



## Rev. Katie O’Dunne Honored with Inaugural IOCDF Advocate Spirit Award



The inaugural IOCDF Advocate Spirit Award was bestowed upon Reverend Katie O’Dunne, in recognition of unwavering dedication to advocating for positive change, empowering others, and being an inspiration to all.

The award was announced at the IOCDF’s Annual OCD Conference and presented to Katie in a surprise Instagram Live during OCD Awareness Week.

The Advocate Spirit Award was created to celebrate advocacy and to honor an IOCDF Advocate who has gone above and beyond in their efforts.

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The mission of the IOCDF is to ensure that no one affected by OCD and related disorders suffers alone. Our community provides help, healing, and hope.

Our vision is that everyone impacted by OCD and related disorders has immediate access to effective treatment and support.

The IOCDF provides up-to-date education and resources, strengthens community engagement, delivers quality professional training, and advances groundbreaking research.

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If you are a parent/caregiver of someone with OCD please take our survey to help us improve our programming:  
**[iocdf.org/caregiversurvey](http://iocdf.org/caregiversurvey)**

**WE WANT  
YOUR  
FEEDBACK**

**We would love your feedback on the OCD Newsletter!**

Give us your opinions at **[iocdf.org/newslettersurvey](http://iocdf.org/newslettersurvey)**

You can enter for a chance to win a \$50 Visa gift card by completing the brief survey.



## President's Letter

by Susan Boaz

Dear OCD and related disorders community,

The focus of my letter to you today is on celebrating the life of our dear friend Dr. Michael Jenike, who passed away in October. It is, of course, very difficult to fit into one letter all that he has meant to the IOCDF.



We know that so many of you knew Dr. Jenike and that if you met him, you probably adored him for his quirky, outgoing personality and willingness to believe that absolutely anyone can find help from OCD. He would literally stand for hours to answer questions about medications or ERP therapy. He was always open to listening to the latest research and he lived his life with a curious and expansive mind.

If you didn't get the chance to meet him in person, trust that if you are in the OCD community, you did know him — through the clinicians that he mentored, the research that guides care, or the spirit that this community embodies: helping the person in front of you. You can learn more about him in a comprehensive tribute in the following pages, but I wanted to take a moment to reflect on his remarkable impact and honor his enduring legacy. Mike would want us to celebrate the remarkable journey our organization has taken — and then he would ask what we are doing next to help those with OCD and related disorders!

Mike was one of the earliest pioneers of the IOCDF. In fact, he was a part of the organization when it was still called the Obsessive Compulsive Foundation. Whether presenting at conferences, speaking with news organizations, or diving into research, Mike was a driving force in discovering just how many people were suffering in silence, and he refused to accept the status quo.



Here's a photo from one of the first Annual OCD Conferences — you can see Mike there in 2002.

Back then, IOCDF Conferences were just a few hundred people coming together for a shared mission of ensuring that no one with OCD or related disorders suffers alone. The inaugural Annual OCD Conference included around 300 attendees and a mere 10 talks.

Contrast that with the recent Online OCD Conference, which featured a staggering array of over 80 informative talks. Today, the Conference is a vibrant mix of 2,000 people, from researchers and clinicians, to adults or kids with OCD, and

family members. This evolution of the Conference, and of the IOCDF as an organization, is a testament to the strength and determination of our community.

Since those early days, the IOCDF has grown to offer trainings, free resources, and virtual programming that reaches hundreds of thousands of participants. It is through the shepherding of greats like Mike that this organization strives to reach its full potential, growing in new directions and constantly advancing in its mission to ensure no one with OCD or related disorders suffers alone.

Just this October, we celebrated two major events in the OCD community. The first was our OCD Awareness Week, where participants from around the world came together to advocate, share OCD Truths, and celebrate the OCD Community. In addition, we partnered with OCD SoCal to present the Online OCD Conference, where over one thousand attendees joined us for a weekend of programming!

As you can imagine, an instrumental figure behind the evolution of the IOCDF was, of course, Mike Jenike. In addition to his influential role on the IOCDF Board, he served as the Chair of the Scientific and Clinical Advisory Board of the IOCDF for several decades. Mike also was responsible for the establishment of IOCDF's Research Grant Program, and the Michael Jenike Young Investigator Awards were named in honor of his meaningful contributions. If you would like to honor Mike, his family asks for contributions to be made to this fund, to help young researchers find a passion for OCD research that may someday change this disease.

Our continued work on our vision that everyone with OCD receives treatment will continue because of all the hard work and dedication of relentless advocates like Mike — and like you. As we celebrate his legacy, we are reminded that a few dedicated individuals can change the world. Each of us has the power to change the life of another person for the better, and I know that this world is a better place because of the life and contributions of our friend Dr. Michael Jenike.

Warmly,

Susan M. Boaz

IOCDF Board President and mom



## FROM THE FOUNDATION

### Inaugural IOCDF Advocate Spirit Award *(continued from front cover)*



On being the Foundation's inaugural Spirit Award Winner, O'Dunne writes:

*Receiving the inaugural IOCDF Advocate Spirit Award is an unparalleled honor that holds a special place in my heart. My greatest joy as an IOCDF Lead Advocate comes from empowering fellow advocates as they embark on their unique projects and journeys. I am deeply honored to play a role in the journeys of so many amazing advocates, as they create passion projects that truly change the shape of this community.*


*The physical award holds a permanent place on my desk, a constant source of motivation for me. As recently as 2019, I could not have imagined sharing my story or advocating with the IOCDF. And I truly want everyone to know their voice is valuable in this community.*

*This award is a testament to the amazing individuals within our community who continue to inspire me each day. It strengthens my resolve to drive positive change and to encourage every single person to find their own uniquely beautiful voice in advocacy. I am so excited for this award to continue, as there are so many incredible advocates in this*

*community deserving of recognition for their unwavering dedication and commitment to positive change. I'm simply honored to be on the journey with each of them!*

Dr. Emily Bailey, who was one of the surprise guests celebrating Katie on Instagram Live, wrote: "Katie completely embodies the values and purpose of this award."

"I can't think of a better person to serve as a positive role model in the advocacy world," Bailey wrote. "Not only does Katie exemplify this award because of the spirit and energy she puts into her advocacy platform, she also shows relentless drive and unwavering passion for helping others within the OCD community while normalizing conversations around mental health. She truly gives hope to the OCD community surrounding the possibility of recovery and living a values-driven life."

Annie Gottesman, who was also in attendance to celebrate Katie, wrote, "Katie helps other people shift how we look at ourselves: she helps us see that we are all created in the Divine image and we all have a spark of holiness in us — and that is the most important, meaningful message that any human can ever receive." 



## Remembering Dr. Michael Jenike



*It is with great sadness that we share that our longtime board member and dear friend Dr. Michael Jenike has passed away after a long battle with cancer.*

Dr. Michael Jenike is not a man who can be easily described. Several interviews and countless conversations about Dr. Jenike all left the same impression — you just had to know Mike. Mike was one of a kind. He was the unexpected. He was joyous, curious, and wise. He didn't play by the rules. He was a maverick for all the right reasons, an advocate who didn't have the word "no" in his vocabulary.

He was, according to the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, a doctor. But most people lovingly knew him as "Mike."

### A DOCTOR WITH A HEART OF GOLD

"He definitely carried himself as a highly respected medical professional in the special field of OCD. However, he was different because he had that 'father figure' vibe about him. He was sweet, warm, kind, and caring," said Charlene Salvador, a former patient of Dr. Jenike's.

"He had enormous charisma," said Dr. Sabine Wilhelm, who worked with Dr. Jenike at McLean and is vice-chair of the IOCDF Scientific and Clinical Advisory Board. "He was incredibly smart, of course. And he was a full professor at Harvard and a world-renowned clinician, and a real icon in the OCD world. But he also had a great sense of humor," Wilhelm said.

Dr. Jenike's sense of humor stands out as something people loved about him.

"He was incredibly funny. I would walk by his office and I could hear him and his patients laughing," Wilhelm said. "He

always was able to get people to see sort of a brighter side of life."

"He was also a very funny guy who used to always cheer me up when I was down," Salvador said.

"Mike was a brilliant doctor, a total sweetheart," Ethan Smith, IOCDF National Advocate and a former patient and friend of Dr. Jenike, said.

### A STORIED CAREER

Dr. Jenike dedicated his entire career to serving members of the OCD and related disorders community.

A graduate of the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, Dr. Jenike founded the Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Institute at McLean Hospital, the first residential treatment program in the United States for individuals with OCD, and the Obsessive Compulsive Disorders Clinic and Research Unit at Massachusetts General Hospital, where he also served as medical director.

He authored hundreds of papers on mental illness and was a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Jenike contributed to the start of many researchers' and clinicians' careers by collaborating with them on research, books, or presentations, and by driving patients to newly founded clinics.

