

ACT and RFT in Relationships: Helping Clients Deepen Intimacy and Maintain Healthy Commitments Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Relational Frame Theory

By JoAnne Dahl PhD, Ian Stewart PhD, Christopher Martell PhD, Jonathan S Kaplan PhD

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Even if you are not a couples therapist, chances are you have dealt with clients whose problems are based in relationship issues. In order to successfully treat these clients, you must first help them understand what their values are in these relationships, and how their behavior may be undermining their attempts to seek intimacy and connection.

Combining elements of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) and relational frame theory (RFT), **ACT and RFT for Relationships** presents a unique approach for therapists to help clients develop and experience deeper, more loving relationships. By exploring personal values and expectations, and by addressing central patterns of behaviors, therapists can help their clients establish and maintain intimacy with their partner and gain a greater understanding of their relationship as a whole.

ACT is a powerful treatment model that teaches clients to accept their thoughts, identify their core values, and discover how these values are extended to their relationships with others. RFT focuses on behavioral approaches to language and cognition, and can help clients identify their own expectations regarding relationships and how they might communicate these expectations with their loved ones more effectively.

This book aims to shed light on the thought processes behind intimate relationships—from the attraction phase to the end of intimacy—from a functional, contextual perspective.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This is a fascinating account of love from the perspective of modern behavioral analysis. This book will get you thinking about yourself, your partner, and love in ways that you probably haven't thought of before. It brings scientific illumination to the candle lights of intimacy.”
—**Andrew Christensen, PhD**, is professor of psychology at UCLA, a cofounder of integrative behavioral couple therapy, and author of *Reconcilable Differences*

About the Author

JoAnne Dahl, PhD, is professor of psychology at Uppsala University, Sweden. She is coauthor of *Living Beyond Your Pain, The Art and Science of Valuing in Psychotherapy*, and *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Chronic Pain*. Dahl hosts a weekly radio program on ACT, and specializes in creating ACT applications for chronic illness, as well as those suffering in the developing countries.

Ian Stewart, PhD, is a faculty member in the school of psychology at the National University of Ireland, Galway, and coauthor of *The Art and Science of Valuing in Psychotherapy*.

Christopher Martell, PhD, is clinical associate professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a clinical research consultant. He is coauthor of *Overcoming Depression One Step at a Time*.

Jonathan S. Kaplan, PhD, is a clinical psychologist, adjunct professor, and author of *Urban Mindfulness: Cultivating Peace, Purpose, and Presence in the Middle of It All*. He has been incorporating mindfulness and meditation into psychotherapy for the past fifteen years. His work has been featured in *O, The Oprah Magazine*, as well as on the BBC News, MSNBC, and on radio and TV stations across the United States. He maintains a private practice in New York City.

Foreword writer **Robyn D. Walser, PhD**, is the assistant director at the National Center for PTSD at the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System. She also works as a consultant, workshop presenter, and therapist in her private business, TLConsultation Services. She has facilitated ACT training workshops across the world since 1998.

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