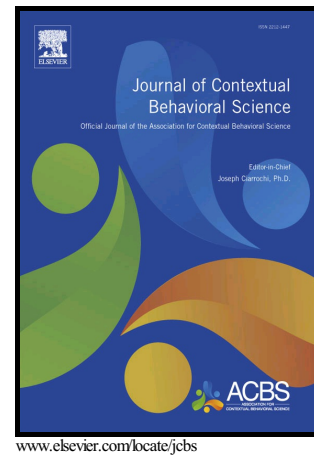


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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

What Happens after Five Years?: The Long-Term Effects of a Four-Session Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Delivered by Student Therapists for Depressive Symptoms

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Abstract

Brief interventions can be viable treatment options worth consideration in addressing the growing need for treatments of subclinical and clinical depressive symptoms. However, there is uncertainty regarding the long-term benefits of these interventions. The aim was to examine the long-term (5-year) effects of a 4-session Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) intervention for low mood delivered by novice therapists in order to see whether lasting effects could be achieved cost-effectively with four intervention sessions. Originally, 57 self-referred clients were randomized into two groups: an intervention group and a waiting-list control group which received treatment later. The groups were combined both at the 6-month ($n = 48$) and the 5-year ($n = 35$) follow-up measurements to examine intervention effects. The results indicate a good effect size for depressive symptoms (the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI): $d = 1.45$ (CI 1.10 – 1.80) through the five-year study period. All in all, approximately 40% of the participants reported minimal to no depressive symptoms based on the primary outcome measure, the BDI (scores 0-9), both at post- and 5-year follow-up measurements.

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