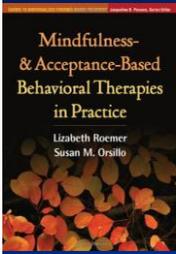
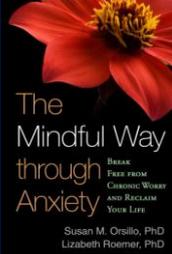


Mindfulness and acceptance-based behavioral therapy for anxiety disorders



Lizabeth Roemer, Ph.D.
University of Massachusetts Boston
lizabeth.roemer@umb.edu

Susan M. Orsillo, Ph.D.
Suffolk University
sorsillo@suffolk.edu



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Therapists and clients

Outline

- Review of research and model that informs case conceptualization
- Acceptance-based behavioral therapy
 - An overview of goals, methods and issues that commonly arise
 - Cultivating acceptance and mindfulness
 - Encouraging values-consistent living

cognitive BEHAVIORAL approaches (cBt)

- Conceptualize clinical problems as learned, habitual, serving a function
- Teach clients to understand difficulties and strategies for change
- Increase behavioral flexibility
- Increase awareness
- Use out-of-session practice
- Demonstrated efficacy with wide-range of disorders

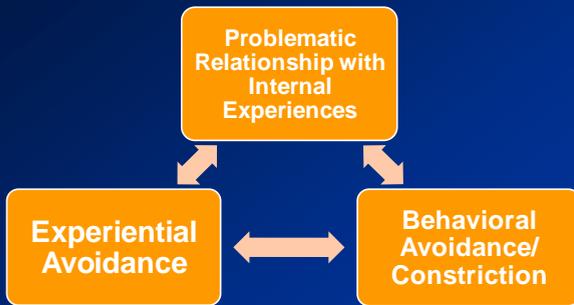
Acceptance-Based Behavioral Therapies

- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes et al., 1999)
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT; Linehan, 1993)
- Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT; Segal et al., 2002)
- Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy (IBCT; Jacobson & Christensen, 1996)

ABBTs

- Emphasize quality of life
- Teach skills that can be practiced without symptoms
- May target common mechanisms of change
- May enhance other evidence-based treatments (e.g., increase motivation for exposure)

Conceptual Model of Anxiety Disorders¹



¹Informed by a model of psychopathology described by Hayes et al., 1996

Problematic Relationships with Internal Experience

- Restricted awareness/ focus on threat
- Fusion/entanglement with internal experiences
- Emotions viewed with fear and distress¹
- Reactivity, critical judgmental of internal experiences

¹Lee et al., 2010; Mennin, 2005, Williams et al., 1997

Experiential Avoidance

- ❑ Viewing internal experiences as threatening, dangerous motivates efforts to avoid¹
- ❑ Worry serves an experientially avoidant function
 - Cognitive avoidance of somatic arousal²
 - Distraction from more emotional topics³
- ❑ Consequences
 - Increases distress; contributes to problematic relationship with internal experiences
 - Motivates behavioral avoidance

¹Lee et al., 2010; Hayes et al., 1996; ²Borkovec et al., 2004; ³Borkovec & Roemer, 1995

Behavioral Avoidance/ Constriction

- ❑ Less likely to engage in valued behaviors¹
 - Behavior driven by avoidance rather than choice
 - Diminishes quality of life¹
- ❑ May appear to be active/busy
 - Worry, anxiety and avoidance efforts prevent true engagement

¹Michelson et al., 2010; Wilson & Murrell, 2004

Goals of an ABBT for Anxiety



¹ Informed by ACT (Hayes et al., 1999), MBCT (Segal et al., 2002), and DBT (Linehan et al., 1993)

Research Context

- Individual psychotherapy with clients with principal diagnosis of GAD
- 16 sessions
 - First four 90 minutes
 - Last two are every other week
- Concepts of acceptance, mindfulness and values are interwoven into all sessions
- Two phases of treatment

Phase I

- Begin with a mindfulness exercise
- Review outside of session work
- Go over new concept
 - Present using handouts and psychoeducation
 - See how it fits with clients experience
 - Use metaphors and exercises to illustrate concepts
- Develop new out of session work

Phase II

- Client chooses mindfulness exercise
- In and between session application of principles to life material
 - Explore opportunities for valued action
 - Use acceptance and mindfulness in response to urges to experientially avoid
 - Revisit concepts presented in earlier sessions as needed

State of the Empirical Evidence

- ❑ Case study¹
- ❑ Open trial²
- ❑ Small randomized controlled trial³
 - 31 participants (71% F; 87% White)
 - Mean GAD severity 5.56 (SD = .97)
 - Mean % additional dx .93 SD= 1.03
 - 2 TX d/o, 4 WL d/o, 1 WL recovered

¹Orsillo, Roemer & Barlow (2003); ²Rpemer & Orsillo (2007); ³Roemer, Orsillo, & Salters-Pedneault, (2008).

