



**ACBS WORLD
CONFERENCE
NICOSIA, CYPRUS
24-28 July 2023**

Pre-Recorded Session Abstracts



199. Changing digital contexts: Design, Development, and Testing of Digital Interventions for Behavior Change

Invited

R. Vilardaga Viera¹

¹Duke University, USA

Categories: Other

In less than 20 years, smartphones went from science fiction to taking over the world with force. These miniature computers have impacted almost every corner of our lives, and have the great potential of reaching millions of people to improve access to behavioral health. However, this great promise is yet to be fulfilled. While there are over 20,000 mental health apps, only a small fraction of them have been tested in clinical studies, and very few apply simple and intuitive designs that would unleash their full potential. In this talk I will present (a) some examples of the current state of research on digital interventions for addiction, (b) an overview of our previous work developing and testing digital interventions, and (c) current efforts to evaluate the efficacy of digital interventions and their potential for implementation and dissemination among priority populations. More specifically, I will introduce the Mind to Quit Trial, a multisite study that we are currently conducting in the East Coast to test a digital therapeutic for smoking cessation designed for people with serious mental illness. This multisite trial, designed with input from the Food and Drug Administration, will generate data that could inform public health policy for using digital apps as a medical prescription. I will also discuss an ancillary study that we are conducting among racial and ethnic minorities at the intersection between serious mental illness and tobacco use disorder to examine implementation science and health equity outcomes linked to the use of this Digital Therapeutic.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the current state of research on digital interventions for addiction.
2. List examples of user-centered design research and treatment development work of digital interventions for behavior change.
3. Describe a current multisite trial to evaluate the efficacy of a Digital Therapeutic for smoking cessation among patients with serious mental illness and current research on implementation science and health equity on digital therapeutics.

200. Using Interpersonal Behavior Therapy to Broaden Conceptualization and Treatment Strategies in CBS Interventions

Workshop

G. Callaghan¹

¹San Jose State University, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Role play*

Categories: Supervision and training

Target Audience: Intermediate

As we focus powerful CBS treatments on specific issues like psychological flexibility, developing skills in acceptance and value-directed living, we may overlook the broader context of human interaction, possibly missing opportunities to ease suffering as it's expressed with other people. This workshop highlights advantages of broadening our conceptualizations to include client relationships as defined by Interpersonal Behavior Therapy (IBT), where the emphasis is on the dynamic interpersonal interaction between the client and others, including the therapist. Using clinical behavior analysis, IBT extends the model initially proposed by Functional Analytic Psychotherapy and provides a rich contextual understanding focused on developing client repertoires and connected relationships. Clinical examples are provided using IBT for client problems that can occur in ACT-focused sessions to situate client struggles in an interpersonal context specifying behavioral repertoires for development. Additional strategies for clinical change are described for intrapersonal problems that are evidenced interpersonally. A role play will demonstrate this approach in-session along with efforts to extended change outside of therapy to help reduce client distress and develop more connected supportive relationships.

Educational Objectives:

1. Identify interpersonal aspects of clinical problems identified as experiential or intrapersonal (in-session and with others outside of therapy).
2. Conceptualize identified problems as occurring interpersonally and variables that might give rise to and sustain those problems.
3. Clarify the utility or value of focusing on those interpersonal factors for the client given the overall formulation of that case.
4. Respond to opportunities to develop (shape) more effective client behaviors and interpersonal skills to help client seeking support and connection with therapist and others.

201. Doing More But Never Doing Enough: Help your clients unhook from productivity anxiety and engage in skillful means with Wise Effort

Workshop

D. Hill¹

¹Private Practice, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Role play*

Categories: Processes of change

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Many high performing clients report being more “productive” than ever, but still feel like they aren’t doing enough. Hooked by productivity anxiety, clients get caught in vicious striving cycles that leave them feeling dissatisfied, depleted and acting in ways that are out of alignment with their values. Drawing from research on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), and the contemplative teachings of “Wise Effort,” this workshop will guide practitioners in how to help clients shift from unworkable striving toward values-aligned, compassionate action. Participants will learn signs of inflexible striving and how to map out common processes that keep stuck and burned out. Participants will engage in metaphor, embodiment practices, experiential exercises, and short writing assignments to learn processes that will increase their client’s psychological flexibility and skillful striving.

Educational Objectives:

1. Conceptualize clients' inflexible striving as experiential avoidance.
2. Define Wise Effort from contemplative and third-wave perspectives.
3. Employ experiential exercises that increase values-based effort toward compassionate goals.
4. Engage clients in activities that balance "good stress" with "constructive rest".

202. Using Exposure to Strengthen Self-as-Context: Oregon Chapter Sponsored

Workshop

B. Thompson¹, B. Pilecki¹

¹Portland Psychotherapy Clinic, Research, & Training Center, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Processes of change

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Much has been written about the importance of willingness and values in ACT-informed exposure (e.g., Twohig et al., 2018). In this workshop, we focus on what is arguably the most important yet often overlooked hexaflex process in ACT-informed exposure: self-as-context. Self-as-context refers to an "I" from which we can observe all experiences. It builds upon cognitive defusion and encompasses willingness in that it describes a perspective from which one can defuse from thinking and be present with uncomfortable feelings and bodily sensations. One recent study of OCD found that, of all the ACT processes, self-as-content was most relevant to symptom severity (Thompson et al., 2022).

Through the repetition of exposure, clients learn to tact, discriminate, and practice psychological flexibility with uncomfortable private events. In this workshop, we explore the importance of self-as-context in exposure work and how to be more deliberate in working with it in clients. Drawing from RFT, we will discuss how exposure may strengthen hierarchical framing. We also will discuss how fusion with self-as-content can be a barrier to treatment.

Educational Objectives:

1. Explain the importance of self-as-context in ACT-informed exposure.
2. Demonstrate how to discriminate signs of self-as-context in client feedback during exposure
3. Discuss instructions that may help clients contact self-as-context.
4. Use exposure to strengthen hierarchical framing.
5. Identify fusion with self-as-content as a barrier to improvement in anxiety treatment.

203. ACT-Informed Psychedelic Integration: Psychedelic and Non-Ordinary States of Consciousness SIG Sponsored

Workshop

B. Pilecki¹, T. Morris²

¹Portland Psychotherapy Clinic, Research, & Training Center, USA

²True North Therapy and Training, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Literature review, Role play*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Though psychedelic assisted therapy is still several years away from legal availability, more clients are learning about the potential for psychedelics to treat mental health problems and are choosing to use psychedelics on their own. As a result, an increasing number of clinicians are encountering the topic of psychedelics even if it is not their specialty area. This workshop will focus on basic principles of ACT-informed psychedelic integration to help clinicians improve in their ability to talk to clients about their psychedelic experiences and integrate them into traditional psychotherapy. Empirically supported principles from the model of psychedelic-assisted therapy emerging from early clinical trials of psilocybin and MDMA, such as using a non-directive approach, will be presented from an ACT lens to help participants respond effectively to clients, such as by using cognitive defusion in helping clients describe indescribable experiences. After completing this workshop, participants will be better able to have informed conversations with clients about the use of psychedelic substances and understand how the ACT model is a natural fit for talking about psychedelic experiences.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe basic features of psychedelic integration as informed by recent clinical trials.
2. Demonstrate how to use the ACT model to provide psychedelic integration in clients who are using psychedelics on their own.
3. Identify particular needs associated with positive challenging or disappointing psychedelic experiences.

204. ACT-Informed Exposure for Clients Who Couldn't Care Less About ACT

Workshop

B. Thompson¹, B. Pilecki¹

¹Portland Psychotherapy Clinic, Research, & Training Center, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Role play*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

ACT-informed exposure has a growing research base for anxiety and obsessive-compulsive and related disorders (Arch et al., 2012; Twohig et al., 2018). However, the support for traditional exposure is more extensive (e.g., Norton & Price, 2007), and many clients seek out therapists with expertise in exposure without concern for the model. They want an exposure specialist but may not care or even register if you're also an ACT therapist. While some of these clients learn to appreciate ACT, others have buy-in for exposure yet may resist an ACT approach.

What do you do with clients who remain skeptical when you try to orient them to willingness? What about clients who seem disinterested in values work?

