

4. Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to Help People Live Well after Trauma: *Dr David Gillanders & Dr Lesley Hunter*

In this workshop, David will introduce participants to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and consider how it can be used to conceptualise post trauma psychopathology. Participants will learn that the ACT focus in exposure is less wed to a habituation model, and is more about promoting new, more flexible forms of behaviour, in the presence of feared stimuli. The ACT literature also shows that willingness and acceptance allow people greater choice of behaviour and that through the ACT elements of Values and Action, we can help people to make choices to move in the direction of their own growth, carrying their pain with them.

David and Lesley will use clinical case material to show how clients' understandable attempts to limit their contact with feared external circumstances and internal events, such as thoughts, memories, feelings, urges and physical sensations, lead to greater and greater life constriction. They will also show how exercises and metaphors can be used to help clients to get unstuck in their lives and develop greater willingness to contact their pain - not as a way of processing or healing, but as a way of recognising that even with great pain comes a choice of how we respond and that certain forms of response come with too great a cost.

Finally, Lesley will discuss how she has integrated ACT into her own practice in a specialist posttraumatic stress service and how she regards it in relation to the other CBT trauma focused therapies which she regularly uses.

Biographies

David Gillanders is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist and Academic Director of the Doctoral Programme in Clinical Psychology at the University of Edinburgh. David also works for NHS Lothian Chronic Pain Service where he uses mainly Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to help people with Chronic Pain to live more successfully with their pain. David is a founding member of the Association for Contextual Behavioural Science (ACBS), only the third person in the UK to become an ACBS peer reviewed ACT Trainer and has recently been appointed by ACBS board as Chair of the Training Committee. He has also served two terms on the Committee of the BABCP ACT SIG, as Research Chair and as an Ordinary Member, and on the board of the ACBS UK Chapter as a member at large. David's clinical, teaching and research work largely focuses on ACT for a broad range of conditions including pain, illness, and mental health problems. David has experience of working clinically in an ACT model with people with PTSD and of supervising research in the field of acceptance and PTSD.

Lesley Hunter is a Clinical Psychologist who works at The Rivers Centre for Traumatic Stress, Edinburgh. Before joining The Rivers Centre in 2003, she worked in the anaesthetist led Pain Clinic at the Western General Hospital which is part of the Lothian Chronic Pain Service. Lesley was also a Senior Lecturer and Co-Director of the South of Scotland CBT course for several years. Currently she works with adult civilians and has a particular interest in those whose traumatic experience has resulted in physical as well as psychological injury. Recently Lesley has developed an interest in using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy with patients who have experienced trauma, particularly in cases when more traditional trauma focused therapies have had limited effectiveness.