

ACT Therapy and Values for DV Offenders

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Introductions

- * Kathy Bruner – Mt Grove Counseling
- * Old, new grad...
- * Experience that led me to use ACT in DV practice
 - * DV internship
 - * USH substance abuse work
 - * Evidence-based practice
 - * Private practice work

Brief Research Review

- * Zarling, A., Bannon, S., & Berta, M. (2017). Evaluation of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Domestic Violence Offenders. *Psychology of Violence*. Advance online publication.
- * <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/vio0000097>
- * Results: Compared with Duluth/CBT participants, significantly fewer ACTV participants acquired any new charges, domestic assault charges, or violent charges. ACTV participants also acquired significantly fewer charges on average in the 1 year after treatment than Duluth/CBT participants. Conclusions: This investigation provides preliminary evidence for the feasibility and effectiveness of an ACT-based group for men who have been arrested for domestic assault.

Brief Research Review

- * A brief Acceptance and Commitment Therapy-based intervention among violence-prone male inmates delivered by novice therapists Nikolett EISENBECK*¹, Katalin SCHEITZ** & Boglárka SZEKERES** (*¹) Universidad de Almería, Spain (**²) Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Büntetés-végrehajtási Intézet, Hungary.
- * Psychology, Society, & Education, 2016. Vol. 8(3), pp. 187-199 ISSN 2171-2085 (print) / ISSN 1989-709X (online)
- * Results: ACT was more effective in enhancing values-consistent behaviors than TAU as measured by the Valued Living Questionnaire. These results were maintained at three-month follow-up. Conclusions: A brief ACT intervention delivered by inexperienced ACT therapists can be effective in increasing values-behavior consistency among male inmates.

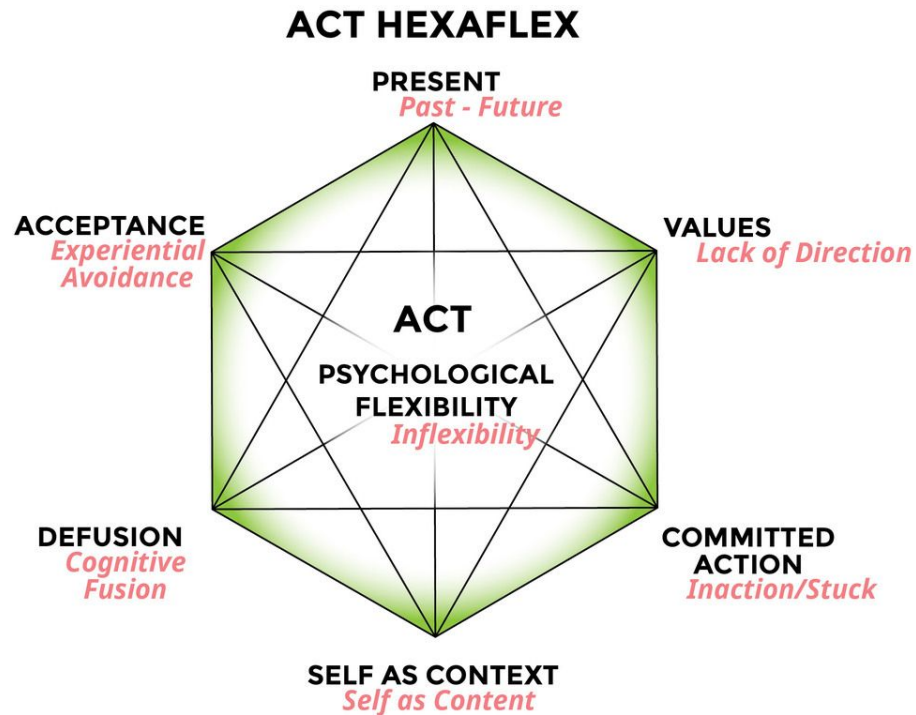
Brief Research Review

- * A preliminary trial of achieving change through values-based behavior for incarcerated intimate partner violence offenders
- * Iowa State University Ames, Iowa 2017 Meg Berta, 2017.
- * Consistent with expectations, experiential avoidance decreased significantly over the course of treatment.

