From woe to go!
Learning how to run effective acceptance and commitment therapy groups

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Link to resource sheet http://tinyurl.com/hqanr7d
Introduction

- Learning
- Doing
- Facilitating
- Group Process
- Supervision

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Passengers on the Bus
• Learning through self-practice
  • Understanding the participant perspective
  • Practicing content and developing style as facilitator
  • Promoting psychological flexibility as a facilitator

• Using exercises to help the group learn and remember ACT language and concepts
Running an Effective Post-Mindfulness Enquiry and Debrief
• Introducing a mindfulness exercise

• Completing the exercise

• Facilitating a post-mindfulness enquiry

• Linking mindfulness exercise to underlying concepts – debrief
Facilitating

- Introducing classic ACT metaphors (Tug of War)
- Facilitating the Tug of War Metaphor
- Tug of War Debrief
- Alternate Exercises
- Promoting Willingness as the facilitator
- Co-facilitation
Tug-of-War
Facilitating (Tug of War)

- Conducting a Tug of War debrief
  - Promote shared humanity
  - Promote shared language
  - Promote psychological flexibility
  - What happens when the exercise doesn’t go to plan
- Using alternate exercises/metaphors (e.g., finger traps, baby tiger)
- Willingness and promoting this in a group
- Managing the roles of facilitators: co-facilitating a group
Values

- A process
- Framing the conversation
- The experience; the environment
- Responding to the conversation
- Priming for the next step
- Self-disclosure
- Participation
Values

80th Birthday Party
Values list
Values Compass
Bullseye
Worksheets
Group Process

• Creating a cohesive and supportive group
• When to “step in” and “step out”
• Prioritising process over content
In supervision we are interested in shaping therapists to:

1) be broadly adherent with the ACT model,

2) be increasing competent in strengthening psychological flexible responding
Uncertainty and uncomfortable feelings are frequently part of doing ACT. Being “true” to the model is an active choice that involves vulnerability... while confident feelings come and go (if they are ever there).
supervision sessions - a mixture of support, problem-solving and experiential learning:

- contracting with the facilitators about what to expect from the meetings. This includes discussion of how constructive criticism will be offered;
- reviews of how the group sessions have been, and the experience of leading the groups, including negative experiences;
- facilitators sharing their knowledge and understanding of the group protocol;
Supervision of Group Facilitators 2

Supervision sessions - a mixture of support, problem-solving and experiential learning

- practice of exercises, to fine-tune delivery;
- use of role-play and experiential methods to problem-solve about group challenges;
- the supervisor seeking feedback from the facilitators about their experience of the meeting.
The idea behind SHAPE is simple: it describes several features of effective ACT/CBS supervision.

The SHAPE tool can be used as a way of prompting these choices and actions during supervision.

And to reflect on these features between supervision sessions.
**Supervision Values**
Clarify the **goals** of supervision and connect with a **valued direction** (through and beyond these goals)

Use **supervision contracting** to promote commitment

**Check in** with valued actions and goals regularly in supervision sessions

**Seek feedback** in various ways

**Connect** – attend to the supervisory relationship

**Hold Stories Lightly**
Promote supervisee **learning from experience**, rather than rules.

Attend to workability (pragmatism)
Use observation (direct, video/audio)

**Notice story telling** in supervision: promoting flexible responding?

**Analysis of Function**
Foster **curiosity** in client actions in their contexts – ABCs, social environment, learning history

Review the impact of therapist behaviour on client in-session responses: **functional analysis of therapy context**

**Attend** to what influences supervision behaviours and choices: workable? values-based?

**Perspective Taking**
Promote **flexible perspective taking**.

Notice variation of experience, perspectives
• **experience** across a **variety of contexts**
• **contact** with a **range of experiences and changes**
• **taking different perspectives of the same experience**

**Building reflective ability** - what is it like:
• for me to be working with this client?
• to experience life from the client’s eyes?
• to take the supervisor’s perspective? Others?
• When perspectives are fixed, rigid, incoherent, fractured… and, what choices and actions are possible? How workable are these?

**Experiential Methods**
Engage in a variety of ways to learn from experience and **promote supervisee sensitivity to client-therapist context**:

**Show... rather than Tell:**
• Use roleplay, modelling, reviewing audio- and video-recordings, direct observation
• Noticing effects of describing vs evaluating/explaining
• Use analogy and perspective-taking when the supervisee is stuck
• Undermine rule-following to please supervisor by encouraging the supervisee to track supervision content to client behaviour, especially when things don’t work as imagined...
Wrapping up

- Learning
- Doing
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