This workshop is rooted in over a decade of experience with clients dubious about ACT. The presenters will offer practical ways of talking about ACT-informed exposure that may resonate with hesitant clients and describe experiential exercises that are particularly complementary to exposure work. Finally, common client barriers to ACT-informed exposure will be identified, along with potential solutions.

Educational Objectives:

1. Explore rationales for ACT-informed exposure that clients can easily grasp.
2. Practice experiential exercises that help orient clients to ACT-informed exposure.
3. Describe ways to address common barriers to ACT-informed exposure.

205. Where's My Hoverboard? Taking cutting-edge Relational Frame Theory (RFT) for a 'ROEM' around the skatepark of human language and cognition: Australia & New Zealand Chapter Sponsored

Workshop

T. McLauchlan¹

¹Private Practice, Australia

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

This workshop will hold your hand as you step off your old skateboard (using classic A-B-C's to understand behaviour) and onto your newly developed Hoverboard (using Relational Frame Theory (RFT) to understand human behaviour, including human language and cognition). The focus will be on the stuff clinicians want to know about when working with clients. We will highlight some recent developments in RFT (HDML/ROE-m). Ultimately, this workshop aims to serve as a fun and easy introduction to RFT as presented in Harte, C. & Barnes-Holmes, D. (2021).

Key reference:

Harte, C. & Barnes-Holmes, D. (2021). A primer on relational frame theory (RFT). In M.P. Twohig, M.E. Levin, & J.M. Peterson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*. Oxford University Press.

Educational Objectives:

1. Explain how Relational Frame Theory (RFT) can be conceptualised within a classic A-B-C framework.
2. Describe the process of Relating, Orienting and Evoking (ROE).
3. Apply RFT (HDML/ROE) when conducting a functional analysis in clinical work.

206. "It's Not Just My Emotions. It's My Reality": Addressing Systemic Racism Using Culturally Tailored ACT

Workshop

J.S. Payne^{1, 2}

¹Johns Hopkins University, USA

²Kennedy Krieger Institute, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Social justice / equity / diversity

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Effective therapy can only help marginalized and oppressed groups to a point. The evidence-based programs we use as therapists were developed and tested based on Eurocentric cultural paradigms valuing individualism versus collectivism. Also, marginalized groups have both personal distress and systemic issues affecting their well-being.

This workshop examines ways to address systemic issues and social injustice through ACT, using African Americans as an example. While ACT works, elements can be tailored to increase trust in the therapeutic process and increase motivation toward treatment for those suffering from systemic oppression.

The trainer developed a culturally tailored ACT model called POOF (Pulling Out Of Fire), where the models of cultural humility and the social determinants of health were used to adapt the POOF model. Introducing ACT via the POOF model, the trainer will present an action plan to help clients commit to both personal and communal actions. Real-world case examples, experiential exercises, and selective disclosures will be interwoven throughout. Finally, there will be a discussion on how this framework might apply to other marginalized groups.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the axiology of evidence-based practices and how they were not designed explicitly for marginalized populations.
2. Apply the social determinants of health to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.
3. Compare classic ACT with culturally tailored ACT (POOF)
4. Demonstrate the development of collective values using case examples.
5. Explain and define systemic oppression and social justice applied to ACT.

207. Unlocking the power of emotional self-regulation in youth: Exploring Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for managing anger and aggression in children and adolescents

Workshop

S.T. Cohen¹, E. Nahloni²

¹CBT, Israel

²Sheba Medical Center, Israel

Components: *Conceptual analysis*

Categories: Other

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

This workshop will focus on implementing Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to regulate anger and aggression in children and adolescents. Anger is a negative emotional response to an event perceived as provoking or crossing personal boundaries. It is linked to aggressive behavior and interpersonal problems and is a significant part of the symptomatology of many psychological disorders. However, anger is also a natural and functional response that can motivate us to act in the face of a real or perceived threat and facilitate communication regarding interpersonal conflicts.

Expressing anger becomes problematic when it is excessive, out of control, causes aggressive behavior, and leads to distress or dysfunction. Children and adolescents who struggle to regulate anger and aggression may experience social rejection and complications in further development.

ACT offers a solution to anger management difficulties and aggression by promoting psychological flexibility, which is the ability to respond appropriately to environmental demands while maintaining a connection to inner values. According to the approach, children and adolescents who struggle to control anger exhibit psychological inflexibility and attempt to avoid contact with inner experiences by converting them into aggressive behavior. Thoughts and feelings can trigger them without the ability to notice and observe them. During the workshop, participants will learn about the six processes that promote psychological flexibility and how to apply specific techniques for regulating anger and aggression in children and youth.

Educational Objectives:

1. Diagnose different disorders in children and adolescents related to anger regulation.
2. Conceptualize a formulation of anger and aggression control difficulties according to the model of acceptance and commitment therapy.
3. Plan an acceptance and commitment treatment model for anger dysregulation in children and adolescents.
4. Apply various techniques across six core processes designated to increase psychological flexibility and improve anger regulation.

208. ACTION in Psychosis Recovery

Workshop

J. Gerlach¹

¹True Story Counseling LLC, USA

Components: *Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Literature review*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Intermediate

Years ago, psychosis was viewed as a severe and permanent disability. Individuals living with psychosis were tragically often encouraged to abandon their valued goals mislabeled 'grandiose' in favor of their treatment team's goals, often a life of treatment and seeking stability on medication. What a dark time in our field's history! Today, many individuals with psychosis recover and are thriving despite (and sometimes encouraged by the insights made through) their experience. Through clinical wisdom, research, and the author's lived experience as a person in mental health recovery, we will focus on how Acceptance Commitment Therapy can be a powerful tool in encouraging mental health recovery. We will practice exercises applicable to a wide range of individuals to inspire hope, move beyond the 'patient' label toward a contextual sense of self, spark the creation of valued goals, and ignite movements towards these.

Educational Objectives:

1. Implement interventions to assist clients in identifying valued-goals.
2. Describe the role of identity in mental health recovery as well as how clinicians can assist clients 'stuck' in a patient identity label toward a more complex of self.
3. Apply strategies for energizing clients toward their valued goals including those who may struggle with motivation.

209. (IN) Tour: In the Route of Self Discovery - A tool to promote psychological flexibility and self-compassion with children and teens

Workshop

C. Crispim¹

¹Cascais Municipality, Portugal

Components: *Case presentation, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

The (IN) Tour is a board game created to playfully explore the processes of cognitive flexibility and self-compassion with children and young people above 10 years.

It is a tool that intends to be used as an instrument to promote self-knowledge and prevention of mental health. This game aims to encourage thinking about life as if it were a bus, where each player is the driver and their thoughts, emotions and sensations are the passengers.

Now, it happens that sometimes passengers are unwanted, like some thoughts or fears that tell the driver how to drive his bus.

The challenge of the game is to identify which direction you want to drive the bus and use psychological flexibility exercises, to deal with unwanted passengers.

Along the way, you will have some recharge stop (support of friends, self-care actions and compassionate dialogue), but also indents, with avoidance experiences.

It's a game that invites everyone to take the wheel, choose the direction and learn to deal with its passengers.

Educational Objectives:

1. Demonstrate as players this tool and reflect on how it can contribute to acquire skills to deal with suffering and psychological difficulties by promoting processes involved in psychological flexibility such as: cognitive defusion, contact with the present moment, acceptance, clarification of values, committed actions with the values and I observer.
2. Explore through the board game adaptive emotional regulation strategies to deal with life's difficulties and failures through the development of self-compassionate attitudes that allow a young person to relate to herself in a more positive warm and encouraging way.
3. Discuss how the CFT model can articulate with the ACT model in practice. Communicate and discuss the results of a pilot study carried out with young people between 12 and 17 years old.