He served as the Chair of the IOCDF Scientific and Clinical Advisory Board for nearly three decades, where he oversaw its growth to over 50 members, and he was also a member of the IOCDF Board of Directors for a number of years.

During that time, Dr. Jenike helped grow the Foundation into the global, mission-driven nonprofit that it is today. He inspired the IOCDF's commitment to free resources, making sure everyone affected by OCD and related disorders had access to educational materials; reached out to donors and personally contributed enough to allow our growth in hires for communications, fundraising, and programming; and presented at every Annual OCD Conference. The lines after his presentations were so long that he often stood helping individuals for hours.

### A MAVERICK FOR THE OCD COMMUNITY

But most people who knew Dr. Jenike remember him for reasons that did not appear on his resume. Dr. Jenike became known for his unwillingness to conform to the norm, and for having a penchant for coloring outside the lines.

"He made his own rules," said Wilhelm.

"I think what made Mike special was he didn't conform to



## FROM THE FOUNDATION

### Remembering Dr. Michael Jenike *(continued)*

norms or what people thought he should be," Smith said.

Through his unconventional practices, Mike carved out a place in the OCD community, establishing himself as an expert in the field.

"He was a pioneer and the authority on everything OCD," Smith said. "People knew his story and knew that he saved so many different lives."

"He saved so many lives, so many lives because of who he was and how he approached patients. So his impact was enormous," Wilhelm said.

#### A LIFESAVER FOR COUNTLESS PATIENTS

From the comments on his memorial tributes, it's apparent that Dr. Jenike made an impact in countless lives. As Wilhelm described, there were no limits to his compassion.

"He was enormously compassionate in a way I had never seen before. I think that's why he inspired so many of us," Wilhelm said.

"His driving force was ending suffering in the OCD community," Smith said. "All he cared about was helping people. And that drove him."

"There was never a patient who was too ill for Mike," Wilhelm said. If a patient was stuck in their basement, Wilhelm said, Mike would go down to see them.

"He really felt like there was no one he couldn't help," Smith said. "He was remarkable in that way for his ability to make room for everyone and make everyone feel like they were special. He never made you feel like you were being brushed off or he didn't have time for you. Even when he was busy."

"It was really his willingness to just talk to anybody and anybody and make them feel heard that that's what made him truly remarkable," Smith added.

#### AN ENDURING LEGACY


Dr. Jenike's legacy is already shining bright, as messages of gratitude pour in with the news of his passing. Former patients are coming forward from near and far, all to say how much of an impact Mike had on their lives.

"He's a hero to many people," Smith said.

"It was a special honor and privilege to have known him in my lifetime," Salvador said. "I considered him to be my hero and will always be grateful for all he has done for the OCD community."

"His legacy is one of hope, and encouragement that one person can literally make the most profound difference in a community over decades," Smith said.

"He really changed the field," Wilhelm said. "I think that's actually the most important thing: how much of a positive impact he had on the field, how much his life mattered."

At the IOCDF, Dr. Jenike's legacy lives on through the Research Grant Fund. Dr. Jenike created a culture of giving that was essential in establishing this fund, which he pioneered. The IOCDF's Michael Jenike Young Investigator Awards were named for him in honor of these contributions and his formidable influence on the field, ensuring that his name will forever be associated with cutting-edge research in this field. 

For memorial donations to the Michael A. Jenike Young Investigator Awards Fund, visit [iocdf.org/donate-research](https://iocdf.org/donate-research)

*In Memory*  
**Mike Jenike, MD**





## FROM THE FOUNDATION

## Get to Know Our Newest Board Members



*The IOCDF Board of Directors is a group of clinicians, family members, individuals with lived experience, and other advocates who work together to fulfill the Foundation's vision. Their leadership guides the organization in its mission to ensure that no one affected by OCD and related disorders suffers alone.*

The Board's newest members, Crystal Fulwood (left) and Ben Gambrel (right), bring with them their unique perspectives and unwavering commitment to the cause. Here, we delve into their personal journeys, motivations, and the shared vision they hold for the future of the OCD and related disorders community.

#### **What made you want to join the IOCDF Board?**

CF: The mission of the organization and the passion of the community inspired me to join the Board. Last year, through focus groups, I had the honor to speak with various constituents about the impact of the IOCDF. During those conversations, I learned how the IOCDF is an industry leader and how, through the organization, people worldwide have found hope and healing.

#### **How did you first get involved with the IOCDF?**

BG: Our daughter has OCD, and that's what first connected us with the IOCDF. Like so many others, we leveraged the resources and conferences that the IOCDF provided to help with our journey. I developed a deeper connection [to the organization] after spending some time with the former executive director and discussing the IOCDF's strategy. I do strategic planning as part of my "day job," so I offered to assist.

#### **What do you hope to accomplish as a Board member?**

BG: The IOCDF is committed to a bold vision where everyone with OCD and related disorders has immediate access to effective treatment and support. Frankly, we have a lot of work to do to get there! There is inadequate supply of qualified treatment options and the treatment that is available is often prohibitively expensive and physically out of reach. In my view, the IOCDF must take a more assertive leadership role in pulling together providers, partners, institutions, donors, and government to address awareness, accessibility, and affordability of treatment.

My hope is that by joining the Board I can contribute my expertise in strategic planning and execution that I've learned in the business world to accelerate and enlarge the impact on the community we serve.

#### **What does it mean to you to be a part of the IOCDF Board?**

CF: Being a part of the IOCDF Board is incredibly rewarding and fulfilling. The role provides an opportunity to make a positive impact on people living with OCD and those who care for them.

#### **What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the OCD community currently?**

BG: Lack of broad awareness of OCD as well as inadequate affordable capacity for effective treatment.

#### **How can the IOCDF Board continue to spread hope to our community?**

CF: The IOCDF Board and the staff can continue to look for innovative ways to meet people where they are so no one is alone.

We at the IOCDF are thrilled to have these two visionaries join us in our mission, and we look forward to all that they will accomplish during their time with us. 📌



## ADVOCATE CORNER

### The BDD SIG Goes to London!

Four members of the Body Dysmorphic Disorder Special Interest Group (BDD SIG) (from left to right), Scott Granet, Sabine Wilhelm, Chris Trondsen, and Jamie Feusner, all traveled to London to participate in the 10th Anniversary BDD conference sponsored by the BDD Foundation.

Scott spoke on BDD Across the Lifespan, Sabine presented on The Past, Present, and Future of CBT for BDD, Chris discussed BDD within the LGBTQIA+ community, and Jamie presented on Visual Processing and Distorted Perceptions. In this picture, they are joined by Rob Willson, the Chair of the BDD Foundation.

It was a wonderful opportunity for members of the IOCDF BDD SIG to join together with leaders in BDD research and treatment in the UK. Together, they helped spread awareness and provide support for people and families struggling with this very challenging yet treatable disorder. [🔗](#)



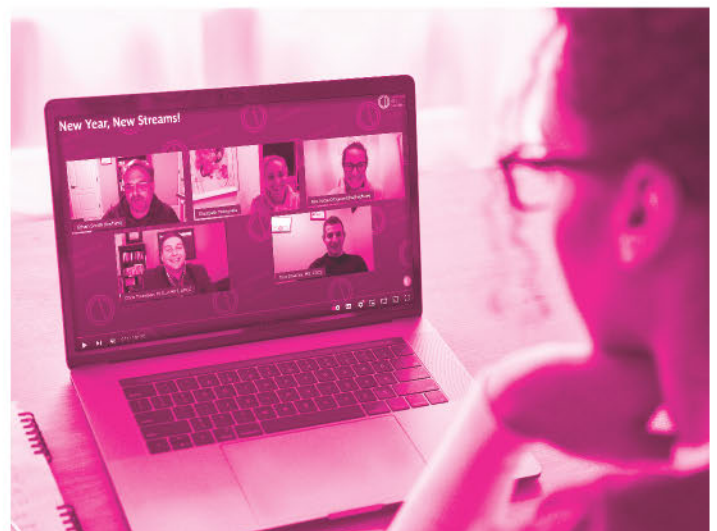
## IOCDF — LIVESTREAMS!

Tune in for twice-weekly livestreams to interact with OCD experts and people just like you who live with OCD and related disorders!

- **Tuesdays @ 7pm ET**
- **Wednesdays @ 12pm ET**

Ask your questions, connect with others in the community, and join the conversation to fight stigma surrounding mental health.

