



Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT):
3-Day Introductory Workshop for Mental Health
Professionals

July 21-23, 2015
Hosted by Chiang Mai University
Department of Psychology
Faculty of Humanities

--Registration Now Open--

Facilitator:

Ben Weinstein, PhD
Graduate School of Psychology, Assumption University
Psychological Services International

Workshop Overview

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (or ACT, said as one word) is a third-generation, evidence-based, behavior therapy that balances mindfulness and acceptance processes with commitment and behavior change processes to (a) weaken the unhelpful influence of thoughts and emotional avoidance in guiding actions, while (b) promoting greater experiential engagement and psychological flexibility in the service of valued ends. When using ACT, the clinician focuses less on symptoms reduction and more on helping clients to live deeper, richer, more meaningful lives. ACT helps clients and therapists to learn to be with their pains and do what works. ACT is a broad approach to the problem of human suffering and engaged living; it is not just a set of intervention techniques for specific psychological disorders. This three-day workshop will introduce ACT, both as a model and intervention technology, emphasizing the innovative theoretical foundation and the clinical application. The workshop will describe how to apply ACT across a broad set of problem areas that are commonly seen in mental health settings with adults (e.g., anxiety, depression, anger).

The workshop will include didactic teaching, demonstrations, activities and practical experiential exercises that will be done individually, in dyads, and small groups. There will be an emphasis on experiential learning with individual and group reflection. The exercises will illustrate the integration of connecting with our directly lived experience, recognizing cognitive fusion, and developing engaged mindfulness and acceptance strategies to disarm forms of human suffering while also promoting greater clarity of values and action in the service of living well. Participants will be encouraged (but never forced or coerced) to engage the material at a personal level, as it applies to their own lives, and then also in the context of their clinical work. Clinical worksheets and other practical tools will be provided.

Who Should Attend & Requirements

This workshop is for mental health professionals who provide psychotherapy and counselling, including psychologists, social workers, counselors, nurses, psychiatrists, and others as well as graduate students, psychiatric residents, post-doctoral fellows. It is essential that participants (1) have clinical experience with fundamental counselling skills and techniques, and (2) come to the workshop with an openness to learn. Some general familiarity with ACT will be helpful, but is not required. Interested participants may request a pre-workshop reading list.

Workshop Language

The workshop facilitator will present in English. A bilingual psychologist will translate into Thai.

Learning Objectives

Participants will have an opportunity to learn how to:

- ✓ Develop an understanding of the ACT model of human suffering and its alleviation,
- ✓ Understand the common role of cognitive fusion and avoidance in creating disengaged living (the behaviors we commonly identify as psychological or psychiatric symptoms),

- ✓ identify and weaken excessive struggle and experiential avoidance while promoting more defused and mindful actions in the service of valued living;
- ✓ help counselors and clients identify and liberate themselves from the dominance of unhelpful verbal rules,
- ✓ learn skills for helping themselves and clients to identify and clarify valued domains and sources of vitality and engagement
- ✓ help clients balance acceptance and change while moving in the direction of their chosen values and life goals;
- ✓ use exposure-like exercises in an ACT consistent fashion;
- ✓ understand the use of mindfulness exercises to foster acceptance, compassion, kindness, and greater experiential and psychological flexibility;
- ✓ integrate experiential exercises, metaphors, defusion techniques and mindfulness techniques into their clinical work;
- ✓ Apply ACT in a culturally consistent way in an Asian context.

Location

The workshop will go from 9:00am to 4:30pm each day (July 21-23) and will be held at Uniserv, the CMU hotel and hostel (uniserv.cmu.ac.th), which is located off Nimmanhemmin Road in the western part of downtown Chiang Mai. Participants are welcome to stay at Uniserv (and can make their own arrangements). Participants can also find numerous hotels nearby in the Nimmanhemmin Road neighborhood.

Registration

Space is limited. The registration fee for the workshop is 4,000 baht. This fee includes break snacks and lunch daily. The fee doesn't cover other meals, transport or accommodation

To register, or for more information, contact Khun Saharut (Thee) at 061-665-1649 (outside Thailand, +6661-665-1649) or by email at onederjet@yahoo.com

Attendance Certification:

Participants need to be present for at least 90% of the workshop in order to have their attendance certified and receive a certificate of completion. In registering for the workshop, participants agree to this condition.

Facilitator Profile:

Ben Weinstein, PhD is a licensed clinical psychologist who has been teaching and practicing in Thailand and Asia since 2003. He is a lecturer at the Graduate School of Psychology of Assumption University and consulting Clinical Psychologist with Psychological Services International. Dr. Weinstein has been integrating ACT into his clinical practice since 2004. Dr. Weinstein is a skilled facilitator who provides training in behavioral skills and topics for diverse groups and organizations. He trains mental health and medical professionals from countries across Southeast Asia. Dr. Weinstein has worked extensively within the NGO and development community.