



The Essential Guide to the ACT Matrix: A Step-by-Step Approach to Using the ACT Matrix Model in Clinical Practice

By Kevin L. Polk PhD, Benjamin Schoendorff MA MSc, Mark Webster, Fabian O. Olaz PsyD

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The ACT Matrix revolutionized contextual behavioral science. Now, the creators of this pioneering new model present the first detailed, step-by-step guide to help professionals implement the ACT Matrix in clinical practice and improve clients' psychological flexibility.

If you're a clinician, you know that acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) is extremely effective in helping clients who are "stuck" in unhealthy thought patterns by encouraging them align their values with their thoughts and actions. However, the ACT model is complex, and it's not always easy to use. Enter the ACT Matrix, a seamless fusion of the six core processes of the ACT hexaflex—cognitive defusion, acceptance, contact with the present moment, observing the self, values, and committed action—into a simplified, easy-to-apply approach.

From the editors of *The ACT Matrix*, *The Essential Guide to the ACT Matrix* offers professionals a comprehensive guide to using the innovative Matrix model in-session. With this book, you'll learn how to help your clients break free from painful psychological traps and live more meaningful lives. You'll also learn how client actions and behavior should be viewed as workable or unworkable, rather than good or bad. Most importantly, you'll discover how this unique approach can be used to deliver ACT more effectively in a variety of settings and contexts, even when clients are resistant or unmotivated to participate.

This book is essential for any ACT clinician looking to simplify their therapeutic approach in client sessions.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The Matrix is a profoundly useful approach for teaching psychological flexibility. Simple and direct, it focuses on the most important dimensions in a way that cuts through the conceptual clutter—for ACT therapists and clients alike. Let me say it this way: if you care about ACT, you have to know the Matrix. It's not optional. And this is the best book yet for learning exactly what it is and how to use it. Highly recommended.”

—**Steven C. Hayes, PhD**, codeveloper of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)

“Written in a skillful and highly readable fashion, this volume stands out as a valuable contribution to ACT practitioners looking for a structured, yet flexible, guide for doing brief and effective interventions. The authors have succeeded in providing a manual suitable for private practice, institutional work, and interdisciplinary integration.”

—**Michel. A. Reyes Ortega, PhD**, director of the Contextual Behavioral Science and Therapy Institute in Mexico City, Mexico; and clinical professor of clinical behavior analysis at the National Institute of Psychiatry in Mexico City

“This lively and engaging book provides the most comprehensive, accessible, and practical guide yet to the Matrix model in everyday clinical work. Step by step, the authors present clear and useful examples of how the Matrix can increase awareness, psychological flexibility, and vitality in adult individuals, couples, and children. *The Essential Guide to the ACT Matrix* is just that; essential for anyone wishing to understand how to utilize, and even enjoy, this powerful new clinical tool with their clients.”

—**Christopher McCurry, PhD**, clinical child psychologist in private practice, and author of *Parenting Your Anxious Child With Mindfulness and Acceptance* and *Working with Parents of Anxious Children*

“This book is the ultimate tool for training psychological flexibility in six basic but sophisticated steps. Clear guidelines are provided for practicing the ACT Matrix, present-moment and therapeutic relationship-focused clinical work, getting unstuck, sharing your own Matrix with clients, and going deeper with each step. Indispensable for anyone interested in delving more deeply into a functional contextual perspective, this volume can help clinicians do transformational work with individuals, couples, and families.”

—**Mavis Tsai, PhD**, cocreator of functional analytic psychotherapy (FAP), and research scientist and clinical faculty at the University of Washington

“Tender, yet funny, this book is on the cutting edge of ACT. Offering page after page of practical interventions, newcomers will be presented with a clear frame of reference for doing ACT, and seasoned ACT practitioners will be exposed to fresh material that will excite and invigorate their practice. The six steps presented by the authors are simple, fun, easy to read, and always relevant to working directly with clients. This is my new clinical guide to doing ACT for my students.”

—**Timothy Gordon MSW, RSW**, treats attachment and trauma in independent practice in Hamilton, ON,

Canada; teaches ACT at McMaster University in the Clinical Behavioural Sciences program; presents workshops around the world; and is renowned for his passion as a presenter, and his experiential approach to training professionals

“For newcomers to ACT or experienced ACT clinicians, this is a much-needed, step-by-step guide to using the Matrix in psychotherapeutic sessions. It places this effective tool right at the heart of the clinical dialogue orienting client’s behavioral change. Focused on daily clinical practice, it also illustrates how relational frame theory (RFT), the contextual behavioral approach to understanding human cognition that underlies ACT, can help progressively build better clinical skills and be more helpful to the client. It also extends the application of the Matrix to work with parents and children, couples, and in life coaching. What more could you ask for?”

