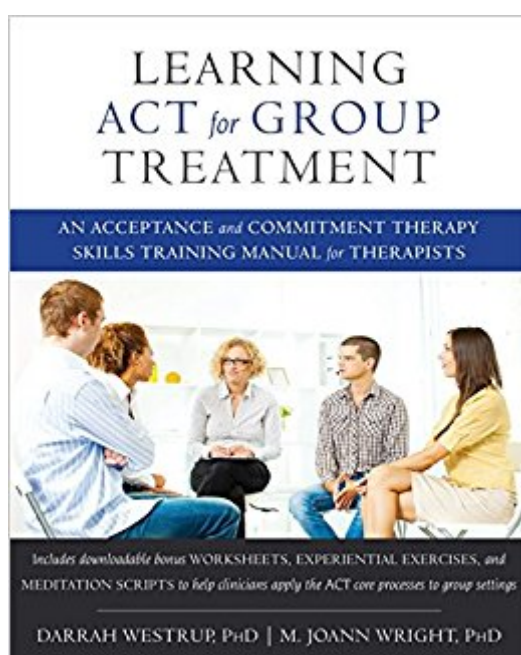


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# Learning ACT For Group Treatment: An Acceptance And Commitment Therapy Skills Training Manual For Therapists



## Synopsis

For many clients, group therapy is a more practical treatment option than one-on-one therapy sessions. The financial cost of group therapy is substantially less than individual therapy, and research shows it can be just as effective. However, group therapy also presents unique challenges, and is often more difficult to administer. That's why professionals need a solid plan of action when using group therapy to treat clients. In recent years, acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) has gained immense popularity. Based in values, mindfulness, and committed action, this therapeutic model has proven successful in treating a number of psychiatric disorders, including anxiety, depression, stress, addictions, eating disorders, trauma, and relationship problems. However, despite the popularity of this modality, there are very limited resources available when it comes to applying ACT in a group setting. *Learning ACT for Group Treatment* is a comprehensive, powerful manual for clinicians, therapists, and counselors looking to implement ACT in group therapy with clients. A composite of stand-alone sessions, the book provides detailed explanations of each of the core ACT processes, printable worksheets, tips on group session formatting, and a wide range of activities that foster willingness, cooperation, and connection among participants. In the book, professionals will see how the benefits of ACT can actually be enhanced in a group setting, particularly because there are more participants for ACT exercises. This leads to increased accountability among clients, and allows them to play both an active role and the role of the observer during treatment. The book also includes concrete tips for applying ACT to a number of treatment scenarios, including inpatient group therapy, partial hospitalization programs, outpatient programs, and community self-help groups. With detailed exercises and group activities, this book has everything therapists need to start using ACT in group settings right away.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Finally! The scientific literature on acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) is heavily based on group intervention methods, but through nearly three decades of such studies, no book has been available to walk clinicians through the myriad choice points, barriers, and opportunities presented by ACT in groups. No more. This wonderful and readable volume walks through every relevant area and issue in a way that is wise, evidence-based, and clear. How can you organize an open membership ACT group? What if a group member just wants to tell stories? In area after area and issue after issue, Westrup and Wright have skillfully done the heavy lifting for you. If you’re doing ACT in groups, you now have a much easier job: buy the book, read it, and use it.”

—Steven C. Hayes, PhD, Foundation Professor of Psychology at the University of Nevada, and cofounder of ACT

“This long-awaited book finally provides therapists with the guidance they needed to do ACT in groups. Darrah Westrup and Joann Wright have turned their scientific expertise and clinical wisdom into a wonderfully written text that covers all the key aspects of the psychological flexibility model while addressing the typical pitfalls and advantages of doing ACT in this context. This is an essential read for all therapists doing ACT in groups!”

