Be MINDFUL

AN INNOVATIVE MINDFULNESS BASED TRAINING PROGRAM FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The *Be Mindful* project is an international collaboration between specialists in Mindfulness and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and service providers in the mental health field. Professionals from 3 different countries and 5 organizations have joined forces to work together on the development of an innovative training course in mindfulness for mental health professionals. The tailored course will be hosted on a multilingual e-learning platform so that professionals from all around Europe and the world can access it and benefit from the training.

Mindfulness is a thousands of years old practice, but its techniques have been adapted by modern psychology in recent years. Ever since, its applicability to everyday life have become renowned worldwide and thanks to its effectiveness in combating and regulating stress. However, its application to professionals in the mental health field has not been fully developed to date. The *Be Mindful* project's team is convinced that mindfulness will prove a magnificent tool for mental health professionals working with patients with severe and prolonged mental illness. The utility of mindfulness for mental health professionals is twofold. On one hand, it will support the professionals to cope with their own difficulties and stress derived from their professional activity and, on the other hand, it will enhance and support the quality of therapy delivered and hence, the recovery of their patients.

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SWEDEN RECOGNIZES ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY AS A PHYSIOTHERAPEUTIC THEORY AND METHOD

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) has gained increased evidence, not only to treat diverse mental and physical health conditions, but also as an intervention for organizations to increase health among their employees. ACT integrates mindfulness as one of its therapeutic processes that, together with the increased acceptance of difficulties, and the capacity to commit to live a valuable life, potentiates the outcomes for the professional and the patients. A perfect fit for the Be Mindful project, designed specifically for mental health professionals.

It is a big news that in Sweden ACT has been recognized as a physiotherapeutic theory and method, demonstrating the usefulness of ACT principles and its application to other professions and fields. The revised core competencies published by the Swedish Association of Registered Physiotherapists refers to the work and chapter written by Dr. Graciela Rovner, one of the expert partners in the project.

Dr. Rovner has been working, disseminating and implementing ACT and mindfulness based rehabilitation for inter-professional pain rehabilitation teams since 2007. She is the first and only physiotherapist in the world who successfully passed the review as an ACT trainer by the Association of Behavioral and Contextual Sciences. We asked Dr. Rovner about the difference between ACT and prior models of therapy and she answered: “ACT has been created in a novel way: instead of developing the therapy first and testing if it works afterwards, the creators of ACT started by exploring and investigating the mechanisms of action and processes needed to change and transform suffering into healthy recourses. Once these processes of changes were well studied, they developed the Psychological Flexibility model underlying ACT, used mainly by psychologists.

“Mindfulness is like mental physiotherapy!”
Dr. Graciela Rovner

The adaptation of ACT to be used by other professionals is called ACTiveRehab. It guides the professionals working in all areas in how to apply the ACT principles in their own work and everyday life, also as a self-care method to handle different day-to-day stressful situations.”

Be Mindful integrates these processes in its training program that, in an effective way, will improve the quality of the interventions delivered by mental health professionals as well as the professionals’ own health, by teaching the latter how to effectively transform stress into a healthy resource. In the words of Dr. Rovner: “Mindfulness is like mental physiotherapy!”

THE PARTNERS

Psychological center PSICACT based in Valladolid, Spain, led by Dr. Carlos Salgado, specializes in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness. It is the first center in Spain to take care of people with chronic mental illness from a one hundred percent contextual-functional perspective. They offer both, individual ACT based therapy and trainings for health professionals.
www.consulta-psicologo.es

ACT INSTITUTET located in Gothenburg, Sweden, presided by Dr. Graciela Rovner, offers training and clinical supervision to professionals in the area of specialized chronic pain, inter-professional rehabilitation and behavioral medicine. Their research translates knowledge from empirically tested and evidence based science of behavioral change to further understand mechanisms needed to increase professional competence and skills to deliver sustainable and short interventions that improve self-care and life-style changes.
www.actinstitutet.se

Institute for Integrative Psychotherapy and Counselling (IPSA) situated in Ljubljana (Slovenia), led by Dr. Gregor Zvelc, carries out individual psychotherapy, psychological counselling and supervision in the field of psychotherapy and counselling. They have developed an Integrative Stress Management (ISM) program that integrates practice of mindfulness with Transactional Analysis, Cognitive Therapy and concepts from Integrative Psychotherapy.
www.institut-ipsa.si

Fundación INTRAS is a non-profit organization dedicated to research and intervention in the mental health field in the region of Castilla y León, Spain. The organization's services and programs are based on the *recovery approach*, thus empowering people with mental health issues to live a self-determined and self-confident life. INTRAS offers a variety of services and activities to its clients, such as psychosocial and labor rehabilitation programs, occupational and vocational training, and pre-labor workshops as well as counseling and professional guidance.
www.intras.es

OZARA d.o.o. is a social enterprise located in Maribor (Slovenia). It is one of the national key service providers for people with mental illness promoting their social inclusion, offering them different forms of psychosocial rehabilitation, vocational training and employment. With the help of individual approach and joint planning OZARA enables their clients to re-include in the social and working environment and also empower them to lead an independent and quality life.
www.ozara.si

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