**All streams are completely free. Tune in via IOCDF's YouTube, Facebook, Twitch, or LinkedIn pages — or at [iocdf.org/live](https://iocdf.org/live)**





## Winter Public Policy Updates



*Temperatures are getting lower, but policy advocacy is heating up as we finish out the year! Did you know the IOCDF relaunched our IOCDF Action Center this past quarter? It is your one-stop shop for contacting your elected officials about bills of importance for the OCD and related disorders community.*

Over the next year, the Action Center — which can be accessed at [iocdf.org/take-action](https://iocdf.org/take-action) — will make it effortless for you to contact your senators and representatives about the following areas and pieces of legislation:

### SUPPORTING TELEHEALTH ACCESS

The COVID-19 pandemic saw more and more people receive mental health treatment via teletherapy, and this trend has continued following the ending of the public health emergency. Not only has teletherapy been proven to be a safe and effective treatment option for OCD, but the option to receive care remotely breaks down barriers to treatment access. We are asking our representatives and senators to co-sponsor the CONNECT for Health Act (H.R.4189/S.2016), a bill that will expand coverage of telehealth services through Medicare, make the telehealth flexibilities we saw during the COVID-19 pandemic permanent, improve mental health outcomes, and make it easier for patients to connect with their doctors.

**Expanding and Enforcing Parity:** In the United States, insurers are required by law to treat mental health benefits the same as they treat benefits for physical health services. They cannot add restrictions to their mental health coverage or put limits on mental health services that don't also apply to other types of benefits. Nevertheless, many people with OCD and related disorders report that their insurers are a key barrier to their attempts to access appropriate treatment. We are asking our senators to co-sponsor the Better Mental Health Care for Americans Act (S.923), and our representatives to co-sponsor the Parity Enforcement Act of 2023 (H.R.3752). These bills

would give regulators more power to enforce parity laws, and increase transparency and accountability.

**Supporting Diverse Populations:** We know that OCD does not discriminate — but, unfortunately, OCD treatment often does. Our community is not alone in facing this issue, with significant disparities existing in almost every aspect of mental health for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations. These disparities are particularly pronounced in the youngest members of our society. From treatment access to treatment outcomes, there is much work to be done to improve the mental health of BIPOC youth. We are asking our representatives and senators to co-sponsor the Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act (H.R.3548/S.1700), a bill that will work to systematically address the mental health disparities faced by BIPOC youth in the US.

### OCD AWARENESS WEEK PHONE ZAP

Another exciting event from this past quarter was the Public Policy Phone Zap, which took place during OCD Awareness Week. As part of this event, OCD policy advocates joined IOCDF Advocate Justine De Jaegher to receive training on best practices in making phone calls to elected officials. After this training, they then made calls together as a group. Calls focused on increasing awareness of OCD and related disorders on the Hill, in addition to asking for co-sponsorship of several bills from the Action Center above.

We recorded this training and will add it to the Action Center in the coming weeks for anyone who wasn't able to make it but is still interested in making calls to their representation. We hope to do more Phone Zaps in the future; stay tuned!

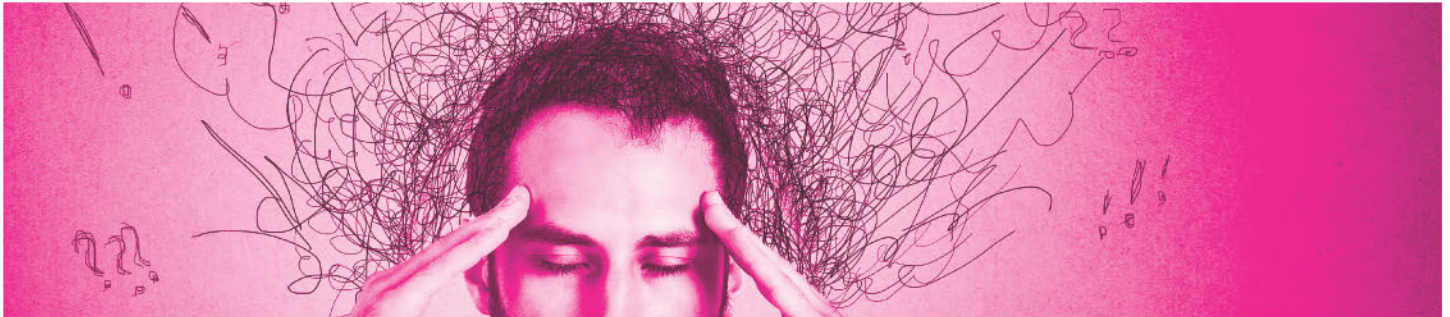
As always, we invite you to visit our Public Policy Advocacy page at [iocdf.org/public-policy](https://iocdf.org/public-policy) to read more about our work in this area. You can also sign up for email notifications about upcoming public policy events (such as future Phone Zaps!), action alerts, and other ways to get involved. Remember — your voice matters, and you can make a difference! 🗣️



## THERAPY COMMUNITY

**Obsessions in OCD as Intrusive Thoughts: Historical and Clinical Reflections**

by Eva Surawy Stepney, PhD Candidate, and Jonathan Hoffman, PhD, ABPP



**Editor's Note:** This article reflects the opinions of its authors and does not necessarily represent the views of the IOCDF.

*The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition, Text Revision (DSM-5-TR) refers to OCD obsessions as “recurrent and persistent ... intrusive and unwanted thoughts, images, and urges.” Our impression is that people with OCD and related disorders increasingly summarize their experience of obsessions as “intrusive thoughts.” This observation sparked our interest in reflecting on the history of how obsessions came to be described in this way, and whether this has proven to be a positive development from a clinical perspective.*

#### **A 20TH CENTURY HISTORY OF ‘INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS’**

The concept of “intrusive” symptoms is rooted in early 20th-century ideas of war trauma. In *Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through* (1914), written during the First World War, Sigmund Freud theorized that the repression of a traumatic event led a person to experience a persistent and forceful repetition of thoughts and images.<sup>1</sup> The function of this “repetition compulsion” was to facilitate a conscious regaining of agency over passive events in the unconscious. In his discussion of “war neuroses,” the British psychiatrist W.H.R. Rivers similarly referred to fearful thoughts and images being “thrust into manifest consciousness.”<sup>2</sup> Rivers combined Freudian reasoning with the theories of neurologist John Hughlings Jackson to suggest that when faced with an extreme threat, higher-level functions in the nervous system became impaired and lower-level functions (fearful thoughts) “escaped from their restraining effects.”

The distinct symptom of “intrusive thoughts” came to prominence during the Vietnam War (1955-1976), when the psychiatrist Mardi Horowitz (University of California) was enlisted to explain why so many American soldiers experienced difficulties readjusting to civilian life. During his research, Horowitz observed that “intrusive repetitive thoughts” are found in people “who are struggling to master recent stressful events” and may be “a distinctly symptomatic response to stress.”<sup>3</sup> In exploring this hypothesis, the psychiatrist conducted experiments on over 300 university students. They were shown two films — one that was “neutral” (non-stressful)<sup>2, 3, 7</sup> and one of a woodshop accident and severe bodily injury — and asked to write down their thoughts and the intensity of any associated affect. From the results, Horowitz observed that witnessing stressful events led a “normal” person to experience “intrusive and stimulus-repetitive thoughts” and that “most people’s subjective experiences of intrusive thoughts increased” after exposure to a stressor.

Horowitz referred to this idea of “intrusive thoughts” as a “modernization of Freud’s repetition compulsion.” He drew on the information processing model of cognitive science to propose that stressful events imposed a strain on the mind’s “normal” mechanism of “processing” (information matching). In cases of high stress “the working out of how new information is to be integrated with old information about the world will be hard or time consuming.” Depending on a person’s “threshold of tolerance” a stressful event would either be “processed” and stored in memory or get stuck in a cycle of “intrusive repetition.” Horowitz’s research led to the inclusion of “intrusive thoughts” as a key symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the DSM-III.

The link between the “intrusive thoughts” of stress/trauma research and the “obsessions” of OCD began in 1978 when, due to obstacles in behavior therapy (ethical critique, lack of consistent cure rates), the British psychologist and key OCD researcher Stanley Rachman sought alternatives to the



purely behavioral (stimulus-response) model of obsessions and compulsions. During a six-month fellowship to the University of California, where he was exposed to Horowitz's research, Rachman noticed that "intrusive thoughts" shared many similarities with obsessions: both were experienced by the "normal" population, contained "stimulus-repetitive content," and were "hard to dispel."<sup>4</sup> On returning back to the UK, Rachman adopted the idea of "intrusive thoughts" as a lens through which to further explore and add "conceptual clarity" to the definition of "obsessions." Over time, however, the psychologist began merging the concepts, describing "obsessions" as "unwanted, intrusive cognitions" (and vice versa).

