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Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: 100 Key Points and Techniques

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This book presents, in a clear and concise way, key concepts and techniques that make ACT what it is – a humane and effective way of changing human behaviour to relieve distress and suffering, and to reorient individuals towards a future they want to have. The book is simple and honest in its aims to present a picture of what ACT looks like, of how it describes itself in its terminology, and of the science it connects most closely with. This combination is hugely workable and simply refreshing. The book grapples with the complexities of clinical problems, but manages to inspire the clinician not to be too daunted by this challenge, by offering a range of helpful, well-described tools that are usable, understandable and creative. I would definitely recommend this book for anyone interested in learning ACT or for clinicians wanting to explore ACT techniques.

Dr Yvonne Barnes-Holmes, Associate Professor in Behaviour Analysis, Department of Experimental-Clinical and Health Psychology, Ghent University, and leading researcher in Relational Frame Theory

In my opinion, this book deserves to be mentioned in the same breath as the classic ACT texts. I say this because I haven't read a Contextual Behavioural Science book quite like this, where the depth of the science and practice is covered in such accessible language. It will be the first resource that I recommend to students who are interested in learning about this topic.

Dr Nic Hooper, Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of England, co-author of *The Research Journey of ACT* and co-creator of the annual *Diary for Valued Action*

This book will be essential reading for all trainee and qualified practitioners who want to use the wisdom of ACT ideas in their work. The book provides an accessible reference to the key theoretical concepts and practical issues for practitioners across all settings, such as individual or group psychotherapy, counselling, coaching, community or organisational interventions. The authors have cleverly kept the three important areas of learning the ACT approach central to the writing, that is, the Head (knowledge of theory and concepts), Hands (practical skills and techniques) and Heart (ways of relating to one's own experiences and the experiences of others). An excellent contribution from innovative authors in the field.

Dr Louise McHugh, Associate Professor, University College Dublin, and co-editor of *The Self and Perspective Taking: Contributions and Applications from Modern Behavioral Science*

A stand-out book: thorough, knowledgeable, clear and practical. It gives just the right balance of the necessary theoretical foundations, practical skills, and guidance on how to use them in context. The newcomer can work through it to learn what they need to *do* ACT well, rather than simply 'know about' ACT. The veteran can open it at any page and find a new insight, technique, or idea to ponder. To be read cover-to-cover, or dipped into at random, this book is a valuable addition to the shelf of anyone interested in ACT.

Dr Ray Owen, Consultant Clinical Psychologist,
Health Psychologist, and Peer Reviewed ACT Trainer,
author of *Facing the Storm* and *Living with the Enemy*

ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: 100 Key Points and Techniques offers a comprehensive, yet concise, overview of the central features of the philosophy, theory, and practical application of ACT. It explains and demonstrates the range of acceptance, mindfulness, and behaviour change strategies that can be used in the service of helping people increase their psychological flexibility and wellbeing.

Divided into three main parts, the book covers the 'Head, Hands, and Heart' of the approach, moving from the basics of behavioural psychology, via the key principles of Relational Frame Theory and the Psychological Flexibility model, to a detailed description of how ACT is practised, providing the reader with a solid grounding from which to develop their delivery of ACT-consistent interventions. It concludes by addressing key decisions to make in practice and how best to attend to the therapeutic process.

The authors of *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy* bring a wealth of experience of using ACT in their own therapy practice and of training and supervising others in developing knowledge and skills in the approach. This book will appeal to practitioners looking to further their theoretical knowledge and hands-on skills and those seeking a useful reference for all aspects of their ACT practice.

Richard Bennett works as a Clinical Psychologist and Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist and runs a private practice, Think Psychology. He also leads a Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy as part of the Centre for Applied Psychology at the University of Birmingham.

Joseph E. Oliver is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and director for Contextual Consulting, a consultancy based in London providing ACT training, coaching, and therapy. He is joint director for the University College London Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in Psychosis Post Graduate Diploma, whilst also holding a post within the NHS.

100 Key Points and Techniques

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**ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY:
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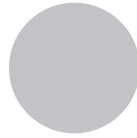
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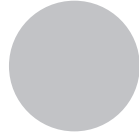
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We are indebted to everyone within the ACT and contextual behavioural science community for shaping our thinking about the work that we do. Many of the ideas and concepts presented herein have been inspired by others, although the precise genesis of these is not always easy to pinpoint due to the open-source ethos of the community. We have referenced and credited people where possible, and wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude, both to those people and anyone else who has helped us along the way.



INTRODUCTION

At the time of writing, it is almost 20 years since the first book on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT, pronounced as one word, as opposed to A.C.T.) was published. In the intervening period ACT has benefitted from the growth of a considerable evidence base, encompassing approximately 250 randomised controlled trials and around 30 systematic reviews and meta-analyses. The evidence of its efficacy is wide-ranging, from clinical applications in individual therapy in physical and mental health care, through occupational applications in teams and organisations, to helping people face social and public health problems at a societal level.

We are very grateful to series editor, Professor Windy Dryden, for the invitation to contribute an ACT text to the '100 Key Points and Techniques' range. Given the rapid growth of ACT, it feels like a timely addition. It is our hope that this book will serve as a handy reference to the key theoretical concepts and practical issues for anyone looking to use the model as part of their efforts to help others. We have arranged this book in three parts, entitled the Head, the Hands, and the Heart of ACT. This reflects the way in which ACT is often discussed and delivered in training contexts, emphasising that those wishing to learn about the approach will necessarily engage in the pursuit of three areas of learning:

- Head – knowledge of theory and concepts
- Hands – practical skills and techniques
- Heart – ways of relating to one's own experiences and the experiences of others

2 INTRODUCTION

The global ACT community, from within the field of contextual behavioural science, places significant importance on the desire to continue to develop a science more appropriate to the needs of the human condition. It is in the service of gaining an understanding of this science and its application that we present this book. We very much hope you find it helpful.



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