210. Compassionate Mind Training for Healthcare Professionals

Workshop

T. Ngo^{1, 2}, A. Elie², S. Paquette^{2, 3}

¹Hopital du Sacré Coeur de Montréal, Canada

²Université de Montréal, Canada

³CISSS Lanaudière, Canada

Components: *Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Methods/approaches for individual variation

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Compassionate Mind Training, with its roots in evolutionary psychology, attachment theory, and neuroscience, may offer a useful framework for approaching some of the challenges of working in an overstretched healthcare system, at the personal, professional, and organizational levels. It will present a heuristic based on evolutionary theory explaining how we find ourselves with "tricky brain" that can cause all sorts of problems for ourselves and others and discuss how to recognize when we find ourselves in self-defeating mental loops. We will investigate how a compassionate attitude, for self and others, as a healthcare professional might help guide a useful, effective and self-sustaining approach to meeting physical and mental suffering. We will see how this approach can bring a variety of positive benefits for mental health and well-being and will talk about the experience of guiding two large online groups for physicians during the pandemic. We will learn some techniques and practices to help us cultivate compassion in our personal and professional lives, particularly when dealing with the daily challenges of a career in healthcare.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the three emotion regulation systems.
2. Describe and strengthen the attributes of the compassionate self.
3. Summarize the techniques for directing compassion towards the self, colleagues and patients to foster effectiveness and resilience.

211. ACT and Feminism: How Contextual Behavioral Science and ACT can move us towards equity inside and outside the therapy room

Workshop

L. Loureiro¹

¹Private Practice, Argentina

Components: *Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Social justice / equity / diversity

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Feminism implies equality and equity for all genders. As we try to pursue these values, we may encounter obstacles that prevent us from behaving in our desired way. Gender roles are part of our learning history and can influence our behavioral repertoire both in our personal lives and in the therapy room.

This workshop will include a didactic presentation on the main contributions that Contextual Behavioral Science can bring to this field. Throughout the presentation you will be invited to look at your personal experiences with gender, and how it has influenced your behavior. We will also explore how gender stereotypes can impact our work as therapists. You will be guided experientially through different ACT processes to touch on the obstacles that are interfering with behaving in line with your values in your personal life and with your clients. The aim of this workshop is for people of all genders to reflect on the influence of gender on behavior and create an action plan to move towards their values in their personal and professional lives.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the contributions of Contextual Behavioral Science to an understanding of gender.
2. Explore how gender influences our behavior inside and outside the therapy room.
3. Identify values and obstacles towards committed action regarding gender equity in our personal and professional lives.
4. Create a plan of committed actions in line with personal values.

212. Together we can build a digital platform to help the world: Let's co-create and give it to all, for free!

Workshop

F. Livheim¹, J. Rickardsson¹

¹Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

Components: *Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Strategic planning*

Categories: Dissemination or global health strategies

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

We believe the human-caused climate change, the mental health crisis, rising inequalities and political turmoil are symptoms. The root cause of these crises may be how we individually and collectively detach from ourselves, each other and nature. Our belief is that psychological tools can help people connect with themselves, each other, the world and become wiser decision makers.

Therefore, we are creating a digital, app-based platform grounded in Contextual Behavioral Science with the goal to measurably transform 5 million lives within three years.

This platform is non-profit, open source, free for end-users, and funded by philanthropists and partnerships. The release of the app less than a year ago already resulted in 320 000 downloads from +205 countries and a rating of 4.8 out of 5 in Appstore.

This workshop is an invitation to test the platform and to join us in co-creating content and research. The workshop will include an introduction to the platform, exercises and ideas on how to engage in co-creating this global initiative.

One-minute inspirational-video: https://youtu.be/29YL_4aPxuM

Educational Objectives:

1. Use the 29k platform with its courses, exercises and challenges for oneself and/or clients.
2. Demonstrate the possibilities, as a therapist or researcher to help co-create the platform by adding content and courses and steps to be taken to do this.
3. Discuss the possibilities, as a therapist or researcher to use the 29k platform to do research or use the platform as a base or partner for research applications.

214. Breathing Compassion into ACT with the Compassion Focused ACT (CFACT) Case Formulation Model: Compassion Focused SIG Sponsored

Workshop

D. Tirch¹, L. Silberstein-Tirch¹

¹The Center for CFT, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Original data, Role play*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

A robust and coherent case formulation is known to contribute to positive outcomes across evidence-based psychotherapy modalities, and when we integrate Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) and ACT interventions with the benefit of a theoretically precise and consistent formulation model the whole can be more than the sum of its parts. In this workshop, Dr. Laura Silberstein Tirch and Dr. Dennis Tirch provide an integrative, process-based case formulation model that is both CFT-informed and ACT-consistent. This model is drawn from their book "The ACT Practitioner's Guide to The Science of Compassion" and ongoing research on Compassion Focused ACT (CFACT) at Kean University and elsewhere. Participants will learn a new way of understanding, framing and delivering interventions, in order to best help clients to cultivate mindfulness, acceptance and compassion throughout the course of therapy, regardless of the diagnoses or stressors that they face. The CFACT formulation model weaves the psychological flexibility model and the science of compassion together to provide a coherent and user-friendly roadmap for personal practice and effective, values-based, and compassionate action.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe an ACT-consistent and compassion focused case formulation that informs process based interventions.
2. Implement compassion cultivation interventions that are grounded in a coherent CFACT case formulation.
3. Train clients in psychological flexibility that address functional analysis at multiple levels in accord with both the extended evolutionary meta-model and the evolutionary model of motivation and emotion found in CFT.

216. The Contextual Science of Compassion and the Behavioral Treatment of Trauma: An Introduction to Compassion-Focused Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (CFACT) for Complex PTSD: Compassion Focused SIG Sponsored

Workshop

D. Tirch¹, T. Vogel¹, L. Silberstein-Tirch¹

¹The Center for CFT, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Literature review, Original data, Role play*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

During this era of pandemic, war, and systemic inequality, people all over the world have been reporting increasing distress and symptoms of PTSD. Effective treatment for people living with trauma is a global priority. Grounded in Compassion Focused Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (CFACT) and tri-phasic treatment of trauma, this workshop provides an integrative and ACT-consistent framework for working with trauma in its varied forms. Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to discuss the supporting research and scientific foundations of the CFACT approach to trauma, as well as be able to integrate these techniques into their existing contextual behavioral practice. This workshop will introduce specific tools designed to help clients safely connect to the present, compassionately develop new relationships with the past, and meaningfully build a future. These integrative methods will also include elements of emotional exposure drawn from EMDR. This workshop's innovative and user-friendly experiential exercises, didactic instruction, and role-play practices will empower participants to meet their most complex cases with new perspectives and the transformational applied science of mindful compassion.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe an ACT-consistent, compassion-focused approach to the tri-phasic treatment of complex trauma.
2. Implement a number of nervous system grounding techniques that are acceptance based and mindfulness informed as a first phase intervention for trauma treatment.
3. Deploy compassion focused exposure and response prevention methodologies to the treatment of complex trauma.

217. CFT with Adolescents: Addressing the Fallout of the Pandemic: Ohio Chapter Sponsored

Workshop

C. Fraser¹, H. Fraser²

¹Positive Path Counseling, LLC, USA

²Compassionate Mind Collaborative, USA

Components: *Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Role play*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Adolescents around the world are suffering. The lingering fallout of the pandemic, fears stemming from unrelenting school shootings, and underlying anguish about global climate change are all contributing factors. As a result, suicide rates have skyrocketed over the last decade, with suicide now the second leading cause of death among adolescents in the United States.

The call for compassion for adolescents is loud. We can respond by teaching teens compassionate mind skills. The need to foster self-compassion is paramount! Participants by the end of this workshop will be able to utilize CFT principles and practices to help adolescents learn to be mindful of their suffering, to bring self-compassion to themselves, to recognize that they are not alone in their struggles, and to grow the compassionate courage to live vitally!

We will work experientially in this workshop to learn practical CFT interventions and how to apply them virtually and in person. We will emphasize CFT chair work as a powerful tool for cultivating self-compassion, defusion, perspective taking, and dealing with the challenging parts of ourselves.

Educational Objectives:

1. Explain how the brain has evolved and how it can be "tricky" and why we need compassion for it.
2. Describe why new brain and old brain loops can be problematic for adolescents.
3. Utilize CFT chair work with adolescents.