Since Horowitz identified intrusive thoughts as the result of stress, Rachman questioned whether stressful events — and failures to process them — also explained the origin of obsessions. Between 1980 and 1983, Rachman and his student Luke Parkinson conducted research exploring whether intrusive thoughts/obsessions were generated during periods of stress. In an experiment, 50 mothers — half of whose children were being admitted to hospital for surgery — were tasked to write down their intrusive thoughts on the day before, the day of, and the day after admission. Mothers whose children were admitted experienced "high stress levels," reporting a greater number of "intrusive cognitions (such as obsessions)" than those in the control group.<sup>5</sup>

Rachman turned to the cognitive model of the mind as a "processor" to develop a "unifying concept for intrusive thoughts and obsessions" which he termed "emotional processing."<sup>6</sup> Building on his predecessors, he maintained that obsessions/intrusive thoughts could be the result of an emotional event which had not yet been appropriately stored in memory. Behavioral exposure techniques were rearticulated within this framework: exposure to stimuli "is a matter of breaking down the incoming stimulation into manageable proportions." The presence of "intrusive obsessions" became a sign of incomplete processing.

By 1983, Rachman had more firmly conceptualized obsessions as "intrusive thoughts" which were "unwanted, unacceptable, persistent, cause distress, and the sufferer cannot get accustomed to."<sup>7</sup> As we turn toward discussing this auspicious development through a clinical lens, perhaps we may also wonder whether Rachman was unhelpfully inconsistent in defining "intrusive thoughts" as obsessions versus being experienced as obsessions. We must also ask if it made sense to generalize concepts about intrusive thoughts — originally gleaned from the research on trauma and stress we have described — to obsessions occurring in the context of OCD.

## CLINICAL REFLECTIONS

Let's now consider the clinical side of "intrusive thoughts" in the context of OCD today and what is gained or compromised by utilizing this term. On the plus side, and considering how use of the word "obsessed" in common language (as in, "I'm obsessed with this Netflix show") has diluted its meaning, "intrusive thoughts" may better convey how bad, frightening, peculiar, doubt-creating, and embarrassing/shameful such thoughts feel than the word "obsessions." For clinicians, using this term may also be helpful in providing experiential validation, which can aid building rapport in the therapeutic process. Also, for all we know, the inner experience of thinking may be qualitatively different in OCD; perhaps certain thoughts feel "intrusive" because they are being conflated with external stimuli, such as sensory information. But this is just speculation.

On the minus side, when a clinician validates the subjective experience of a thought as "intrusive," they suggest that a thought can actually be "intrusive" or that thoughts can be demarcated as "regular" and "intrusive." All thoughts are intrusive by nature, as anyone who meditates well knows; sure, we can bring a certain thought to mind briefly, but that's about it. Additionally, the very notion of "intrusive thoughts" would seem contrary to OCD basics, such as "a thought is just a thought," and connecting a thought with a behavior is magical thinking, thoughts are ultimately involuntary, and being on "thought patrol" to monitor and control thoughts is exhausting, futile, and predicted to backfire. An important point to make here is that it is how a person perceives and responds to a thought, rather than the thought itself or if it's experienced as "intrusive," that determines if it will become more intense, repetitive, and time-consuming, or trigger compulsive/avoidant behavior.

Another concern about "intrusive thoughts" is that it may make some people view their mind as a potential enemy within. Even if one accepts the premise of "intrusive thoughts," determining what constitutes "intrusivity" would be impossible, since it is entirely subjective. Anecdotally, people with OCD even vary as to whether the same exact thought feels as intrusive (or intrusive at all) on any given day or moment.

Lastly, is the notion of being "intrusive" essential to defining obsessions? If the concept was removed, the unwelcome aspect of the obsessive thought would remain, but would that be enough? Perhaps it would. We noted earlier that it is our impression that talking about obsessions as "intrusive" (rather than unwanted) thoughts may be trending. But to us, given that no one can control their thoughts, the notion of labeling thoughts as "wanted" or "unwanted" makes as little sense as categorizing them as "regular" or




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**Obsessions in OCD as Intrusive Thoughts: Historical and Clinical Reflections** *(continued)*

"intrusive." However, if we are stuck with such terms, at least "unwanted" makes a similar point as "intrusive," but with less emotional valence. We believe it also sidesteps the unfortunate connotation that a thought — regardless of its subjective experience — can have an ultimate moral dimension such as "badness," while providing a degree of agency for the thinker. Another positive is that it avoids the suggestion of a rampaging, traumatizing thought invading the mind against one's will.

A counter-argument to some of the concerns we have raised is that the DSM-5-TR clearly states that obsessions are experienced as, rather than are, "intrusive." However, again, we think this can be very easily lost in translation. Obviously, we have some misgivings about the concept of "intrusive thoughts" and believe that it tends to confuse rather than improve how obsessions are conceptualized clinically. But if definitions of obsessions in future DSMs and elsewhere will refer to "intrusive thoughts," we wonder if more careful wording might be in order. Accordingly, we advocate for modifying present diagnostic language defining obsessions to make it crystal clear to all that obsessions are thoughts that are subject to "erroneously being experienced as intrusive." Immediately, this might help reduce the sense of labeling thoughts as being inherently bad, weird, traumatizing, and capable of inducing guilt and shame. Adding "erroneously" to the definition of obsessions would also continue to allow for validating one's subjective experience of "intrusive thoughts" in the broader context and benefit the psychoeducation process.

We hope this article reflecting on the historical origins and clinical aspects pertaining to "intrusive thoughts" stimulates further discussion on how, when utilizing this term, to do so in as meaningful and helpful a way as possible, especially for clinicians and in our diagnostic manuals. We also hope it encourages readers to reflect on the bigger question raised of whether using this terminology at all to describe obsessions continues to be justified. Perhaps the less any definition of obsession deviates from the "recurrent and persistent" aspect, the better. Obsessions are a difficult enough clinical phenomenon to understand from a scientific standpoint without adding any further, if we may say, "intrusive" descriptors that risk further muddying the waters. More generally, we wish to stress the importance of understanding concepts that are presently used in our diagnostic and clinical reasoning from their origins, as well as reflect on their current theoretical and therapeutic validity, and treat none as if they are written in stone. 



Eva Surawy Stepney is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at the University of Sheffield. Funded by the White Rose College of the Arts and Humanities (WRoCAH), her thesis explores the history of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and its intersection with post-war British clinical psychology. You can

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Jonathan Hoffman, PhD, ABPP, is Founder and Chief Clinical Officer at Neurobehavioral Institute (NBI), Founder at NBI Ranch, and a member of the IOCDF Scientific and Clinical Advisory Board. You can contact him by email at [info@nbweston.com](mailto:info@nbweston.com).

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## THERAPY COMMUNITY

*Institutional Members of the International OCD Foundation are programs or clinics that specialize in the treatment of OCD and related disorders. For a full list of the IOCDF's Institutional Members, please visit [iocdf.org/clinics](http://iocdf.org/clinics).*

**THE ANXIETY CENTER**

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[theanxietycenter.com](http://theanxietycenter.com)**

**7340 Crossing Pl, Suite 100  
Fishers, IN 46038  
(463) 220-0437**

Our approach is to use the very best treatments and technologies in behavioral health and to apply them skillfully and compassionately. We adhere exclusively to treatments that have been established through rigorous scientific research because we want you to have the confidence that you are receiving a treatment that has been proven to be effective. We do not believe in a "one-size-fits-all" model and will work flexibly in designing a program with you in mind.

All of our psychotherapists utilize a multi-modal approach to therapy, and all have specialized training in process-based cognitive behavioral (CBT) orientation, meaning that when you receive services through our center you will be receiving short-term, individualized, practical, and action-oriented therapy in order to help you achieve the best possible outcome.

**ANXIETY EXPERTS**

**1247 7th St Ste 301  
Santa Monica, CA 90401  
(805) 705-0614  
[intake@andreakulberg.com](mailto:intake@andreakulberg.com)  
[andreakulberg.com](http://andreakulberg.com)**

**3585 Maple St Ste 277  
Ventura, CA 93003**

We are excited to welcome primary therapist Alexandra Neff to our new Santa Monica location. Alex has experience conducting individual and family therapy with adults in residential treatment for anxiety, depression, trauma, grief, and loss. She is trained in ERP, ACT, and group therapy using the Seeking Safety format. Alex has an undeniable passion to help patients through their anxiety and OCD, and Anxiety Experts is grateful to have her on our team.

We are accepting new patients now. Please call for a free assessment at (805) 705-0614 or visit [andreakulberg.com](http://andreakulberg.com) today to inquire about our virtual and live evidence-based treatment programs for OCD and related disorders.

**ANXIETY SPECIALISTS OF ATLANTA**

**1360 Center Drive, Suite 100 and Suite 200  
Dunwoody, GA 30338  
(678) 825-2320  
[admin@anxietyatl.com](mailto:admin@anxietyatl.com)  
[anxietyspecialistsofatlanta.com](http://anxietyspecialistsofatlanta.com)**

Founded in 2014, Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta is heading into their 10th year as a Center of Excellence, focused on serving children, adolescents, adults, families, and couples who battle anxiety, OCD, and related disorders. Headquartered in beautiful Dunwoody, Georgia, our multidisciplinary team of over 20 OCD and anxiety specialists provides in-person services to the Metro Atlanta community along with telehealth services to more than 35 states.

