Description

Committed action can be described as engaging in behavior guided by personal values, even in the presence of unwanted thoughts or feelings and external hindrances that can impede such behaviors. Committed action is one of the six core processes in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and it is a process and outcome of the therapy specifically, and of psychological flexibility more generally. This training will provide methods of developing and increasing a repertoire of interventions that build commitment; working with other core ACT processes to assist clients with committed action; and promoting values-consistent client behaviors in the service of psychological flexibility, even in the presence of client or therapist barriers.

In Day 1, I will introduce attendees to the central role of committed action within the ACT model, including both how commitment is inextricably tied to client values and how committed action is facilitated by each of the other core processes in ACT. I will then present the characteristics of how to set a clear committed action target, including experiential exercises for participants to practice this process for themselves. We will then spend much of the day identifying common barriers to follow through with committed action and exploring and practicing ways to overcome these barriers on the part of the client or of the therapist.

In Day 2, I will focus on the application of committed action practices in the real world, not only in ACT-based treatment but also as a focus on committed
action can enhance other evidence–based approaches. We will then explore specific applications of these practices using case studies of common presenting problems. In the final half of Day 2, participants will have the opportunity to practice applying what they’ve learned to themselves and in the context of small group exercises and role–plays. We will wrap up with a final Q&A.

During this workshop, participants will learn:

1. The characteristics of an effectively defined committed action
2. How to use client values to inform choice of specific committed actions
3. How committed action processes intersect with the other primary processes of the ACT model
4. Common barriers that interfere with the execution of commitments
5. Methods for encouraging and increasing client–driven committed action in the presence of internal barriers
6. Ways to model and teach strategies for committed action to trainees/supervisees
7. How committed action skills as taught in ACT can be applied to other evidence based treatments
8. How to apply committed action principles and techniques with common clinical problems, such as substance use and posttraumatic stress disorder

The Presenter

Sonja V. Batten, PhD, is a clinical psychologist with a specialization in traumatic stress, who has worked in policy, clinical, and research leadership positions in the public and private sector. She is currently a Senior Associate at Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington, DC. Having learned ACT over the course of 5 years
from Dr. Steven Hayes during the 1990s, Dr. Batten is a recognized ACT trainer, a Past-President of the Association for Contextual Behavioral Science, the author of *Essentials of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*, and the co-author of the upcoming *Committed Action in Practice*.

Dr. Batten is: an experienced leader with a demonstrated history of working in the management consulting industry; skilled in Change Management, Organizational Development, Health Care Operations, Leadership Development, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy; a Licensed Clinical Psychologist, certified Change Management Practitioner, and experienced Coach and Mentor.

**Day 1**

9:00 – 9:30 AM    What is committed action?

9:30 – 10:45 AM    Assessing and planning committed action, including experiential exercises.

10:45 – 11:00 AM   Break

11:00 AM – 12:45 PM Identifying obstacles to committed action

12:45 – 1:30 PM    Lunch

1:30 – 3:00 PM     Addressing obstacles to committed action on the part of the client.

3:00 – 3:15 PM     Break

3:15 – 5:00 PM     Addressing obstacles to committed action on the part of the therapist including experiential exercises

**Day 2**
9:00 – 10:45 AM  Blending evidence-based approaches with committed action

10:45 – 11:00 AM  Break

11:00 AM – 12:45 PM  Application of this model to case studies, including substance use problems and posttraumatic problems in living

12:45 – 1:30 PM  Lunch

1:30 – 4:00 PM  Bringing it all together, including small group breakout sessions for role playing and practicing our model with each other.

4:00 – 4:15 PM  Break

4:15 – 5:00 PM  Q&A

**Teaching method or strategy**

The workshop will include didactics, experiential exercises, and role plays both to model the application of principles and also for participant practice. Exercises will be conducted through imaginal methods, in writing and in small group activities.

**Target Audience**
Beginner through Advanced: Clinicians, coaches, mental health workers, their supervisors, and all others who are interested in helping people make and keep commitments to specific valued actions.

**Prerequisites**

Participants should have already had some basic exposure to ACT through training or reading and should understand the core components of the model.

**Duration of Workshop**: 2 days; 14 hours
References