—Matthieu Villatte, PhD, coauthor of *Mastering the Clinical Conversation*

“Life’s too short to beat around the bush, so I’m going to be blunt: if you do ACT with groups, or if you wish to start doing so, you need this book. Chockablock full of wisdom and experience from experts in the field, it’s not just an optional extra; it’s an absolute essential. If you want to help groups of people to discover ACT, and leave them glowing with a sense of vitality and fulfillment, then be smart about it: allow Westrup and Wright to light the way for you.”

—Russ Harris, author of *The Happiness Trap* and *ACT Made Simple*

“Westrup and Wright have masterfully woven the ACT approach into the group therapy milieu. Contextual behavioral science, the foundation of ACT, suggests the human condition evolved through the blending of two levels of selection: the group and the individual. The ACT community has long endeavored to address the human condition in a way that reduces suffering and improves quality of living by using applied behavioral science to help at the individual level. Thankfully Westrup and Wright are contributing to the applied literature with an eye on utilizing group therapy to direct the therapeutic process in important, valuable directions. *Learning ACT for Group Treatment* highlights advanced ACT topics in a manner accessible for a novice. This

pioneering book offers practical exercises for immediate application, and gives incisive examples of how to use them in an ACT-consistent manner. Most importantly, Westrup and Wright created a flexible framework to create unique, impactful group therapy interactions. Highly recommended, even if you are not a group therapist.

• "D.J. Moran, PhD, BCBA-D, founder of Pickslyde Consulting and the MidAmerican Psychological Institute  
"I'm here! And it's just what's needed for the therapist looking to do ACT in a group format. For those who have been waiting and asking for a thoughtful and effective guide including material ranging from brief basics on ACT to utilizing core processes in a powerful and dynamic way in group therapy to supplementary content designed to support its implementation this is the book for you. Darrah Westrup and Joann Wright have written this manual in a user-friendly fashion. The book is comprehensive in nature, while also maintaining a compassionate clinical voice felt in both the example dialogue and the overall approach. ACT delivered in the context of group therapy is not only robust, but also helps clients to connect with others in the very human experience of suffering. Westrup and Wright bring these qualities to life. A must-read for those doing or wanting to do ACT in groups.

• "Robyn D. Walser, PhD, coauthor of Learning ACT, The Mindful Couple, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for the Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Trauma-Related Problems; director of TLConsultation Services; assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley; and cofounder of the Bay Area Trauma Recovery Clinic  
"Brought to us by two ACT master clinicians, Learning ACT for Group Treatment is an essential addition to the library of any therapist who uses mindfulness, acceptance, and compassion processes in groups. This book brings the psychological flexibility model to life in the context of group therapy. I am confident that this text can enhance the effectiveness of any of our group-based work. Masterful!

• "Dennis Tirch, PhD, coauthor of The ACT Practitioner's Guide to the Science of Compassion, and founder of The Center for Compassion Focused Therapy

Darrah Westrup, PhD, is a licensed clinical psychologist practicing in Colorado and California with an established reputation for her work as a therapist, program director, trainer, researcher, and consultant to practitioners at various firms and organizations. She is a recognized authority on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), and has conducted numerous presentations and trainings at international, national, and local conferences, seminars, and workshops. She served for over five years as an expert ACT consultant for the VA-wide evidence-based treatment rollout of ACT for depression, and is author of Advanced Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. Westrup has also coauthored two additional books on ACT:

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for the Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Trauma-Related Problems and The Mindful Couple. M. Joann Wright, PhD, is currently director of clinical training and anxiety services at Linden Oaks Behavioral Health at Edward Hospital in Naperville, IL. She is also executive director of the Psychological Solutions Institute in Lisle, IL. Prior to moving to the Chicago, IL, area, she was a faculty member at Hofstra University's psychology department. Wright is dedicated to teaching and delivering contextual behaviorally based, empirically-supported treatment strategies, protocols, and models in order to help people reduce the suffering in their lives. Wright has presented scholarly papers, workshops, and presentations at national and international psychological conferences.

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