Our brand of clinical care emphasizes the science of anxiety assessment and treatment, along with compassionate, interactive, and highly engaging treatment approaches, including ERP and ACT. We offer intensive treatment programs for patients who need a higher level of intervention, along with a variety of free and low-cost group therapy and support group options, including groups for parents, caregivers, and loved ones supporting those with OCD, as well as groups for those with lived experience with OCD and health anxiety. We remain dedicated to increasing the availability, accessibility, and affordability of evidence-based treatment and educational resources for all.

Check out our newly developed resource at [overcominghealthanxiety.com](http://overcominghealthanxiety.com) for resources on the treatment of health anxiety.

**ARCHWAYS CENTRE FOR CBT**

**205-460 Springbank Dr.  
London, ON, Canada N6J 0A8  
(519) 472-6612  
[info@archways.ca](mailto:info@archways.ca)  
[archways.ca](http://archways.ca)**

Greetings from The Great White North! We are based in London (Ontario), and our OCD & BFRB Clinic is one of only three sites in Canada recognized by the IOCDF as delivering specialized assessment and treatment for OCD and related disorders. We offer in-person sessions at our location in London, and by secure video across Ontario.

Archways is a private psychology clinic focused on delivering evidence-based treatment to help individuals with OCD get well and stay well. Only those who have received specialized training in OCD and BFRBs provide services to these individuals. Currently we have three psychologists, two psychologists (supervised practice), one psychological associate, and one masters-level therapist. Additionally, we have a psychiatrist who offers consultations to assist with starting, ending, or changing medications.



## THE THERAPY COMMUNITY

We are a close-knit group of clinicians who enjoy consulting with one another to help optimize treatment, and sharing new resources we find at conferences. Our goal is to provide timely and effective treatment in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

### ASCENSION ALEXIAN BROTHERS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND FOGLIA FAMILY RTC

1650 Moon Lake Blvd.      801 Gloucester Dr.  
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169      Elk Grove Village, IL 60007  
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[ascension.org](http://ascension.org)

Ascension Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health and Foglia Family Residential Treatment Center is pleased to announce Dr. Brad Riemann as senior clinical consultant for OCD/anxiety treatment at our residential level of care. Dr. Riemann is one of the country's foremost experts in OCD and anxiety. Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital continues to run PHP/IOP in person as well as a virtual option in the evening. The program also runs an OCD support group the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Wednesday of the month. Call us for more information.

### BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE OCD PROGRAM

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Houston, TX 77030  
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[ocdprogram@bcm.edu](mailto:ocdprogram@bcm.edu)  
[bcm.edu/healthcare/specialties/psychiatry-and-behavioral-sciences/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-program](http://bcm.edu/healthcare/specialties/psychiatry-and-behavioral-sciences/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-program)

BCM OCD Program has several exciting project updates. The Latin American Transancestry Initiative for OCD Genomics (LATINO) is a groundbreaking study recruiting 5,000 children and adults (7–89 years) with current or past OCD symptoms to better understand the genetics and presentation of OCD in people with Latin American, Brazilian, or Caribbean ancestry. We are excited to announce that we have recruited over 1,000 participants across more than 20 sites in the US, Canada, and Latin America. Our consortium will be meeting once again for our 3rd annual meeting this summer in São Paulo, Brazil! See [latinostudy.org](http://latinostudy.org) for more information.

Promoting OCD Wellness and Resilience (POWER) is another exciting study recruiting children (7–17) who take medication for their OCD and live in Texas! POWER examines if children already on an antidepressant who achieve wellness with CBT/ERP can successfully discontinue their medication. This study is a great opportunity for families seeking treatment, as we provide 20 weeks of free evidence-based OCD therapy. If interested, please fill out our eligibility survey ([redcap.link/fsvi7z0t](https://redcap.link/fsvi7z0t)), email [PowerOCDStudy@bcm.edu](mailto:PowerOCDStudy@bcm.edu), or call (713) 798-6077.

### BETTER LIVING CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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Allen, TX 75013  
(972) 332-8733  
[admissions@betterlivingbh.org](mailto:admissions@betterlivingbh.org)  
[betterlivingbh.org](http://betterlivingbh.org)

Better Living Center for Behavioral Health is proud to announce that we have achieved Joint Commission accreditation for our programs. We offer day/partial hospitalization, intensive outpatient (IOP), group, and individual therapy. We have also welcomed a Medical Director who can prescribe or adjust medications for our IOP and day clients. We are also proud to have the esteemed Dr. Dean McKay, ABPP, as our Chief Clinical Science Officer.

We also accept individual and group therapy clients. If you refer a client to higher level treatment as an OCD Specialist, please send us a release of information (ROI) so we can be sure to coordinate with you and return your client.

Check out the website and sign up for the mailing list to learn more about our programs, support groups, and consultation groups.

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### BULL CITY ANXIETY & OCD TREATMENT CENTER

918 Broad Street  
Durham, NC 27705  
(919) 808-2318  
[info@bullcityanxiety.com](mailto:info@bullcityanxiety.com)  
[bullcityanxiety.com](http://bullcityanxiety.com)

Our group has been busy this fall! The BCAOTC team participated in the annual One Million Steps for OCD Walk, raising over \$1200 for the IOCDF and OCD North Carolina.

Ben Eckstein, Erin Jones, and Allison Bell were proud to present at the Online OCD Conference, giving a presentation titled "Thinking About Thinking."

We were also excited to welcome Jeremy Bryant, LCMHC, to the group. Jeremy comes to us after spending the past few years honing his OCD treatment skills with NOCD.

We're also currently in the process of putting together and adding an intensive treatment option, as North Carolina is notably lacking in higher levels of care for OCD. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if we can help answer any questions about our regular outpatient treatment or our intensive treatment options.



## THE THERAPY COMMUNITY

### CASCADE ACADEMY

430 West 200 North  
Midway, UT 84049  
(435) 562-8500  
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[cascadeacademy.com](http://cascadeacademy.com)

Cascade Academy is a 26-bed treatment program serving adolescent girls aged 13–18 who struggle with OCD, severe anxiety, and related disorders. Individual, family, group, and recreational therapy along with individualized, sequential exposures are a key component of treatment. Cascade Academy integrates daily exercise, yoga, nutrition, and wellness services into treatment planning.

At the forefront of Cascade's treatment is evidence-based modalities such as ERP, ICBT, ACT, and RODBT. Cascade Academy continues to evolve and provide effective interventions. The clinical team added Dr. Lebowitz's Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions (SPACE) training to the parent curriculum. Through the program, parents learn how they can modify their own behavior in order to support their child. Clinicians also participated in advanced training in BFRBs and health anxiety.

Music therapy and improvisational theater have been added to the weekly groups. This allows students to take social risks in a safe and supportive environment. Eight Cascade students embarked on an international trip to Guatemala for a week of adventure, leadership training, and service, where connection is the antidote for internal poverty.

### THE CENTER FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA

1910 Route 70 E, Suite 7  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003  
(856) 220-9672  
[mail@thecenterforemotionalhealth.com](mailto:mail@thecenterforemotionalhealth.com)  
[thecenterforemotionalhealth.com](http://thecenterforemotionalhealth.com)

CEH welcomed postdoctoral fellows to our team this fall! Megan DeRiso, PsyD, completed her degree at Nova Southeastern University and internship at University of Texas Health Science Center. Megan Giles, PsyD, completed her degree at Rutgers University and internship at Veterans Affairs Health Care. Elizabeth "Tish" Hicks, PhD, completed her degree at Utah State University and internship at Veterans Affairs Healthcare System. Bill Pilney, PhD, completed his degree at Temple University and internship at Compass Health Network. Each of these excellent clinicians bring a wealth of training experience and enthusiasm to their work and we are excited to welcome them to the CEH family.

CEH was excited to share the release of "The BFRB Recovery Workbook," a comprehensive, integrative behavioral self-directed guide for individuals with body-focused repetitive behaviors, by Marla Deibler, PsyD, ABPP, and Renae Reinardy, PsyD. The only resource of its kind, we hope it provides much-needed relief to those living with BFRBs and guidance to clinicians seeking to build their skill set in working with these disorders.

CEH will be hosting two-day continuing education webinar training in BFRBs in 2024 as well as other areas of clinical practice. Details and registration information can be found on our website.

### THE CENTER FOR OCD AND ANXIETY AT SHEPPARD PRATT

6501 N Charles Street, Gibson Building, Suite 305  
Baltimore, MD 21204  
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[ocdbaltimore.com](http://ocdbaltimore.com)

Sheppard Pratt's Center for OCD and Anxiety is thriving! We had a busy summer and fall full of in-person and virtual presentations through the IOCDF and Sheppard Pratt's Center for Professional Education, and therapist Amy Mandelberg recently earned her LCPC. This winter, our team is excited to focus on what we do best: caring for people with OCD and anxiety.