Small RCT: Main Findings

- ❑ Significant reductions in **clinical severity** and **worry**
- ❑ Significant reductions in **depressive symptoms**
- ❑ Marginally significant (medium effect) increases in **quality of life**
- ❑ Marginally significant decrease (medium effect) in **additional diagnoses**
- ❑ Significant change in proposed mechanisms of change (**experiential avoidance** and **mindfulness**)

Durability of Effects

	Post	3 mo.	9 mo.
GAD CSR	3.10	3.22	2.98
PSWQ	53.23	50.68	49.00
BDI	5.99	6.68	7.69
MAAS	57.55	60.39	59.75

Clinical Significance of Findings

	Post n=23	3 month n=19	9 month n=17
Diagnostic Change	78.26%	84.21% (78.29%)	76.47% (78.26%)
High End-State Functioning	77.27%	94.44% (82.61%)	86.67% (78.26%)

Evidence-based Treatments for Anxiety Disorders

- Panic – PCT (interoceptive exposure)
- OCD – exposure with response prevention
- Social – behavioral exposure and cognitive restructuring
- PTSD – prolonged exposure or cognitive processing therapy

Ongoing Study/Future Directions

- Comparing ABBT to AR
 - Common mechanisms of change
 - Predictors of outcome
 - Mechanisms/of change
 - Applicability of treatment to ethnically and economically diverse clients
- Portability/Training
- Adaptations
- Basic research studies
- Studies of other anxiety disorders

Goals



Methods

- Therapeutic relationship
- Psychoeducation
- Mindfulness practice
 - Defusion exercises

Therapeutic Relationship

- Model the treatment
 - Be mindfully engaged in session
 - Demonstrate willingness to tolerate painful emotions and thoughts
- Validate and normalize client's pain and struggle

Psychoeducation

Presenting Psychoeducational Material

- Handouts to reinforce learning
- Present general concept and then explore how it may fit with clients experience
- Don't attempt to persuade or debate
 - Client encouraged to consider over time
- Recognize limits of psychoeducation
 - Experiential learning supports concepts

Psychoeducation

- Function of fear
 - Valued living involves taking risks and facing challenges
- Function of worry
 - Ability to consider the future is adaptive, but unfortunately we cannot control it
 - Worry as avoidance
- Function of emotions
 - Provide information and prepare us

But, Sometimes Emotions Become Muddied....

(like when fear becomes clinical)

How Can We Tell When Emotions are Muddy?

- ❑ Stronger and/or last longer
- ❑ Diffuse – “upset” or “distressed”
- ❑ Confusing
- ❑ Feels really familiar, like part of personality rather than a reaction to situation
- ❑ Feel judgmental or critical about our reaction
- ❑ Feel caught up in or entangled in our emotional response

How do Emotions become Muddy?

- ❑ Failures in self-care
- ❑ Emotions connected to future, imagined or past, remembered events
- ❑ Problematic relationship
 - Fusion/entangled
 - Critical/ judgmental
 - Experiential avoidance
 - Limits and paradoxical effects

How Do We Clarify Muddy Emotions?

Mindfulness

Mindfulness Skills

- Develop a spacious awareness of present moment
- Develop a curious, compassionate, observant stance
- Notice the transient nature of internal experiences
- Beginner's mind

Mindfulness Methods

- Self-monitoring
- Formal practice
- Informal practice
- In and out of session
- Neutral and emotionally charged situations

Self-Monitoring

Self-Monitoring

- Break habitual avoidance habit
- Turning towards internal experiences
- Developing fuller awareness of responses/ interconnections
 - Thoughts, emotions, behaviors, consequences
- Decentering or defusing
- Progressively more challenging
 - Target related to psychoeducation

Date	Topic	Situation	Emotion
11/1	Bills	At desk at work	Anxious Angry
11/2	Conflict with boss	In bed	Anxious Angry Sad

Date	Topic	Situation	Emotion	Efforts to Control
11/8	Job interview	In bed	Anxious	Tried to push out of my mind so I could fall asleep
11/9	Conflict with mother	At desk at work	Sad; angry	I don't want to feel sad about this - she is wrong - I should be angry - need to be able to talk to her without crying!

Date	Situation	First Reactions (thoughts, feelings, sensations)	Second Reactions (efforts to control, critical responses, compassion)
11/7	Asking my boss for a raise	Scared Proud Blushing "She will be mad" "I don't deserve a raise"	This is too overwhelming for me I can't let her see how nervous I am Distract myself so I don't cry
11/9	Laying in bed in the middle of the night thinking about interaction with boss	Anger, sadness Replaying images of interactions "I am pathetic" "Why didn't I stand up for myself?"	Noticed how I am always too hard on myself Tried to bring compassion to the situation - anyone would be uncomfortable; seeing how emotional I was made her understand this is a big deal to me

Concerns about Self-Monitoring

- Do I have to write things down in the situation?
 - Assumption that SM is something done for the therapist
- Do I have to mark down every time I am anxious?
- Won't paying attention make me more anxious?