218. The paradox of fertility and pregnancy loss: How to help clients accept the immensity of grief while holding hope for the future

Workshop

A.K. Bachik¹, D. Hill²

¹MSU Denver, USA

²<https://drdianahill.com/>, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises*

Categories: Health / behavioral medicine

Target Audience: Beginner

Infertility and pregnancy loss are global health issues, affecting between 48 million couples and 186 million individuals worldwide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these rates are rising. Clients seek support around their infertility, losses, miscarriages, and grief, and therapists are often left without the tools, knowledge, or resources to help. Drawing from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Positive Psychology, and ancestral and contemplative wisdom, this workshop will guide practitioners in how to conceptualize and navigate the paradox of immense grief and hope. Participants will learn how to identify their own and clients' experiential avoidance around infertility and pregnancy loss, skills for radical acceptance and hope, rituals to help with the grief and ongoing fertility journey, and useful resources. The workshop will provide personal examples from the presenters' lived experiences, client examples, and engaging experiential exercises.

Educational Objectives:

1. Conceptualize your own and client's experiential avoidance around infertility, miscarriage, and pregnancy loss.
2. Demonstrate skills to increase radical acceptance of infertility and/or pregnancy loss and radical hope to continue the journey.
3. Develop rituals around grief and hope.
4. Discover useful resources for clients who are dealing with infertility and/or pregnancy loss.

219. Applying ACT and Empowerment Education to Reduce Stress and Promote Resilience: Insights from PACER e-Intervention

Workshop

M. Yang¹, K. Fung¹, P. Mishra², S.Y. Lu¹, A. Li³, J.P. Wong²

¹University of Toronto, Canada

²Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada

³Regent Park Community Health Centre, Canada

Components: *Experiential exercises, Original data*

Categories: Social justice / equity / diversity

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

The COVID-19 pandemic induced anxieties, social isolation, work-related stressors and increased family demands, especially among health care providers (HCPs). In response we designed and implemented the PACER e-intervention, using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and empowerment education. The purpose was to promote psychological flexibility and collective resilience. A total of 252 frontline HCPs joined PACER. In this workshop, we will engage participants in experiential learning on how to design e-learning exercises that support defusion, acceptance, self-awareness, self-as-context, and valued guided action in personal and societal contexts. Specifically, we will focus on e-learning exercises that support PACER participants to: (1) recognize the invisible rules that contribute to their internal struggles, influence their behaviours and perpetuate power relations in society; (2) connect with lived moments to gain insights on the impermanent and interconnected self; and (3) reflect on their personal and collective values, which can guide their decision making and actions during challenging times. In summary, workshop participants will acquire strategies to integrate ACT with empowerment education needed during crises like a pandemic.

Educational Objectives:

1. Use the skills of defusion and acceptance to enhance psychological flexibility and resilience.
2. Analyze how psychological well-being is associated with personal values and power relations.
3. Apply the experiential e-learning framework for stress-reduction and resilience enhancement training.

220. Variation with Vignettes - Special Edition: Back to Basics with Clinical Behavior Analysis

Panel

L. Lasprugato¹, E. Sandoz², T. DuFrene³, D. Carr^{4, 5}, M. Boone⁶

¹Private Practice, USA

²Louisiana Contextual Science Research Group, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, USA

³University of California, Santa Barbara, USA

⁴VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System, USA

⁵University of Nevada, School of Medicine, USA

⁶University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, USA

Components: *Case presentation, Conceptual analysis, Strategic planning*

Categories: Behavior analysis

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a form of clinical behavior analysis (CBA). And yet, with the explosive increase in the dissemination of ACT in recent years, there's growing risk of it decoupling from its foundational underpinnings that give ACT its power in the shaping of human behavior. As a result, ACT may be applied as de-contextualized, topographical techniques that miss the mark on effectively moving psychological processes of change. CBA can serve to reorient ACT practitioners to the ongoing stream of behavior in context that occurs in clinical exchanges. As a result, interventions become more functional, fluid, and precise in targeting processes of change.

This panel discussion will call upon emerging experts of CBA to offer an idiographic functional assessment and proposed intervention in response to a challenging clinical video vignette. The vignette will be broken down into short segments, allowing panelists to comment on moment-to-moment observations in the client's behavior. The moderator will invite panelists to relate their analyses to ACT (and other contextual behavioral) processes when applicable.

Educational Objectives:

1. Perform an explicit functional assessment of clinical behavior in context.
2. Propose verbally-based interventions informed by an ongoing functional analysis.
3. Relate functional analyses to the processes of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (and other contextual behavioral approaches).

221. Questionable Research Practices within Contextual Behavioral Science (CBS): Concerns and potential ways forward

Panel

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⁷Ruhr University, Germany

Components: *Conceptual analysis*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Intermediate, Advanced

Psychological science currently faces both replication (Open Science Collaboration, 2015) and measurement (Flake & Fried, 2020) crises; the role of questionable research practices has also become more apparent as of late (O'Donohue et al., 2022). Despite efforts from the very beginning to build a rigorous knowledge development system, CBS is not immune to these issues. Fortunately, the recent ACBS Task Force report and JCBS open science initiatives address some of these meta-science concerns. However, as demonstrated by recent critical appraisals of ACT (e.g., Arch et al., 2023; McLoughlin & Roche, 2023), there is still room for growth. In this panel discussion, researchers across diverse roles, training backgrounds, and career stages discuss a number of questions relevant to these issues, including: (a) in light of recent meta-science concerns, how can CBS continue to pursue rigorous knowledge development and applications; (b) how can we better integrate basic RFT research with applied ACT interventions; and (c) what can be done to increase the dissemination/implementation of ACT and related process-based approaches while still maintaining fidelity to underlying theoretical/philosophical roots?

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe key developments and challenges within the replication and measurement crises, especially as these issues relate to interventions within the field of CBS.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of how questionable research practices influence our understanding and evaluation of the status of evidence-based treatments including ACT and other PBTs.
3. Apply knowledge of QRPs and other methodological issues to the selection and implementation of intervention techniques with clients in clinical settings.

222. Reflections from the Awardees of the ACBS Early Career Mentorship Award Program

Panel

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Components: *Strategic planning*

Categories: Academics or education

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

The Early Career Mentorship (ECM) program, initiated in 2020, aims to support early career CBS researchers in securing research-focused faculty positions and/or obtaining tenure in research institutions by matching them with established CBS research-focused mentors. Applicants are evaluated based on their competitiveness for a research-focused faculty position, their current and potential contributions to CBS, and the indicated need and benefits of receiving mentorship for their next career steps. Mentors commit to working with a mentee for a two-year period. In this panel, 2021 awardees will discuss their experiences with the ECM program, including the stage of their career during which they received the award, the type of mentoring they received, where they are currently at in their career, and future directions. They are Connie Chong (Hong Kong) mentored by Jonathon Bricker at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Anne Roche (USA) by Rhonda Merwin at Duke University, and Shane McLoughlin (Ireland/UK) by Todd Kashdan at George Mason University. Additionally, the awardees will discuss successes and challenges encountered with the mentoring program, as well as solutions identified.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the aim of the ACBS Early Career Mentorship (ECM) Program.
2. Prepare one's own professional development as potential applicants or as potential mentors by learning of the 2021 awardees' experiences in the ACBS ECM Program.
3. Analyze the impacts of the ACBS ECM Program on the field of contextual behavioral science (CBS).

223. Meeting Each Individual with a Compassionate ACT: How can the EEMM, CFT and an idionomic perspective on functional analysis play nicely and share their toys?

Panel

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²UC Santa Barbara, USA

Components: *Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Literature review, Original data*

Categories: Processes of change

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

This panel presentation will discuss a novel case formulation model for Compassion-Focused Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (CFACT) that integrates elements of ACT, Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). The model takes an idionomic perspective on functional analysis, emphasizing the uniqueness of each individual's psychological experiences and the importance of identifying and addressing the context in which problematic behaviors arise. Additionally, the model acknowledges the role of process-based therapy in creating lasting change. Panel members will discuss the research support for this model, ongoing research directions, clinical applications, and the possible challenges of adopting a new case formulation model. Evolutionary science, viewed from the lens of the Extended Evolutionary Meta-Model (EEMM) and Social Mentality Theory (SMT) will be highlighted in the discussion. These evolutionary perspectives inform the CFACT case formulation model, theory of affect and motivation, and compassion-focused, multi-level functional analysis interventions. By attending this panel, clinicians will learn about an ACT-consistent case formulation that integrates components of CFT and EMDR to create a more individualized and process-focused approach to therapy.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe and reflect upon the process elements of a CFACT case formulation model.
2. Base case formulation decisions on an understanding of the relative merits of CBS case formulation modalities.
3. Frame and implement the basics of compassion focused and act consistent case formulation strategies.