We are accepting new outpatient clients for telehealth and in-person care; outpatient clients can be ages 13 and older and must reside in Maryland.

We accept clients for residential care from around the world at our program at The Retreat by Sheppard Pratt. At The Retreat, we care for adults 18+ who have severe OCD and related disorders. Our multidisciplinary team of experts — led by Jon Hershfield, MFT — offers intensive, best-practice OCD treatment and comprehensive, top quality residential care — without a one-size-fits-all approach.

And this spring, stay tuned for more FREE continuing education trainings coming your way from the Sheppard Pratt Center for Professional Education!

Find us online at our website and at @OCDBaltimore on social media.



## THEORY COMMUNITY

### THE CENTER FOR OCD & ANXIETY RELATED DISORDERS (COARD) AT SAINT LOUIS BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE INSTITUTE

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St. Louis, MO 63110  
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[slbmi.com](http://slbmi.com)

The Center for OCD & Anxiety Related Disorders (COARD) program at Saint Louis Behavioral Medicine Institute (SLBMI) is an internationally recognized, multidisciplinary program that has treated obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety conditions for 30 years.

COARD offers outpatient, intensive outpatient (IOP), and partial hospitalization (PHP) levels of care, conducted in person or over telehealth (any PSYPACT state), across all age ranges. COARD's IOP and PHP programs offer individually tailored care provided in a one-to-one session format. We accept all major insurances. Questions? Email us!

Exciting updates:

- We are looking forward to welcoming Kristen Beatty, LCSW, and Andrea Knoll, PsyD, to our COARD family in January!
- We expanded the number of available sessions in our IOP and PHP programs!
- We were honored to host an OCD Awareness Mini-Conference in October for OCD specialists and people with lived experience. The theme was "Live Your Best Life: OCD in Challenging, Changing, and Uncertain Times."
- The book "When a Loved One Won't Seek Mental Health Treatment: How to Promote Recovery and Reclaim Your Family's Well-Being," written by Alec Pollard, Melanie Van Dyke, Gary Mitchell, Heidi Pollard, and Gloria Mathis, will be out in 2024 (pre-orders available at Barnes and Noble).

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### EAST BAY BEHAVIOR THERAPY CENTER

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[drz@eastbaybehaviortherapycenter.com](mailto:drz@eastbaybehaviortherapycenter.com)  
[eastbaybehaviortherapycenter.com](http://eastbaybehaviortherapycenter.com)

ACT beyond Perfectionism, an online class for adults struggling with perfectionistic and high-achieving behaviors, is being launched in October 2023.

Dear reader,

Even the most well-intentioned person can struggle to address a perfectionist trap.

Even if you have read ACT books you may feel unable to put

into practice ACT skills and gain momentum in your day-to-day life.

Through eight modules you will learn actionable, compassionate, and research-based skills to:

Harness the power of perfectionistic, striving, and high-achieving actions without losing yourself or hurting your relationships.

- Do more of what matters — your way — without hurting your relationships or hurting yourself.
- Speak up more about what you really think without betraying yourself in relationships.
- Find your rhythm across different areas of your life.
- Wrestle less with worries, harsh criticisms, second-guesses, and overthinking patterns.
- Distinguish when high-achieving actions are working in your favor or against you.
- Ditch other people's definition of success, accomplishments, and wellbeing to pursue your own.

More information at: [courses.thisisdoctorz.com/act-beyond-perfectionism](https://courses.thisisdoctorz.com/act-beyond-perfectionism)

Contact us via phone or email.

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### HOPEWELL THERAPEUTIC FARM COMMUNITY

9637 State Route 534  
Middlefield, OH 44062  
(440) 426-2079  
[dhorne@hopewell.cc](mailto:dhorne@hopewell.cc)  
[hopewellcommunity.org](http://hopewellcommunity.org)

Hopewell is hiring! We are looking to add a masters-level clinician to our clinical team. Please look at our website under Careers for details. We offer a competitive salary and benefits, comprehensive ongoing training and supervision in ERP from the clinical team and Charles R. Brady, PhD, and a picturesque work environment on a 325-acre farm in rural northeast Ohio. Contact our clinical director Daniel B. Horne, LPCC-S, LSW, at [dhorne@hopewell.cc](mailto:dhorne@hopewell.cc) for more details.

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### INSTRIDE HEALTH

Virtual  
Boston, MA 01887  
(855) 438-8331  
[info@instride.health](mailto:info@instride.health)  
[instride.health](http://instride.health)

InStride Health is a specialty pediatric anxiety/OCD outpatient treatment program for children, teens, and young adults. Patients receive evidence-based treatment (CBT, ERP, ACT, DBT), delivered by a coordinated care team of a psychiatrist, therapist, and coach. InStride offers a



## THE THERAPY COMMUNITY

continuum of care, starting with more touch points each week and gradually reducing them as treatment progresses. All severity levels are treated, with particular focus on moderate to severe conditions where anxiety and/or OCD are interfering with functioning and causing a cascade of additional problems.

Treatment is fully virtual — a delivery format that has been demonstrated to be as effective as in-person treatment for youth with anxiety and/or OCD. InStride provides individual and family therapy, groups for kids and for parents/caregivers, exposure coaching (scheduled and as needed), and medication management.

InStride is growing and has expanded access to those living in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. InStride is insurance based and covered by: Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of CT, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of NH, Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA, ConnectiCare, Harvard Pilgrim, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ, Mass General Brigham Health Plan, Optum, Oscar, Oxford, and UnitedHealthcare.

### NEUROBEHAVIORAL INSTITUTE (NBI) & NBI RANCH

**2233 N. Commerce Parkway #3**      **2695 S. Le Jeune Rd. #201**  
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**(954) 217-1757**

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[nbweston.com](http://nbweston.com)

Our main office refresh is continuing to take shape, to provide an even nicer and more inviting environment for our patients and staff. We're continually developing NBI Ranch too, lately with more paved paths and improvements to our garden and backyard Tiki Hut.

Clinically speaking, our staff enjoyed a terrific presentation on Motivational Interviewing from Dr. David Tolin, who also guested recently on the OCD Stories podcast about OCD and PTSD, together with our NBI and NBI Ranch Associate Director, Dr. Dee Franklin. Also on this pod, Drs. Katia Moritz and Wilfredo Rivera spoke on The Myth of OCD and Suicide, a topic Dr. Rivera further discussed at a community event in Miami.

We also want to express our deepest appreciation to Dr. Amirsaman Sajad for coming in-person to NBI to tell us about his groundbreaking neuroscience and OCD research, and how it can translate for the work we do with our patients — it was beyond interesting!

Lastly, we're so glad to welcome to NBI our newest postdoctoral residents, Drs. Vanessa Alarcon, Stephanie Munio, and Rosanna Rodriguez.

### THE NEW ENGLAND CENTER FOR OCD AND ANXIETY

**1734 Massachusetts Avenue**  
**Cambridge, MA 02138**  
**(781) 462-1001**

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[newenglandocd.org](http://newenglandocd.org)

**612 Main Street**  
**Melrose, MA 02176**

The New England Center for OCD and Anxiety has continued to grow and thrive. Our Boston office added another full-time clinician and brought on a part-time clinician highly experienced in treating comorbid eating disorders.

New York and Los Angeles similarly continue to build out services at multiple levels of care. We further expanded availability of our services into the state of Colorado, offering telehealth and in-person treatment.

We value ourselves as a training site, and in keeping with this, we initiated our post-doctoral fellowship and social work internship programs for 2023–24. We also had two trainee clinicians pass their social work licensing exams and advance to staff clinician status.

Finally, we are increasing the variety and availability of CE-level trainings and advanced consultation groups for experienced clinicians outside the clinic interested in furthering their knowledge and honing their craft in our highly supportive, collaborative, and nurturing learning environment.

### NEW ENGLAND OCD INSTITUTE

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**554 King Edward Ave, Suite 0034**  
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**bewellpsych.ca**

Here at the New England OCD Institute, we are ever-growing and evolving! We want to give a warm welcome to our newest addition on staff, Dr. Folasade Falana, PhD. She received her doctorate from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, engaging in clinical, recovery, and community-centered endeavors on the island and the mainland for quite some time. She has worked with and supported all backgrounds and age groups, including working in schools with children and adolescents as well as working with elderly populations. She is also bilingual in Spanish and English, allowing her expertise to reach more communities of diverse cultures.

Dr. Falana is currently working with us to become an OCD specialist for adolescents and adults, training under our clinical director and OCD expert, Dr. Monnica Williams, while also integrating mindfulness therapeutic techniques with established CBT treatments, providing a holistic presence in her work. We're overjoyed and grateful to have Dr. Falana on our team!