Formal Mindfulness Practices

Exploring Mindfulness Practice

- What did you notice?
- Validate humanness of all experiences
- Listen for judgment – “good” or “bad” practice
- Connect observations to presenting problems and goals of treatment

Mindfulness Progression

- Awareness of body sensations
 - Awareness of Breath
 - Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Beginner’s Mind
 - Raisin Exercise
 - Mindfulness of Sound

Progression (cont.)

- **The challenge of thoughts and emotions**
 - Labeling internal experiences
 - Mindfulness of Emotion
 - The Clouds Exercise
 - Leaves on a Stream
 - New language conventions

Progression (cont.)

- **Compassion**
 - The Guest House
 - Wild Geese
 - Inviting a difficulty in
- **Developing a sense of the transience of experience**
 - Observer exercise
 - Mountain meditation

Informal Mindfulness Practice

- **Daily activities/ routines**
 - Washing dishes, folding laundry, brushing teeth
- **More challenging situations**
 - Interactions with boss, conflict with partner, parenting situations

Struggles with Self-Compassion

- Emotional responses are unacceptable
- Misunderstanding self-compassion
 - = heaping false praise on oneself
 - = ignoring or denying our mistakes
 - = selfish
- Fear of self-compassion
 - It will turn me into a lazy softie
- I don't deserve it

Goals



Values articulation and action

- Psychoeducation
- Emotional processing/writing exercises
- Self-monitoring
- Engagement in action

Psychoeducation

- **Goals can be helpful**
 - But, contain assumption that where you are now is not enough
- **Values differ from goals**
 - Process not endpoint
 - Present moment versus future focus
- **Willingness is an alternative to avoidance that promotes engagement in valued living**
 - Swamp metaphor

Values Writing Assignment I

- **How is your anxiety interfering with...**
 - Relationships (partner, family, friends)
 - Work, education, training, household management
 - Self-nourishment and community activities
- **Writing Assignments**
 - 20 minutes on 4 different days
 - Explore deepest thoughts and emotions about topics
 - Don't worry about grammar

Values Writing Assignment II

- **Relationships**
 - How open or private would you like to be? How would you like to communicate with others?
- **Work/Education**
 - What kind of work do you want to be engaged in? What sort of work habits are important to you? What challenges do you want to take on?
- **Self-nurturance/Community Involvement**
 - How would you like to spend your free time? What do you want to do for fun? To better take care of yourself or others?

Values Assignment III

- Name one or two values in each domain
 - Relationships
 - Work/Education
 - Self-nurturance and community involvement
- Identify obstacles that prevent you from living consistently with values

Value: To Connect with Others

Date	Action	Taken (T) or Missed (M)	Mindfulness (0-100)	Obstacles
7/4	Co-worker invited me to lunch	M	30	I was afraid I wouldn't be interesting and fun enough. Going to lunch would make me feel too anxious
7/7	Talked to my partner about how I was feeling	T	80	

Making a Commitment to a Values-Consistent Life

- Identifying values consistent actions to be taken
- Use mindfulness/acceptance/defusion to address obstacles
- Bring mindfulness to valued living

Values Writing Assignment IV

- What is the importance of the values you have chosen? What do they mean to you?
- What are the biggest obstacles that stand between you and the changes you want to make?
- What positive and negative reactions come up when you think about making a commitment to change?

Common Stuck Points with Values

- I have no control over valued domains
 - Wanting other people to act differently
 - Situations/circumstances beyond my control
- Separating my values from the values of those around me
- Indecision/fear of articulating a value
- Balancing values across domains

Termination and Relapse Prevention

Review Elements of Treatment

- Overview of model and strategies
- Identify particularly useful strategies
- Establish ways of reminding self of concepts and strategies
 - Use of binder and handouts
 - Suggestions for maintaining mindfulness practice
- Setbacks and struggles are expected

Mindfulness Suggestions

Practice	Helpfulness
Breath	Basic portable practice
Breathing Space	Helpful when racing from one activity to another or to check in and get centered
Mindfulness of Emotions	When experience muddy, or intense reactions
Thoughts on Clouds, Leaves or Movie Screen	When entangled, fused or tied in unjudgments
Mindfulness of Sounds/ Eating Mindfully	When you are bringing expectations to a situation; not necessarily watching as it unfolds
The Guest House/ Inviting a Difficulty In	When you are struggling with willingness
The Mountain Meditation	When you need help connecting to inner strength and stability

Signs to Revisit Mindfulness and Valued Action

- Feeling increasingly anxious/stressed/ frazzled
- Feeling checked out or disconnected
- Having muddied reactions more frequently
- Feeling constrained in life – like you don't have freedom or flexibility
- More frequently passing up valued activities
- Repeatedly thinking things will get better after this one hurdle is passed