—**Giovambattista Presti, MD, PhD**, associate professor of psychology, and coordinator of the undergraduate program in psychology at Kore University of Enna in Italy

“Whether you are new to ACT or experienced, you will find real clinical value in this book. As with the Matrix itself, there is nothing extraneous. Everything in it serves the clinician, and by extension the client, in psychotherapy. The writing is engaging and practical. The guidance is clear. The organization of the book is logical. Most compellingly, you will feel immersed in the authors’ clinical wisdom and compassion.”

—**Gareth Holman, PhD**, coauthor of *Functional Analytic Psychotherapy Made Simple*

About the Author

Kevin L. Polk, PhD, is a clinical psychologist who has been a practicing for twenty-six years, primarily helping veterans and others with troubling trauma memories. For the past eleven years, he has dedicated himself to the study of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)—spending close to 27,000 hours studying the philosophy and theory behind ACT, and learning and designing ACT interventions. He is a peer-reviewed ACT trainer who is passionate about teaching others how to use the ACT Matrix to increase & psychological flexibility and valued living. Find out more at www.drkevinpolk.com.

Benjamin Schoendorff, MA, MSc, is director of the Contextual Psychology Institute in Montreal, QC, Canada. He is involved in ACT research at the Montreal University Mental Health Institute, and a clinical psychologist in private practice working with adults, children, teens, and couples. Schoendorff is passionate about making ACT simple for both therapists and clients. He’s authored and coauthored several ACT books in French, coedited *The ACT Matrix* with Kevin Polk, and coauthored *The ACT Practitioner’s Guide to the Science of Compassion* with Dennis Tirch and Laura Silberstein. A peer-reviewed ACT trainer and certified functional analytic psychotherapy (FAP) trainer, Schoendorff has led approximately two-hundred workshops around the world, and is currently disseminating the six-step ACT Matrix approach at the heart of this book. His workshops are widely appreciated for their direct clinical applicability, deep humanity, and warm sense of humor. In his spare time, Schoendorff loves travelling with his wife and young son Thomas, and sharing his love for ACT and the Matrix. Find out more at www.contextpsy.com.

Mark Webster is a registered psychotherapist with the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). Following a first career in the computer industry, he worked for ten years at a specialist personality disorder clinic in the National Health Service (NHS). His involvement in third-wave cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) began with dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) in 1997, which led to an early interest in ACT. Webster has been an ACT trainer since 2002, and currently runs his own business specializing in acceptance and mindfulness therapies. In 2005, he founded the ACT special interest group within the British Association

for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP). In 2008, with Kevin Polk, he created the ACT Matrix, a very user-friendly way of delivering ACT in a group setting. Webster's main interest is in finding ways to make ACT more widely available outside of traditional mental health settings. He has recently founded a community interest company called ACT Peer Recovery CIC to develop peer recovery in addiction and mental health. In addition to offering training in mental health, he regularly conducts ACT workshops for physical health practitioners, including nurses, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists. Webster has been practicing mindfulness for over twenty-five years, and is current chair of the UKCP's Cognitive Psychotherapies College.

Fabian O. Olaz, PsyD, is adjunct professor in clinical psychology and psychotherapies, and researcher and director of the Interpersonal Behavior Laboratory in the faculty of psychology at the National University of Córdoba in Argentina. He is an ACT and functional analytic psychotherapy supervisor and psychotherapist at the Integral Center of Contextual Psychotherapy (CIPCO), and a recognized trainer in Argentina, Brazil, and other South American countries.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mae Saari:

This book untitled The Essential Guide to the ACT Matrix: A Step-by-Step Approach to Using the ACT Matrix Model in Clinical Practice to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, here is because when you read this guide you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy this kind of book in the book retail store or you can order it through online. The publisher on this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, as you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason to you to past this guide from your list.

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The guide with title The Essential Guide to the ACT Matrix: A Step-by-Step Approach to Using the ACT Matrix Model in Clinical Practice contains a lot of information that you can discover it. You can get a lot of profit after read this book. This kind of book exist new information the information that exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to yo7u to find out how the improvement of the world. This specific book will bring you with new era of the the positive effect. You can read the e-book with your smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

Karena Figueroa:

In this age globalization it is important to someone to get information. The information will make someone to understand the condition of the world. The health of the world makes the information quicker to share. You can find a lot of recommendations to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can observe that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended to you is The Essential Guide to the ACT Matrix: A Step-by-Step Approach to Using the ACT Matrix Model in Clinical Practice this reserve consist a lot of the information with the condition of this world

now. This book was represented how does the world has grown up. The words styles that writer use to explain it is easy to understand. Typically the writer made some exploration when he makes this book. Honestly, that is why this book suitable all of you.

Alberta Jones:

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