

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy in Mental Health Practice:

A 5-Day Professional Training Retreat

PRESENTERS: John P. Forsyth, PhD & Jamie R. Forsyth, PhD

Workshop Agenda / Schedule

ARRIVAL DAY – August 13, 2023

- No formal workshop activities planned
- Omega asks you register on this day, get settled, have dinner, and if you like attend the Omega campus orientation (optional)

DAY 1 – August 14, 2023

9:00 – 12:00pm

- Centering Exercise
- Why It's Hard Being Human
- Pervasiveness of Human Suffering
- ACT Model of Human Suffering
- Psychological Inflexibility
- ACT Intervention Processes & Psychological Flexibility
- Process vs. Content
- ACT Case Conceptualization
- The Sphere-a-Flex Model Guiding ACT Work
- ACT Therapeutic Stance
- ACT in a Nutshell Role Play Demonstration
- Pulling it All Together

12:00 – 2:30pm – Lunch / Down Time

2:30-5:00pm

- Centering Exercise
- Rationale and Role of Creative Hopeless Work in ACT
- Exploring Workability
- Establishing Creative Hopelessness
- Exercise: The Mask I Wear
- Context of Control & Workability
- Exercise: Metaphors to Weaken Illusion of Control
- Clinical Case Demonstration: Balloon Exercise
- Exercise and Role Play: Tug of War with Anxiety Monster
- Exercise: Writing Your Own Epitaph
- Experiential Practice: Applying Creative Hopelessness Exercises in Dyads
- Pulling it All Together

DAY 2 – TUESDAY August 15

9:00-12:00pm

- Centering Exercise
- The Nature of Values in ACT
- Distinguishing Values From Goals
- The Link Between Pain & Values
- Connecting with Values
- Exercises: Values Card Sort
- Values Clarification and Assessment
- Exercise: Valued Directions Worksheet
- Clarifying Valued Intentions
- Exercise: Life Compass
- Exercise: Bull's Eye Values Assessment
- Problems Connecting With Values
- Navigating “Values Conflicts”
- Pulling it All Together

12:00 – 2:30pm – Lunch / Down Time

2:30-5:00pm

- Centering Exercise
- Experiential Practice: Life Compass Cards & Values Directions Worksheet in Dyads
- Barriers to Valued Action
- Exercise: My Life Theater
- Experiential Practice: Barriers Clarification Using Barriers Worksheet in Dyads
- Using the Life Compass
- Experiential Practice: Completing the Life Compass in Dyads
- Pulling it All Together

DAY 3 – WEDNESDAY August 16, 2023

9:00-12:00pm

- Centering Exercise
- The Importance of Perspective Taking
- The Nature of Mindfulness in ACT
- Exercise: Take Your Mind for a Walk
- Exercise: Mindful Playdough
- Cultivating an Observer Perspective
- Self as Context vs. the Conceptualized Self
- Exercise: Chess Board Metaphor
- Exercise: The Documentary of You
- Defusing From Unhelpful Thinking
- Exercise Role Play: Thoughts on Cards

- Pulling it All Together

DAY 4 – THURSDAY August 17, 2023

9:00-12:00pm

- Centering Exercise
- Compassion and Kindness Defined
- Cultivating Compassion
- Exercise: Loving Kindness Walking Meditation
- Exercises to Nurture Self-Compassion
- Taking Care of Old Wounds
- Nurturing Acceptance in ACT
- Exercise: Holding Our Pain Gently
- Paths to Acceptance
- Exercise: Acceptance of Thoughts & Feelings
- The Practice of Forgiveness
- Pulling it All Together

12:00-2:30pm LUNCH

2:30-5:00 pm

- Centering Exercise
- The Nature and Meaning of Exposure
- Vulnerability & Willingness
- Exposure in a Values Context
- Exposure Within ACT in 7 Steps
- Willingness Hierarchy
- Exercise: Tonglen Exposure
- Exercise: Nurturing Kindness with Younger You
- Clinical Demonstration: Exposure in ACT
- Discriminating ACT Processes During Exposure
- Pulling it All Together

DAY 5 – FRIDAY August 18, 2023

9:00 – 12:00pm

- How to Keep Our Clients Moving Forward?
- Building Patterns of Committed ACTION
- Steps Toward Value-Guided Committed ACTION
- The Importance of Intentions
- Distinguishing Good from Poorly Stated Goals
- Setting SMART Value Guided Goals

- What to do When Clients Feel Stuck
- Demonstration: Bus Driver Exercise
- Exercise in Dyads: Making a Value-Guided Behavioral Commitment
- Fluid and Flexible Use of ACT
- Discriminating ACT Consistent vs. Inconsistent Moves
- Detecting ACT Processes & Intervention Pivot Points
- How to Dance Around the ACT Model
- Going Forward – Developing ACT Competencies
- Self-Assessment of Where You Stand
- Common Therapist & Client Problems When Using ACT
- Next Steps: Developing ACT Competencies
- Wrap Up, Q & A