ACT Therapy Brief Overview

- * Contextual Behavioral Science
- * Values-guided action
- * Use core values to guide and inspire behavioral changes
- * Use mindfulness in the moment to engage in life in the here and now
- * Get out of your mind and into your life!

Psychological Flexibility



A focus on values-guided action

Valued Living Questionnaire

Below are some areas of life that some people value. Put a circle on the scale from 1-10 indicating how much you value that area of life (1=not at all important, 10=vitally important to you).

Area	Not Important									Very Important
Family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Marriage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Parenting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Recreation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Spirituality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Health	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Defining Values in Behavioral Terms

Defining Values

You will be defining your values more specifically in each of the areas. Some of the areas, you may skip if it is not currently important to you or it is simply not applicable. For each area you choose to focus on, please describe how YOU want to be in relation to this valued area.

For example, in the area of “family” I may want to be “dependable” “trustworthy” “a good provider” “a good homemaker” “loving” “accessible” “connected” “have good boundaries” “a good listener” “reliable” and “fun.”

Family

Marriage

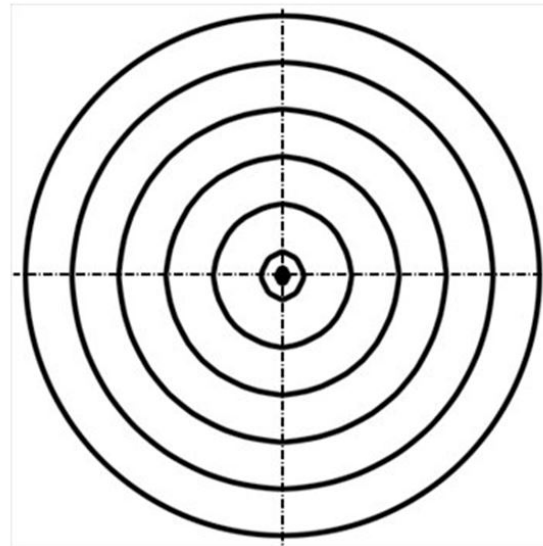
Parenting

Friends

Targeting the action step

How close to the bulls eye are you in living your values?

Valued Area



Set up the Action Step

- * Now that you have narrowed down your valued direction in terms of how YOU want to be in relation to this valued area, and analyzed how near/far you are away right now in BEING this person, what is one step you can take THIS WEEK toward moving in your own valued direction?
- * Create a concrete action step

Follow up with FEAR and DARE

Overcoming FEAR with DARE!

F=Fusion (stuff your mind tells you that gets in the way when you get caught up in it)

E=Excessive goals (your goal is too big, or you lack the skills, time, money, health, or other resource to complete it)

A=Avoidance of discomfort (unwillingness to make room for the discomfort that this challenge brings)

R=Remoteness from Values (losing touch with or forgetting what is important or meaningful about this step)

Now ... what stopped you from completing this action step?

Follow up with DARE!

D=use a De-fusion strategy (change your prison sentence, acknowledge the thought and let it go like a cloud in the sky, name the thought or feeling, say it out loud exaggerated at least five times and in a silly voice)

A=Acceptance strategy (observe it like a curious scientist, rate its intensity on a scale of 1-10, breathe through it, make room for it, give it a shape or color or name)

R=Realistic goal-setting (set a goal to gain the skill you lack to address the step, break the goal into tinier steps, brainstorm how you could accomplish the step, what are you willing to give up to make time for this step? Or if the step is truly impossible to accomplish, cross it out and make a different step. Leave it for another time)

E=Embrace values (meditate upon what really matters to you; ask yourself if the step is truly meaningful, is it aligned with your core values? Is it moving your life in your valued direction?)

What are you going to do this week?

Resources:

- * ACBS Network: <https://contextualscience.org/>
- * ACT Made Simple by Russ Harris, New Harbinger Publications, Inc. 2009
- * The Wisdom to Know the Difference by Kelly Wilson, New Harbinger Publications, Inc. 2012
- * Essentials of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy by Sonja V. Batten, Sage Publications, 2011
- * Lots of youtube videos on ACT therapy by Steven C. Hayes, Russ Harris, and others
- * USU's Psychology Dept: Mike Twohig

Questions?

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