224. Innovations in Remote and Technology-Assisted Acceptance Based Interventions

Symposium

C. McCloskey¹, M. Armaou², A. Stapleton³, J. Lavelle¹, S. Nicolescu⁴

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²University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

³DBS, Ireland

⁴Babes-Bolyai University, Romania

Components: *Case presentation, Original data*

Categories: Mobile or digital technology

Target Audience: Intermediate

Remote, online, and technology-assisted mental health interventions have increased in popularity since the COVID-19 Pandemic. This symposium combines the innovative work that has occurred in the delivery of remote Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Mindfulness interventions over the past three years, with a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research that explores the effectiveness, feasibility, and outstanding issues associated with these newer modes of delivery.

This symposium includes papers on digital Acceptance and Commitment Therapy interventions for clinical populations as well as Acceptance and Commitment Training for medical practitioners. Research on the perspectives of mental health professionals on the delivery of live video based interventions is presented, as well as research on interactive chatbot-based mental health interventions.

From the classroom to the zoom room: Perspectives on adapting mindfulness-based interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic

C. McCloskey¹

¹University College Dublin, Ireland

Components: *Literature review, Original data*

Categories: Mobile or digital technology

Target Audience: Intermediate

The COVID-19 pandemic has elicited concern about mental health and wellbeing at a time when the provision of mental health care has also faced significant disruption. In response to the pandemic, mindfulness teachers and other mental health practitioners have had to adapt to new ways of delivering what were once predominantly face-to-face interventions. 13 mindfulness teachers who adapted either eight week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction or Mindfulness Based Intervention courses to online formats were interviewed on their perspectives on this change. Practitioners reported being pleasantly surprised by the potential that online interventions had for embodiment and depth of enquiry, but expressed concerns about dealing with adverse events from participants and the lost social connections that occur during in-person courses. These results broadly support the effectiveness and utility of online mindfulness interventions but highlight certain limitations as well as the need for stronger protocols for assisting distressed participants.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the literature on the effectiveness of online mindfulness interventions.

Chatbot-delivered acceptance and commitment therapy with adolescents: A pilot randomized controlled trial

A. Stapleton¹, J. Lavelle², L. McHugh²

¹DBS, Ireland

²University College Dublin, Ireland

Components: *Didactic presentation, Experiential exercises, Literature review, Original data*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Intermediate

The present pilot study was a three-arm parallel-group RCT that aimed to (i) evaluate universal chatbot-delivered ACT for adolescents and (ii) assess the feasibility of nesting high temporal density measures of problematic rule-following (i.e., daily ecological momentary assessments) in the chatbot. 148 young people aged 15 to 17 years were randomly assigned to receive either chatbot-delivered ACT, psychoeducation via a booklet, or neither of these. Participants completed self-report measures of generalized pliance, tracking, affect, psychological inflexibility, and valued living at three time-points (immediately pre-intervention, immediately post-intervention, and at a six-week follow-up), with participants assigned to the chatbot further completing daily single-item assessments of problematic pliance. No statistically significant changes in any dependent variable were observed across conditions or over time. As per intervention satisfaction data, chatbot-delivered ACT demonstrated adequate acceptability. Given both the apparent convergence with a standardized measure and minimal missing data, nesting ecological momentary assessments in the chatbot was deemed highly feasible. Findings are discussed with reference to (i) session duration and (ii) means of enhancing artificial intelligence underlying the chatbot going forward.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe recent advancements in the use of chatbot-delivered acceptance and commitment therapy.
2. List ACT exercises targeting rigid rule-following that may be delivered via a chatbot.

Oncovox: A randomised controlled trial of a web-based Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Breast cancer patients

S. Nicolescu¹

¹Babes-Bolyai University, Romania

Components: *Original data*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Background: iACT interventions can be cost-efficient and convenient medium for providing evidence-based treatment for breast cancer patients (BCP).

Objectives: Determining the feasibility and efficacy of Oncovox, a guided iACT intervention designed to improve psychosocial outcomes in BCP in active treatment.

Methods: Testing a 8 module intervention in a two-arm, parallel, open label RCT.

Participants were randomly assigned to the iACT group (N=75) or to a waitlist (N=75).

Primary outcomes: quality of life (QOL), behavioural activation (BA), symptom interference (SI) and reward observation (RO). Secondary outcomes: anxiety and depression symptoms

and psychological flexibility (PF). Measurements were made at pre- and post-intervention, twice during the intervention and at 1- and 2- months follow-up.

Results: SI, anxiety and depression and PF strongly improved, outcomes further improving at follow-up. QOL, BA and RW improved moderately, but only when analysing the imputed data.

Conclusion: Ocovox is the first iACT intervention for BCPs, results adding new insight to the scarce evidence of the effectiveness and acceptability in this area of research.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe how to adapt an ACT intervention for the online medium.

Feasibility of digital acceptance and commitment training for UK nurses

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Mobile or digital technology

Target Audience: Intermediate

A mixed-methods study was conducted to examine the feasibility of an adapted 4-week online version of Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) to UK nurses delivered through an open-access online training package in Moodle. The aim was to enhance nurses' psychological flexibility and reduce stress in the workplace. Materials included combinations of animations, links to mindfulness practices, home exercises and textual information. Each session targeted at least two psychological flexibility processes. 45 nurses were recruited via professional networks and a Twitter campaign. 69% completed the pre-intervention questionnaire and Google analytics suggest that they all engaged with the first session. 33% completed the post-intervention questionnaire. Highest engagement level was in a cluster of 25 participants. Values identification exercises were more frequently accessed than mindfulness practices. Qualitative participant feedback indicated that pre-existent attitudes towards, and familiarity with, online mindfulness-based interventions were a key driver of nurses' engagement. Digital adaptations of ACT at work should include material targeting values-based processes. Intervention strategies need to focus on facilitating interaction with participants as well as the collection of real-time usage data.

Educational Objectives:

1. Design a digital ACT intervention with features that can improve engagement with the intervention and select platforms that allow the collection of required metrics to assess feasibility outcomes.

2. Design feasibility studies of digitally-delivered ACT interventions incorporating research processes that can reduce barriers to recruitment.

3. Set specific objectives and recruitment criteria when aiming to evaluate the acceptability of digital ACT interventions.

225. MAGPIES: A school-based, developmentally appropriate, neuroaffirmative ACT and RFT program targeting emotion regulation, social skills, self-esteem, and anxiety at childhood.

Symposium

S. Cassidy¹, A. Stapleton², E. Kirsten^{1,3}, S. Eidman¹, L. O'Loughlin¹, N. Gaynor¹, J. Collier^{1,4}, E. Blaney¹, S. Gannon¹

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Components: *Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Literature review, Original data, Strategic planning*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Although ACT is often hailed as a transdiagnostic approach, there are some common presentations discussed in mainstream psychology that fail to get adequate attention from the behavioral community at large (e.g., emotional dysregulation, low self-esteem, poor social skills, and anxiety). This is partly due to mainstream psychology's use of mentalistic language, and partly due to a lack of consensus around functional definitions of these skills. Ultimately, this lack of attention contributes to the dearth of interventions and supports for children developing these skills in mainstream school settings. MAGPIES, a school-based, developmentally appropriate, neuroaffirmative ACT and RFT program, targets these four skill sets. MAGPIES is systematic and includes easy-to-implement protocols and strategies that teachers/clinicians/other professionals can effectively deliver in naturalistic settings. This symposium presents data from the 2022/2023 offering of MAGPIES, outlining challenges/opportunities for growth when using ACT and RFT in the real world. This symposium also highlights the need to work closely with statutory services and to focus on what education and health services deem important to address.

