



## Summer Newsletter

### **Coderix Summer 2017 Newsletter - "What is ACT Anyways?"**

*After the first newsletter, I was told, "Dr. Lam - you refer to ACT in the newsletter. But I don't know what ACT is!"*

### **ACT Stands for - Acceptance and Commitment Therapy**

ACT is about psychological flexibility - it is about developing skills to deal with difficult thoughts and feelings so they don't control us, and taking concrete, practical steps in our lives which are meaningful to our true selves.

Psychological flexibility can be thought of as six skills, which are inter-related. In this and the next few newsletters, I am going to touch upon each of these six

skills. If you are interested, ask us more in clinic. Dr. Rana, Dr. Eibisch, and myself are all trained in ACT, and it informs what we do, and how we do it.

## **ACT Skill #1 - Contacting The Present Moment**

Everyone says 'Live for the moment'. However, our minds spend a lot of time replaying the past, and worrying about the future. We often get 'caught up' in our thoughts. This is a normal function of our minds, which evolved to protect us from danger and solve problems about how to survive. However, if our minds spend all our time in the past and the future, we miss out on the only time that life really happens - which is in this exact moment. Developing the skill of being in the present can help us to experience more of our lives.

Contacting the Present Moment is about noticing. It is about me noticing the feeling of the keyboard under my finger as I type this. It is about you noticing the way the light of the screen hits your eyes. It is also about paying attention, openly and without judgment - paying attention to the way water feels as you swallow, paying attention to the way grass feels as you walk.

### **Try this:**

1. Choose a minute. Any minute will do.
2. During that minute, simply notice physical sensations - what you can see from where you are, what sounds come to you.
3. As you do this, thoughts will pull you into the past and the future. They may even be critical, saying 'are you doing this right?' There is no need to be frustrated: simply notice the thoughts, and gently bring your attention back to your physical sensations.

## **Reflection - Why the Photo of Dancers?**

I took this photo at an event called Dusk Dances. I love watching dance because it operates on a level which is less about thoughts, and more about the physicality of movement. You can make a Contacting the Present Moment experience out of anything, but why not something really beautiful? This annual, and magical dance performance is coming to Toronto at Withrow Park from August 7 to 13. The closest TTC station is Chester. It is a PWYC event.

Dusk Dances Website at <http://duskdances.ca/en/>

**Go at dusk and simply notice the dance...**



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