

APS 2012 Workshop Information

Full Day, March 14, 2012, 9am to 4:30pm

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness in Psychosomatic Medicine: An Experiential Workshop

Lance M. McCracken, PhD, Health Psychology Section, King's College London & INPUT Pain Management Service Guys and St Thomas' NHSFT, London

There is probably no other psychological approach within physical health that is growing faster than those that include processes of acceptance and mindfulness. Prime examples of these include Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). There are now more than 50 published randomised controlled trials of ACT for a range of conditions and there are an even larger number of trials of mindfulness-based approaches. These studies address such diverse physical conditions as chronic pain, diabetes, epilepsy, cancer, end of life, insomnia, smoking cessation, tinnitus, and HIV. ACT and mindfulness are similar and different. Mindfulness includes a set of practices with an extremely long history that are relatively well disseminated around the world. On the other hand, there was no book-length description of ACT until 1999, and dissemination has just started over the past ten years and appears to be accelerating. ACT has a firm basis in scientific theory and includes relatively precise psychological processes of pathology and treatment. The overarching treatment process in ACT is called 'psychological flexibility.' The objectives of this workshop are to (a) introduce or re-introduce these approaches with an emphasis on the theory and principles of ACT, (b) present a particular focus on data and methods for chronic pain as an example condition, and (c) include a blend of theory and evidence, in small doses, and experiential learning exercises, in larger doses.

Half Day, March 14, 2012, 1:30 to 4:30pm

Assessing Life Stress using Interview and Computer-Based Methods

George M. Slavich, PhD, Cousins Center for Psychoneuroimmunology and Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles

Life stress is a central concept in most models of psychological and physical health. The goal of this workshop is to provide attendees with intimate knowledge of the leading, gold-standard techniques for assessing exposure to early adversity and adulthood life stress. We will review several traditional interview-based methods for assessing stress, including the Life Events and Difficulties Schedule (LEDS) and the UCLA Life Stress Interview (LSI). We will also learn about several new, fully-automated, computer-based systems for assessing stress, such as the Stress and Adversity Inventory (STRAIN). Researchers and clinicians will come away from the workshop knowing the major issues plaguing stress assessment and how to address these issues by implementing sophisticated systems for measuring individuals' exposure to early adversity, and recent and cumulative adulthood life stress.