Piloting Magpies: Feasibility and effectiveness of an ACT and RFT intervention targeting emotion regulation among 8-to-12-year-olds

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Components: *Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Literature review, Original data, Strategic planning*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Despite its importance, few studies have examined ACT and RFT interventions targeting emotion regulation among young people. In the present pilot, 14 children aged 8- to 12-years participated in eight weekly 90-minute group sessions of MAGPIES-ER, an ACT- and RFT-based approach to young people's emotion regulation. Through didactic presentations and experiential exercises, facilitators taught children ways to notice, name, and respond effectively to their internal experiences. Children were also guided through values clarification

and valued living. Children completed the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (Gratz & Roemer, 2004), Ohio Scales for Youth (Ogles, 2000), and Children's Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire (Dixon & Paliliunas, 2017) pre- and postintervention. Children were also invited to complete single-item assessments of psychological flexibility, emotion regulation skills, and negative affect at each session. Aggregate descriptive statistics indicate desired changes in each questionnaire (i.e., decreased difficulties in emotion regulation and problem severity, in addition to increased functioning, child-reported psychological flexibility, and caregiver-reported psychological flexibility). Findings are discussed with reference to a focus on function (not form), idiographic measurement, and future adaptations of MAGPIES.

Educational Objectives:

1. Outline developmentally appropriate ACT and RFT-consistent approaches to emotion regulation.
2. Evaluate MAGPIES exercises targeting emotion regulation.

Piloting Magpies: Feasibility and effectiveness of a neuroaffirmative ACT and RFT intervention targeting self and interpersonal skills among 8-to-12-year-olds

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Components: *Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Literature review, Original data, Strategic planning*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Many interventions targeting "social skills" promote conforming to the neuromajority at the expense of some children's authenticity and wellbeing. Being authentically ourselves and respecting others are important skills for all children to learn. In the present pilot, 11 children aged 8- to 12-years participated in eight weekly 60-minute group sessions of MAGPIES-SS, a neuroaffirmative ACT- and RFT-based approach to self and interpersonal skills. Facilitators introduced children to a range of skills relevant to healthy selfing and interpersonal relationships, including advocating for our needs, communicating how we feel, and understanding how ourselves/others feel. Children completed the Healthy Pathways Child-Report Scales peer connectedness subscale (Bevans et al., 2010), Ohio Scales for Youth (Ogles, 2000), and Children's Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire (Dixon & Paliliunas, 2017) pre- and postintervention. Children were also invited to complete single-item assessments of psychological flexibility, connection, and negative affect at each session. At present, data analysis is underway. Results will be discussed with reference to the importance of a neuroaffirmative approach to "social skills" and challenges associated with running interventions in the real world.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the importance of a neuroaffirmative approach to self and interpersonal skills.
2. List at least two MAGPIES activities used to support children in exploring their own values in the context of seeking relationships with others.

Piloting Magpies: Feasibility and effectiveness of an ACT and RFT intervention targeting self-esteem among 8-to-12-year-olds

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Components: *Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Literature review, Original data, Strategic planning*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Defined behaviorally, self-esteem refers to the ways in which we respond to our own responding (selfing). Highlighting the need for evidence-based interventions at childhood, Orth et al.'s (2018) meta-analysis revealed that self-esteem was lowest in children. Despite their comprehensive accounts of selfing, few studies have applied ACT and RFT to self-esteem at childhood. In the present pilot, 12 children aged 8- to 12-years participated in eight weekly 75-minute group sessions of MAGPIES-SE, a developmentally appropriate ACT- and RFT-based approach to selfing. Through didactic presentations and experiential exercises, children contacted each of the three selves and hierarchically framed themselves as the container of their experiences, further clarifying their values and taking valued action. Children and parents completed the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), Ohio Scales for Youth (Ogles, 2000), and Children's Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire (Dixon & Paliliunas, 2017) pre- and postintervention. Children were also invited to complete ecological momentary assessments at each session. At present, data analysis is underway. Results will be discussed with reference to selfing's developmental trajectory and the utility of physicalizing metaphors.

Educational Objectives:

1. Conceptualize self-esteem from an ACT and RFT perspective.
2. Name at least two MAGPIES activities used to evoke self-as-context among young people.

226. Developments in the Structure and Experimental Underpinnings of Relational Responding: A Basic Science Symposium

Symposium

C. McCloskey¹, A. Stapleton², J. Cummins³

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²DBS, Ireland

³Ghent University, Belgium

Components: *Original data*

Categories: Behavior analysis

Target Audience: Advanced

Relational Frame Theory (RFT; Hayes et al., 2001) provides a functional contextual account of human language and cognition, building on advances in the study of verbal behaviour and derived relational responding. RFT has been used to inform behaviour analysis and third wave clinical interventions, most notably, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. Since the original account of RFT was put forward, a number of advances have occurred, including integrations with cognitive neuroscience and evolution science, as well as advancements in our understanding of the classes of rule-governed behaviour, in how we can understand relational operants functionally (rather than topographically), and in the role that the relatedness of stimuli plays in relational responding. This symposium will explore the latter three developments, highlighting advances in experimental research which have and continue to inform our understanding of relational responding.

An Empirical Investigation of Relational Density, Coherence, and Flexible Rule-Following

A. Stapleton¹, L. Hutchison², J. Belisle², E. Sickman²

¹DBS, Ireland

²Missouri State University, USA

Components: *Conceptual analysis, Didactic presentation, Literature review, Original data, Strategic planning*

Categories: Behavior analysis

Target Audience: Intermediate, Advanced

In a recent systematic review, Kissi et al. (2020) concluded that “only preliminary evidence exists for the idea that adults demonstrate the [rule-based insensitivity effect]”. Limitations associated with dominant approaches to the rule-based insensitivity effect, such as match-to-sample tasks (MTS), include an overreliance on analyzing dichotomous response accuracy. In theory, rule-based insensitivity is underpinned by coherence, which may be conceptualized as “degree of relatedness.” The nuance of this conceptualization may not be adequately captured by current approaches. Relational density theory emphasizes the degree of relatedness among stimuli within and between networks, often using multidimensional scaling (MDS) to visually represent relatedness. The present study extends MTS approaches to rule-based insensitivity, adding MDS to track the relatedness of stimuli across phases of the experiment. Participants were divided into one of two groups (high/low coherence) and invited to complete a MTS task with an unsignalled contingency shift and three rounds of MDS. At present, data analysis is underway. Results will be discussed with reference to contextual cues and the concept of “strength” in accordance with relational frame theory

Educational Objectives:

1. List challenges associated with empirical investigations of rule-governed behavior in the laboratory.
2. Discuss recent advancements in the use of match-to-sample tasks to examine rule-governance.

On the assessment and structure of relational responding

J. Cummins¹

¹Ghent University, Belgium

Components: *Original data*

Categories: Behavior analysis

Target Audience: Intermediate

A central concern of Relational Frame Theory (RFT) relates to the nature of relational responding as a generalised operant response class. Studies typically delineate different "relational responses" along descriptive lines: for instance, "same/opposite" responding, "before/after" responding, "you/me" responding, etc. In order for the field to advance, our understanding of relational responding should evolve such that relational operant(s) are delineated functionally, rather than topographically as is done at present. In this talk, I will describe a series of studies that on the one hand seek to provide such a functional understanding of relational responding, and on the other hand also attempt to improve upon the reliability and validity of extant relational responding assessments.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the efforts to improve upon the reliability and validity of extant relational responding assessments.

Establishing Histories in Rule-Governed Behaviour and the Future of Pliance in Contextual Behavioural Science

C. McCloskey¹

¹University College Dublin, Ireland

Components: *Original data*

Categories: Behavior analysis

Target Audience: Intermediate

Behavior controlled by rules is more rigid and resistant to healthy change, when compared to behaviors that are developed through direct experience. Pliance as a class of rule-governed behavior is theorized to produce increased rigid behavior, but a lack of clear research has led to imprecisions, limiting the effectiveness psychotherapeutic approaches that rely on this account. This research project explores a newly developed method of studying rule-based insensitivity, which introduces an innovative way of measuring rigid rule-following. This method involves directly reinforcing rule-following itself, rather than offering extraneous reinforcement. Data from this approach has shown that it produces behavioral responses that are extremely reliable and more consistent with conceptualizations of pliance and tracking, when compared to past research methodologies, allowing for a better understanding of the rule-based insensitivity effect.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the role of rule-governed behaviour in psychotherapy.

