

Preface

The ability to perceive, identify, accept, and regulate intense emotions is an important contributor to health and well-being. Unfortunately, not everyone has been given the chance to acquire these complex skills. The Affect Regulation Training (ART) program was designed to foster emotion regulation skills in individuals who suffer from mental disorders, are at-risk for developing such disorders, or simply want to learn how to cope with challenging emotions in their daily life.

It took several years to develop ART. First, the research literature was thoroughly reviewed to identify emotion regulation skills deficits that are linked to the development and maintenance of mental disorders. Second, a theoretical model was developed to conceptualize the critical components of *adaptive* emotion regulation. Third, building upon this theoretical framework, the most effective emotion regulation techniques from a broad range of psychotherapeutic approaches were identified and integrated into a beta version of ART. This initial version of the training program went through an extensive testing phase in which clinical feasibility was scrutinized. The current version of ART incorporates feedback from this testing phase.

ART has now been used successfully for several years in various treatment centers. Results from pilot research studies indicate that ART, used as an adjunctive intervention, enhances the effectiveness of empirically based treatments (such as cognitive behavior therapy) and that ART can also be effectively applied as a stand-alone, first-step intervention. Numerous therapists have been trained to deliver the ART curriculum. The positive feedback we have received from these therapists and from the participants who have attended ART classes has been very encouraging.

The ART manual was originally published in the German language. As ART was presented in lectures and workshops in the United States and the United Kingdom, there were numerous requests for an English version of the ART manual, so work began with Brian Whitley to develop an updated, English version. Since some of the expressions in the original German version did not translate well into English, the translation process was difficult at times. However, with perseverance and determination, the task was completed with the valuable help of numerous native speakers from the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Australia.

We would like to give special thanks, posthumously, to Dr. Klaus Grawe. While developing ART, he provided tremendous support, inspiration, and motivation. We also want to thank the German Research Association and the Swiss National Science Foundation for funding the research on which the training is based.

Additionally, we would like to mention the numerous advisors, physicians, therapists, colleagues, students, and trainees who contributed to this manual in many different ways, particularly Tiffany Calvert, Kristen Ellard, Nicholas Salsman, and Peggilee Wupperman. Last but not least, we are grateful to our wives and children, who had to cope with our frequent absence during the work on this manual. Without their support and understanding, this book never could have been made.

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A Practitioners' Manual

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