recommendations**

1. We recommend practices that actively encourage replication.

2. We recommend openly available and accessible appendices and method sections that provide more history and context of research studies that may facilitate replication.

3. We recommend open data and transparency whenever possible. We recognize that this may not be possible in all cases. In such cases researchers should explain why they are not using open data (e.g., for ethical reasons or in cases where participants may be identifiable).

4. We recommend the use of Open Science pre-registration to promote openness and transparency regarding the theoretical framework that was used to generate the initial research question.

5. We recommend protecting bottom up contextual and idiographic work in Open Science practices. Therefore, hypothesis testing is not mandatory as it does not always fit with our philosophical leanings. Unexpected findings not based on hypothesis testing can be supported by Open Science practices such as recommendations 1-4 above.

6. We recommend pre-registration of any studies, including systematic reviews, meta-analyses, single case design studies, and clinical trials.

7. Within JCBS we suggest offering a pre-registered protocol acceptance option for especially high risk, high reward research that fosters key aspects of contextual behavioral science as a research and practice tradition, especially when such encouragement is needed to foster rapid progress (see Notes for examples).

8. We recommend that JCBS support objective criteria indicating the use of Open Science practices such as the use of badges.

9. Deviations from pre-registration should be outlined in the published manuscript.

10. We recommend that Open Science methods not be applied post hoc to research studies conducted before the promulgation of these practices by JCBS in such a way so as to undermine their fair review.

11. We recommend that Open Science for CBS research be expanded to include the relevant idiographic historical and contextual variables that bear on recruitment, concepts tested, measurement systems, and analytic strategies that could impact conduct and interpretation of research, and that JCBS advocate for this approach as a CBS consistent extension of the greater purpose of Open Science practices.

**Notes on the Recommendations**

*Recommendation 7.* The high risk, high reward studies might be targeted for the use of registered reports by JCBS are those that follow the recommendations of the ACBS Task Force on the Strategies and Tactics of CBS Research but that are costly, time-consuming or otherwise difficult to mount; or studies linked to the recommendations that may be rejected from other journals because the ideas are too methodologically or strategically novel. An example might be looking at processes of change in an idiographic way using high density measures, that are then clustered into nomothetic patterns.

Other studies that might be considered for registered reports by JCBS are carefully crafted meta-analysis studies of the patterns and practice of CBS research, simply because studies of this kind can be important, effortful, and have limited alternative outlets.

*Recommendation 10.* Science sometimes has a long “tail” -- a study may take years or even decades to be published for a wide variety of reasons. Some of the above recommendations (e.g., Recommendation 6) cannot be applied post hoc, and thus, out of simple fairness, accommodations should be expected when dealing with legacy studies in some areas.

*Recommendation 11.* What Recommendation 11 means is that we think the purposes of Open Science can be fostered by taking a more Contextual Behavioral Science approach to behavioral science research, and JCBS should actively examine and support the relevance of that message. For example, the Task Force white paper explains why as an intellectual and practice tradition we believe that behavioral science will be more progressive and replicable if its concepts are more “idionomic” -- meaning that they focus on the measurement and empirical validation of processes of change within individuals in historical and situational context that can then be generalized to sub-populations or to people as a whole, rather than relying on normative categories that are then illegitimately applied in a top down fashion to individuals.

**References**

Hayes, S. C., Merwin, R. M., McHugh, L., Sandoz, E., A-Tjak, J., Ruiz, F. J., Barnes-Holmes, D., Bricker, J. B., Ciarrochi, J., Dixon, M. R., Fung, K., Gloster, A. T., Gobin, R. L., Gould, E. R., Hofmann, S. G., Kasujja, R., Karekla, M., Luciano, C. & McCracken, L. M. (2021). Report of the ACBS Task Force on the Strategies and Tactics of Contextual Behavioral Science Research. *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science, 20*, 172-183. Doi: 10.1016/j.jcbs.2021.03.007

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