227. Bridging the Gap: A Review of Recent Advances in Perspective-Taking Assessment and Training

Symposium

S. Garcia-Zambrano¹, G. Diaz², N. Baires¹, E. Pfeiffer Flores², R. Catrone³

¹Southern Illinois University, USA

²Universidade de Brasília, Brazil

³The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, USA

Components: *Literature review, Original data*

Categories: RFT / RGB / language

Target Audience: Intermediate

This symposium presents two innovative computer-based protocols for assessing perspective-taking (PT) skills in adults and a comprehensive, pre-registered systematic review of PT behavioral trainings that follows PRISMA requirements. The first presentation describes a rigorous protocol for assessing emotional PT skills in adults, which improves the ecological validity of previous studies and extends prior research on deictic frames by assessing interpersonal, temporal, and spatial deictic frames. The second presentation introduces a cutting-edge protocol that uses technology to evaluate visual PT skills by assessing interpersonal and spatial deictic frames in adults. This protocol represents a significant contribution to the field as the first computer-based protocol to assess visual PT skills in adults from a behavioral perspective. Finally, the symposium presents the results of a comprehensive and pre-registered systematic review that provides valuable insights into effective interventions for PT skills. The study describes the strengths and limitations of behavioral protocols to teach PT skills. This symposium offers important contributions to the field of behavioral science by providing innovative assessment methods and highlighting effective interventions for PT skills.

Behavioral interventions to develop perspective-taking skills: A systematic review

S. Garcia-Zambrano¹, G. Diaz², E. Pfeiffer Flores²

¹SIU, USA

²Universidade de Brasília, Brazil

Components: *Literature review*

Categories: RFT / RGB / language

Target Audience: Intermediate, Advanced

This study is a systematic review of behavioural interventions aimed at teaching perspective-taking skills. Specifically, the review aimed to a) Identify behavioural protocols used to train perspective-taking skills, b) Identify behavioural measures of the effectiveness of the protocols and, c) Assess the effectiveness of the components used in the training protocols for the development of perspective taking. The first two authors conducted independent searches of electronic databases, following the PRISMA systematic review model. A third reviewer decided cases where there was disagreement. Twenty-nine studies met the four inclusion criteria: empirical article, use of experimental designs with manipulation of independent variables, training protocols based on behavioral models, and articles written in English, Spanish or Portuguese. We discuss results considering the potential of behavioural protocols for the training and assessment of perspective-taking skills.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the main protocols to train perspective-taking skills.
2. Identify the most common components of protocols to train PT skills.

Development of a Behavioral Assessment of Emotional Perspective-Taking Skills in Adults

S. Garcia-Zambrano¹, N. Baires², Y. Garcia³, E. Jacobs²

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²Southern Illinois University, USA

³Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia

Components: *Original data*

Categories: RFT / RGB / language

Target Audience: Intermediate, Advanced

Emotional perspective-taking (EPT) is defined as the ability to recognize an emotion experienced by another person (Harwood & Farrar, 2006), and to relate the emotion with the situation that evokes it (Cutting & Dunn, 1999). Despite the relevance of EPT, there has only been one RFT-based protocol to date that assess these skills. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is twofold: 1) to develop a computer-based protocol to assesses interpersonal deictic frames across three levels of complexity (i.e., simple, reversed, and double reversed), and 2) to evaluate the role of emotion types and the context in situations that require EPT. Participants included 101 undergraduate students; results showed that the number of errors and the latency to respond increased as a function of the complexity of the relations, with the simplest relations having the fewest errors and the shortest latency to respond. Taken together, these results suggest that the type of emotion and the context may affect performance on EPT tasks.

Educational Objectives:

1. Describe the effects of emotions in the development of EPT.
2. Identify potential avenues to develop novel EPT protocols.
3. Evaluate the performance on interpersonal, temporal and spatial deictic framing in adults in tasks that require EPT skills.

Development of a Behavioral Assessment of Visual Perspective-Taking in Adults

S. Garcia-Zambrano¹

¹SIU, USA

Components: *Original data*

Categories: RFT / RGB / language

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Perspective taking is typically defined as the ability to reason about others' mental states (e.g. their beliefs, thoughts, desires, and intentions) and to understand the role of those mental states in everyday situations (Apperly, 2012). Traditional accounts of perspective taking typically analyze the ability based on three different domains: visual, affective or emotional, and cognitive perspective taking (Flavell, 2004). The purpose of this study was to develop a behavioral assessments to measure visual perspective-taking skills from an RFT viewpoint. This study made methodological and empirical contributions to the field by proposing one behavioral computer-based protocols for evaluating the role of deictic frames

on a visual perspective taking tasks. Results revealed significant differences in response latency and correct response levels on interpersonal and spatial deictic frames at simple and reverse levels of complexity on a visual perspective-taking task.

Educational Objectives:

1. Recognize the strengths of a computer-based protocol to assess visual PT skills in adults.
2. Identify the gaps in the literature in regards to the assessment of visual PT skills.

228. Computational approaches of a process-based therapy: From relational frames to idiographic graphs

Loose Paper

D. Edwards¹

¹Swansea University, United Kingdom

Components: *Conceptual analysis, Literature review*

Categories: Methods/approaches for individual variation

Target Audience: Advanced

Historically, little effort has been made in the development of a mathematical account of Relational Frame Theory (RFT) or how might this be utilized within process-based accounts based on ideographic graph theory. There have been some recent and growing concerns over the ergodic approach that provided much of the rationale for the nomothetic populational level statistical approach. This concern relates to normative statistical approaches typically adopted in psychometric studies that make assumptions in order to examine consistencies among collections of individuals. Arguments have been made that through this normative approach, it is difficult or impossible to use data collected from multiple subjects (inter-subject variability) to accurately model the variations with a single subject (intra-subject variability) in clinical behavioral science.

Here propositional logic, set theory, and graph theoretical approaches are suggested that may lead to a relational frame-led, ideographic, and time series approach to process-based therapy, whereby relational frames are central to the ideographic network graphs. This is then discussed within the context, more generally, of the extended evolutionary, meta-model (EEMM).

229. Translation and validation of the Chinese version of the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire for Cancer in patients with advanced lung cancer

Loose Paper

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Academics or education

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

This study aimed to examine the reliability and validity of the Chinese version of the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire for Cancer (AAQ-Cancer) in patients with advanced lung cancer. In phase I, the AAQ-Cancer was translated from English to Chinese. In phase II, an expert panel was invited to examine the content validity of the translated instrument and pilot testing was performed. In phase III, 200 participants were recruited to test the construct validity of the translated AAQ-Cancer using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Reliability was assessed by internal consistency and test-retest reliability. The semantic equivalence and content validity index of the Chinese version of the AAQ-Cancer (C-AAQ-Cancer) were satisfactory. EFA indicated that C-AAQ-Cancer contained the following five

subscales: cancer concerns, blunting, blame, distancing, and behavioural disengagement. These five factors explained 68.28% of the total variance. The Cronbach's α coefficient of the scale was 0.87, and the test-retest reliability was 0.839. This study initially identified the psychometric properties of C-AAQ-Cancer. The findings support the reliability and validity of this instrument in evaluating experiential avoidance/acceptance in cancer patients.

230. Implicit Beliefs about Emotion Regulation: Turkish Adaptation of Emotion Regulation Implicit Association Test and Its Relationship to Psychological Symptoms

Loose Paper

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Health / behavioral medicine

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

This study aims to adapt in Turkish "Emotion Regulation- Implicit Association Test" (ER-IAT) which measures implicit beliefs about emotion regulation and to examine their relationship to psychological symptoms. 172 university students conducted Emotion Regulation- Implicit Association Test, Berkeley Emotion Expression Scale, Emotion Regulation Scale, Value of Emotion Control, Brief Symptom Inventory. The Implicit Association Test was administered via computer through the Inquisit 6 program and the data were analyzed with SPSS V24 program. The results showed a significant relationships between D scores representing implicit beliefs about emotion regulation and the expression of BDI emotions ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$), DDI Suppression ($r = .22$, $p < .01$), Value of Emotion Control ($r = .26$, $p < .01$), thus demonstrating the validity of the measurement tool. There is also a significant positive relationship between D scores and the Brief Symptom Inventory Somatization sub- dimension ($r = .20$, $p = .01$). ER-IAT is the first test measuring the implicit processes of associations about emotion regulation in Turkish literature. Somatization relation to ER-IAT might bring a new area of ACT based intervention for patients with somatoform disorders.

