

Improving participation and mental health through ACT



What does
ACT
stand for?

What is ACT: ACT is an evidence-based treatment that has been shown to be effective in improving mental health and activity participation across a wide variety of experiences and diagnoses, including: depression, anxiety, chronic pain, problematic anger, OCD, substance use, grief, and trauma. ACT leads to improvements in psychological flexibility (the ability to do what works, in the moment, to help move forwards and accomplish goals), quality of life, and overall functioning.

ACT is a great fit for OT practice as it helps clients engage more fully in their lives, participate in activities that really matter to them, and act in alignment with their values. ACT can be flexibly applied to help match specific strategies to client's individual challenges.

Stress does not have to take over your life! By changing your perspective on how stress affects you and by incorporating meaningful activities into your daily routines, you can bring your life back into balance!

- A** = **Acceptance:** Acknowledging and coping with what cannot be changed (including difficult thoughts and emotions)
- C** = **Commitment:** Committing to building a rich, full, meaningful life that is informed by our values (even when difficult thoughts and feelings show up)
- T** = **Taking Action:** Setting SMART goals and following through on goal directed behaviours

Core Therapeutic Processes in ACT

- **Values** (what is really important to you)
- **Committed Action** (taking steps to live in alignment with your values)
- **Acceptance** (willingness to accept the reality of what is, and experience difficult thoughts and feelings instead of avoiding them)
- **Cognitive Defusion** (specific skills to allow you to be aware of your thoughts without getting hooked or controlled by them when they aren't helpful)
- **Being Present** (focus on the here and now)
- **Self As Context** (Increasing awareness of state of mind and self-observation)

Each of these 6 processes contribute to developing psychological flexibility. Your ACT trained OT can teach specific skills in these 6 areas to help promote re-engaging in life and valued activities.



For further assessment, therapy, consultation and/or education on Occupational Therapy in Mental Health, contact Block Building Therapies at:

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Referral forms for new assessments are also available online at our website: www.blockbuilding.ca