## THERAPY COMMUNITY

### NOCD

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[care@nocdhelp.com](mailto:care@nocdhelp.com)  
[treatmyocd.com](http://treatmyocd.com)

NOCD is a specialty provider of treatment for OCD and OCD-spectrum conditions. As part of our goals to increase understanding of OCD and access to high-quality care, we recently launched a directory of OCD specialists through the KnowOCD Foundation.

The KnowOCD Provider Directory aims to help people find providers they can trust, and is the only OCD directory available online that's independently vetted by a committee of experts to verify that providers can effectively treat OCD based on their experience, background, and training.

If you're a licensed therapist who specializes in OCD and ERP, we would like to invite you to be featured:  
[ocdinfo.com/submit](http://ocdinfo.com/submit)

This resource is completely free, both for OCD specialist providers to be featured in and for the OCD community to use. Insurance information is listed to help people find cost-effective, in-network OCD treatment services.

We hope this directory can be a breakthrough for those suffering. With your support, we can help more people access treatment and experience its life-changing effects.

Learn more at [ocdinfo.com/providers](http://ocdinfo.com/providers).

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### NORTHWELL HEALTH OCD CENTER

**Zucker Hillside Hospital**  
**75-59 263rd Street**  
**Glen Oaks, NY 11004**  
**(718) 470-8052**  
[ocdcenter@northwell.edu](mailto:ocdcenter@northwell.edu)  
[northwell.edu/ocdcenter](http://northwell.edu/ocdcenter)

The Northwell Health OCD Center offers evidence-based, comprehensive outpatient treatment for OCD and OCPD. It is one of the only specialized OCD/OCPD facilities in the NY metropolitan area to accept most health insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. Treatment options include individual and group CBT and medication management. The OCD Center offers in-person and virtual individual sessions as well as 14 virtual therapy groups (e.g., ERP practice and skills-building, OCPD treatment, family OCD education/support without accommodation, DBT skills, and weekly/monthly improvement maintenance). Please email us to inquire about treatment.

Our director Dr. Anthony Pinto enjoyed participating in the 2023 Online OCD Conference. He and his colleague Dr. Michael Wheaton from Barnard College presented on treating OCD with comorbid OCPD.

The OCD Center also launched a monthly family maintenance group for graduates of our weekly family group. Led by Dr. Christine D'Urso and extern Marianna Graziosi, this group was inspired by feedback from individual patients and their family members who had each found our weekly family group to be encouraging and effective.

Our team is grateful to be able to continue expanding clinical services and helping to facilitate treatment access for OCD and OCPD sufferers across NY state.

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### THE OCD & ANXIETY CENTER

**2805 Butterfield Unit 120**      **3225 Shallowford Road Unit 500**  
**Oak Brook, IL 60523**      **Marietta, GA 30062**  
**(630) 522-3124**  
[info@theocdandanxietycenter.com](mailto:info@theocdandanxietycenter.com)  
[theocdandanxietycenter.com](http://theocdandanxietycenter.com)

The OCD & Anxiety Center is rapidly expanding in order to better serve our community. We are proud to announce the opening of our third location in Marietta, GA, this past April.

We have also added several new therapists and a new administrative staff member to our team.

We continue to offer outpatient treatment as well as our individualized intensive treatment program where our therapists can see clients up to six times a week depending on their needs. Many of our therapists have completed SPACE training as well as ACT training this year.

Lastly, we have partnered with several school districts to provide education and training about anxiety and anxiety management to their staff, parents, and students.

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### OCD INSTITUTE MCLEAN HOSPITAL

**155 Mill St.**  
**Belmont, MA 02478-1064**  
**(617) 855-2776**  
[ocdiadmissions@partners.org](mailto:ocdiadmissions@partners.org)  
[mcleanhospital.org/ocd](http://mcleanhospital.org/ocd)

The OCDI would like to pay tribute to our original Founder, Michael A. Jenike. In the mid-1990's, it was Michael's vision to open a residential treatment program specifically for people with OCD, as he realized that they required a special form of treatment that was not widely understood or available. The OCDI opened in February of 1997. After one article announcing the opening of the OCDI appeared in the OCD Foundation's newsletter, the program was deluged by applications from people all over the world.



## THErapy COMMUNITY

We remember Mike as someone with a great passion for treating patients suffering with OCD, as well as his limitless capacity for empathy, and his hilarious sense of humor. While it feels hard to go on without his guidance, we know that he taught us well, and we will carry on his amazing legacy. We thank him for creating this special place where so many have received life-saving care. We offer our sympathy to his family, especially his children Lisa, Sara, and Eric.

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### OCD INSTITUTE | TEXAS

**708 E 19th Street**  
**Houston, TX 77008**  
**(713) 526-5055**  
[info@houstonocd.org](mailto:info@houstonocd.org)  
[ocditexas.com](http://ocditexas.com)

OCD Institute of Texas is a premier destination for adults, children, and adolescents seeking world-class mental health treatment for OCD, anxiety, or related disorders. Our team of expert clinicians and support staff is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals affected by OCD and anxiety disorders, creating custom treatment plans to help reduce symptoms while teaching the skills needed to help our patients manage their OCD and live successful, rewarding lives. We offer a specialized residential and PHP program for adults with OCD, anxiety, and OCD-related disorders. We also offer intensive training and treatment options and groups such as a parent coaching group, alumni retreats, consulting, and training opportunities.

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### OCD NORTH

**11 Sophia Street West**  
**Barrie, ON, Canada L4N 1H9**  
**(705) 243-9923**  
[info@ocdnorth.com](mailto:info@ocdnorth.com)  
[ocdnorth.com](http://ocdnorth.com)

OCD North is thrilled to announce the relaunch of our Intern Led Clinic (ILC)! Our ILC offers counseling and emotional support for individuals, couples, and families across the lifespan, with a unique OCD-informed approach. It's an ideal choice for those not yet ready for ERP treatment or facing access barriers.

We look forward to expanding our ILC program with more students joining us in January 2024. Additionally, our Peer Support Program and Parent and Caregiver Support Group continue to provide free assistance to individuals, parents, and those on their recovery journey from OCD.

In the upcoming year, we are eager to enhance our training opportunities, catering to both students and professionals, ensuring that access to OCD treatment becomes increasingly attainable for more Canadians.

### PALO ALTO THERAPY

**407 Sherman Avenue**  
**Suite C**  
**Palo Alto, CA 94306**  
**(650) 461-9026**  
[info@paloaltotherapy.com](mailto:info@paloaltotherapy.com)  
[paloaltotherapy.com/ocd](http://paloaltotherapy.com/ocd)

**940 Saratoga Avenue**  
**Suite 240**  
**San Jose, CA 95129**

At Palo Alto Therapy, we specialize in cognitive behavioral therapy. With years of experience in the field of behavioral health, we've supported children, teens, adults, couples, and families to overcome anxiety, depression, OCD, and more. We offer in-person and video appointments.

Our Newest Addition: We are happy to introduce our new Clinical Director, Deborah Brewer, LCSW, and newest therapist, Debbie Cheng, AMFT.

**Anxiety to Wellness Classes:** Our eight-week class is open to teens and adults. This class teaches anxiety-reducing techniques and offers group support. It is offered in January, April, and September, via video and in person. We also have a **Courageous Connections: Social Anxiety Treatment Group for Adults** that meets weekly.

**Parent OCD Support Group:** This group connects parents of children of all ages with OCD who are struggling with similar situations, providing community and support! This group will run the last Saturday of each month via video.

**OCD Group for Teens:** Our **Breaking Free From OCD** is a weekly group for teens to connect with other teens who experience the same struggles and learn how to break free with CBT skills and resources.

For more information on our individual, couples, and family therapy, and groups, please contact us.

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### PEDIATRIC ANXIETY RESEARCH CENTER (PARC)

**1011 Veterans Memorial Parkway**  
**East Providence, RI 02915**  
**(401) 432-1469**  
[jherren@lifespan.org](mailto:jherren@lifespan.org)  
[parcanxiety.org](http://parcanxiety.org)

The Pediatric Anxiety Research Center (PARC) at Bradley Hospital is currently accepting patients across our outpatient, research, and partial hospital programs. PARC provides gold standard evidence-based therapeutic services for youth five to 18 years with a primary concern of OCD and/or anxiety disorder. Local housing accommodations at the Ronald McDonald House are available to families from out of state.

Dr. Kristen Benito (PARC) and colleague Dr. Christine Conelea (University of Minnesota) were recently awarded a multisite NIMH grant that will test transcranial magnetic stimulation



## THErapy COMMUNITY

(TMS) as an “add-on” to exposure therapy (ERP) for youth and young adults ages 12–21 with OCD. Although TMS is FDA-approved for adults with OCD, this will be the first study to test it as a treatment for youth. The study will begin enrolling this fall at Bradley Hospital and the University of Minnesota.

Please visit our website to learn more about PARC’s current research, training institute, and clinical initiatives.