231. A Pilot Randomised Control Trial of an Online Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) Resilience Training Program for People with Multiple Sclerosis

Loose Paper

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner

This pilot study explored the effectiveness and feasibility of an online version of a group Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) resilience training intervention for people with MS (PwMS), called e-READY for MS. Fifty-six PwMS were randomized to intervention (n=31) or waitlist control (WLC) (n=25). The primary outcome, resilience, and secondary outcomes (quality of life [QoL], distress, psychological flexibility) were assessed at pre- and post-intervention and 12-week follow-up. Intervention participants reported greater pre- to post-intervention improvements in anxiety (d=0.56) and stress (d=0.62) than WLC participants, and these gains were maintained at follow-up. Confidence interval data revealed a trend for the intervention group to report markedly greater improvements than WLC across all outcomes. Reliable Change Index data showed that compared to WLC, there were trends for more intervention participants to evidence clinically significant improvements in physical health QoL and for fewer intervention participants to manifest deterioration in depression. Intervention retention was good and program usability satisfaction was high. Overall, effectiveness and feasibility results from this study provide preliminary support for the e-READY for MS program.

232. The Effect of Positive Writing Intervention on Emotion Regulation Skills and Well-Being

Loose Paper

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Processes of change

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Use of positive emotion in expressive writing is used as an intervention to increase positive emotions (Hayes & Hefferon, 2015). This study investigates the effect of positive writing on emotion regulation and well-being. 78 volunteers participated in the study, which consists of reflection of their day through a positive emotion that they have chosen each day. Participants completed Emotion Regulation Skills Questionnaire and Mental Health Continuum Short Form before the intervention, after day-three and a month. Results showed a significant increase before and after third-day measurements in awareness (t=2.43, p < .05), clarity (t= 3.31, p < .01), understanding (t=3.05, p < .01), resilience (t=2.69, p < .01) and modification of negative emotions (t=3.49, p < .01). There is no change in terms of readiness to confront, compassionate self-support, acceptance, and sensation (all p's > .05). The participants' well-being has significantly improved after a month (t=22.23, p < .01). Thus, expression of emotions leads to better emotion regulation and well-being even in a culture where suppression is higher than individualistic cultures.

233. Using a mixed methods approach to identify key outcome and process measures; reflections on a service evaluation of a family intervention for parental alcohol misuse

Loose Paper

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Methods/approaches for individual variation

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced

Practitioners and researchers co-developed a service evaluation for a novel ACT based intervention for parental alcohol misuse. I will present reflections on how the mainly qualitative approach was chosen and could inform future quantitative research (group comparisons or single case design). It was difficult to find measurement tools in the literature that reflected the goals of the intervention to influence "better family lives". Practitioners were skeptical about the use of quantitative measurement tools and did not want to collect data that would not be immediately useful to the clients. The Valued Living Questionnaire with added text description of behavioral change combined with qualitative interviews was the approach chosen. Results point to important outcomes and processes of change that could be measured in future research. Practitioners became more open to quantitative research when outcomes to be measured directly related to those they observed in practice.

Dorey, L., & Morgan, S. (2022). "Better family lives": experiences of a whole family case management approach for parental alcohol misuse. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 1-15.

234. Evaluating Intimate Partner Violence-Related Biases Evidenced by Dependency System Professionals: Application of the Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure

Loose Paper

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Components: *Didactic presentation, Literature review, Original data*

Categories: Social justice / equity / diversity

Target Audience: Intermediate

Problematic bias evidenced by dependency professionals related to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) victimization can negatively impact child and family outcomes. The literature supports malleability of IPV-related bias in response to training interventions across various professional settings. These studies rely heavily on self-report measures. Self-report tools capture extended, elaborated relational responses (EERRs). These measures are less likely to reflect brief, immediate relational responses (BIRRs). Combining explicit and implicit measures may inform a more comprehensive understanding. We employed a multi-method protocol to measure bias evidenced by dependency professionals in relation to IPV victimization. Participants completed the Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure - Intimate Partner Violence (IRAP-IPV), an empirically validated explicit measure, and an analog explicit measure. IRAP-IPV trial type analyses reflected neutral pro-abused and anti-abused parent bias. We found convergence and divergence between measures. We compared IRAP-IPV scores across in person and virtual groups. Measures were administered either in person or via virtual protocol. While statistical analyses indicate no significant between-group differences, divergence is evident upon visual inspection.

235. Applying Relational Frame Theory and Increased Sensory Involvement with Metaphors to the Digital Delivery of an ACT-based Coping Skill

Loose Paper

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Components: *Original data*

Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Target Audience: Beginner, Intermediate

Metaphors in ACT are used to bridge the gap between an individual's previous knowledge/experiences and complex psychological concepts (Foody et al., 2014). RFT and ACT emphasize decreased reliance on language and increased reliance on experience (Hayes et al. 1999) through increased sensory involvement and physical engagement with metaphors (Hayes et al., 2001; Stoddard & Afari, 2014; Törneke, 2017). Reviews of metaphor use (McCurry & Hayes, 1992; Törneke, 2017) reveals a dearth of research that empirically evaluates increased sensory involvement with metaphors.

160 participants were randomized to verbal, visual, and physical delivery of a metaphor for defusion or to a distraction condition to cope with distressing thoughts related to COVID-19.

A mixed measures ANOVA showed a significant decrease in fusion from baseline to intervention ($F(1, 156) = [225.55], p < .001 \eta^2 = .59$). There was a statistically significant interaction between coping skill condition and time on fusion ($F(5.62, 292.03) = [2.47], p = .03 \eta^2 = .05$). Where the physical metaphor deliver was most effective.

These results provide preliminary support for ACT's use of Metaphors and increased physical engagement.

238. Psychological Flexibility as an Implementation Strategy in Exposure-Based Clinical Training

Ignite

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Categories: Dissemination or global health strategies

Evidence-based interventions (EBIs) including psychotherapies (e.g., exposure) and practices (e.g., universal screening, time outs) have demonstrated effectiveness when delivered appropriately, but remain challenging to implement long-term even with provider training. Exposure-based trainings can be used to help clinicians systematically confront feared stimuli and cope with distress they may experience themselves when delivering EBIs (e.g., Becker-Haimes et al., 2022). Exposure-based clinical training informed by Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) could further strengthen and sustain clinicians' motivation for delivering negatively valenced EBIs. Specifically, the additional openness, awareness, and values skills involved in ACT would support clinicians in reflecting on their motivations for engaging in clinical work and actively choosing to deliver EBIs that their patients need, regardless of associated distress. Psychological flexibility, awareness of core values, and exposure-based clinical training are ideal components to improve clinicians' sustained implementation of negatively valenced evidence-based interventions.

239. Acceptability Matters: A Case for Psychological Flexibility and Treatment Acceptability in Exposure Therapy

Ignite

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Categories: Clinical intervention development or outcomes

Exposure based treatments are efficacious for anxiety and OCD and related disorders, from different theoretical framings including CBT and ACT. However, patient adherence and sustainability of exposure therapy remain significant challenges. Treatment acceptability is one foundational component of sustainability of an intervention. Sekhon et al.'s (2017) and (2022) recent acceptability framework adds a more streamlined framework to the literature, stating that someone's affective attitude, perceived effectiveness and coherence, and burden of participation all relate to acceptability. Existing work suggests that mindfulness and values based framings of ACT-informed exposure may be more acceptable to patients, but this work has not been completed with recent coherent and frameworks that also link to intervention sustainability. Therefore, an ideal next step would be to compare associated acceptability from Sekhon's framework as it differs according to multiple variations of framings of exposure therapy. This has implications for helping to link implementation and dissemination strategies for sustained implementation and uptake of exposure therapy, a highly impactful treatment for people who need it.