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### RENEWED FREEDOM CENTER FOR RAPID ANXIETY RELIEF

1849 Sawtelle Blvd. Ste. 710  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(310) 268-1888  
[info@renewedfreedom.com](mailto:info@renewedfreedom.com)  
[renewedfreedomcenter.com](http://renewedfreedomcenter.com)

The Renewed Freedom Center was established in 2008 by Jenny C. Yip, PsyD, ABPP, to help those suffering from OCD and anxiety disorders by providing the most advanced treatment available, such as ERP, CBT, ACT, and mindfulness training. Our multidisciplinary team of experts is dedicated to helping patients and their families improve their lives by overcoming OCD and anxiety.

RFC takes particular pride in our flexibility to customize and meet the treatment needs of as many patients as possible. One way we do this is by offering lower fee and sliding scale rates with our team of expertly trained pre & post-doctoral psychological associates and practicum students.

If you are in California and you or someone you know is in need of more affordable, high-quality treatment, contact our intake department at our email or by phone. To learn more about our team, visit our website at [renewedfreedomcenter.com](http://renewedfreedomcenter.com).

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### ROGERS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

34700 Valley Road  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066  
(800) 767-4411  
[rick.ramsay@rogersbh.org](mailto:rick.ramsay@rogersbh.org)  
[rogersbh.org](http://rogersbh.org)

In October, Rogers’ Los Angeles clinic opened a new Severe Picky Eating Recovery PHP for children and adolescents struggling with avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID). Patients impacted by ARFID are often overlooked due to the condition’s overlap between eating disorders and OCD. This new offering utilizes CBT-based interventions to address the physical and mental distress caused by ARFID and help patients overcome the challenges of this disorder.

Rogers continues to host free monthly CE webinars. In fall 2023, topics included clinical management of obsessions related to suicide, treating OCD from an LGBTQ+ lens, and

bullying effects and interventions. Professionals interested in attending may check [rogersbh.org/events](http://rogersbh.org/events) for the latest webinar and in-person CE offerings. To view recordings of past webinars, visit [youtube.com/rogersbehavioralhealth](https://youtube.com/rogersbehavioralhealth).

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### STANFORD TRANSLATIONAL OCD PROGRAM

— RODRIGUEZ LAB

401 Quarry Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94304  
(650) 723-4095  
[ocdresearch@stanford.edu](mailto:ocdresearch@stanford.edu)  
[med.stanford.edu/rodriguezlab](http://med.stanford.edu/rodriguezlab)

The Stanford Translational OCD program utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to find new treatments for patients suffering from OCD and hoarding disorder. We have many new exciting research studies and invite you to find out more by calling or emailing us. We also invite you to follow us on Twitter and Facebook @RodriguezLabSU.

During OCD Awareness Week 2023, we highlighted the work of filmmaker Jim Callner via a livestream hosted by the IOCDF. Jim was very inspirational as he shared with our panel about his lived experiences with OCD and videos he has created of tips that have helped him personally. Our website has a link to this recording, and Jim’s OCD resources website ([ocdcoachingvideos.com](http://ocdcoachingvideos.com)) has info on his books, films, and videos.

The results of our novel pilot study using virtual reality (VR) to treat hoarding disorder has been generating a lot of interest and press coverage, including at CBS News: [cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/video/virtual-reality-therapy-for-hoarding](https://cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/video/virtual-reality-therapy-for-hoarding)

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### USF ROTHMAN CENTER FOR NEUROPSYCHIATRY

601 7th Street South Suite 424  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
(727) 767-8230  
[rothmanctr@usf.edu](mailto:rothmanctr@usf.edu)  
[health.usf.edu/care/pediatrics/services-specialties/rothman](http://health.usf.edu/care/pediatrics/services-specialties/rothman)

The USF Rothman Center is pleased to welcome William Hudson, MD. Dr. Hudson is a child and adolescent psychiatrist with experience in OCD, anxiety, tics, and related disorders. We are now accepting new patients for CBT and psychopharmacology at USF Health St. Petersburg with in-person and telehealth options.



## THERAPY COMMUNITY

**WESTWOOD INSTITUTE FOR ANXIETY DISORDERS**

921 Westwood Blvd, Suite 223

Los Angeles, CA 90024

(310) 443-1553

[thewestwoodinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:thewestwoodinstitute@gmail.com)[hope4ocd.com](http://hope4ocd.com)

The Westwood Institute for Anxiety Disorders provides comprehensive and holistic treatment for those with OCD-spectrum and comorbid disorders such as body dysmorphic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, social phobia, and eating disorders. We understand the importance of individualized care, which is why we have implemented a range of new services. These are all arranged through our executive director, Dr. Eda Gorbis, in partnership with UCLA's esteemed professors and specialists. Our focus is to return dysfunctional patients into full-functioning

individuals. Patients at the Westwood Institute are referred to specialists who can treat each of their specific medical concerns. These services include hormonal therapy, ensuring a tailored approach to address hormonal imbalances that may exacerbate OCD symptoms. We also work alongside gynecological and internal medicine services to address any other medical issues that may arise. Additionally, a new focus at the Westwood Institute has included gastrointestinal medical exams to shed light on the potential connection between gut health, OCD, and mental well-being. All our experts in these fields are committed to providing thorough and all-encompassing evaluations. At the Westwood Institute, we remain dedicated to the inclusion of multidisciplinary teams and services to provide specialized support in the treatment of OCD. 🕒

## Find help on the IOCDF Resource Directory

### New and improved features:

- Narrow your search by medication prescribers
- Find increased access to care with the addition of pre-licensed trainees
- Filter by your insurance plan
- Search for support groups OR treatment groups
- Expanded filters
  - Veterans
  - Perinatal OCD
  - LGBTQIA+ affirming
  - and more!



[iocdf.org/find-help](https://iocdf.org/find-help)



## RESEARCH NEWS

## 2024 Research Grant Program Call For Proposals

Since 1994, the IOCDF has awarded almost \$11 million to researchers through our Research Grant Program. To continue improving scientific and clinical understanding of OCD and related disorders, we are pleased to announce the start of the 2024 Research Grant Program cycle on Tuesday, January 2, 2024. Researchers will have the opportunity to apply for the following grant categories:

- **Breakthrough Award:** A \$500,000 grant for senior researchers pursuing high-impact OCD research. This year's Breakthrough Award is a five-year grant paid in annual installments. Applicants must have at least five years of research experience following the completion of their terminal degree. Eligible research projects must investigate topics in the field of OCD, which may include prevention (i.e., keeping OCD from taking hold) and treatment (i.e., effectively achieving significant reduction in symptoms or remission).

**The 2024 Breakthrough Award is made possible through the generosity and commitment of the Selig Family.**

- **Michael A. Jenike Young Investigator Awards:** Grants up to \$50,000 for early career researchers pursuing projects on OCD, BDD, hoarding disorder, and related disorders. These awards are disbursed over the course of one year in quarterly installments. These awards are only available to graduate students and researchers with fewer than five years of research experience following the completion of their terminal degree. They are intended to support career development while making innovative research possible.

Young Investigator Awards are made possible through the generosity of our many community donors of the IOCDF.

While proposals of all kinds will be accepted, the Topic of Interest for the 2024 Research Grant Program is **Increasing Access to Treatment for All**. Please read page 23 to learn more about this topic and why it is so important to our community.

Every grant application that we receive will be evaluated through a peer-review process led by a panel of expert researchers. Through this rigorous method, we ensure that every dollar contributed by donors is directed to the strongest possible research with potentially groundbreaking impact.

Applications will be accepted beginning Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at [iocdf.org/research/apply](https://iocdf.org/research/apply). Complete application instructions, guidelines, and the official 2024 request for proposals (RFP) are now available. The deadline to submit a proposal is Wednesday, February 28, 2024.

These grants are supported entirely through the generosity of our research donors. Please consider joining them in supporting the next breakthrough in OCD and related disorders research with a financial contribution to our Research Grant Program. Every dollar given is a step forward — please visit [iocdf.org/donate-research](https://iocdf.org/donate-research) to help unlock the science behind OCD.

### 2024 EVENTS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

#### Research Symposium: A Hybrid Event

July 25, 2024

Following our success in Denver and San Francisco, the 9th Annual IOCDF Research Symposium will once again be hybrid — a virtual and in-person event! The in-person Symposium will take place in Orlando, FL, and will be live streamed to an online audience. We invite researchers of all backgrounds and experience levels to submit a proposal related to OCD and related disorders for a chance to speak at the Symposium.

For more information and to submit your proposal, please visit [iocdf.org/2024-iocdf-research-symposium](https://iocdf.org/2024-iocdf-research-symposium). The deadline for proposals is Friday, March 1, 2024.

#### Poster Sessions: IOCDF Research Symposium & Annual OCD Conference

July 25–27, 2024

The IOCDF Research Symposium and the Annual OCD Conference in Orlando will both feature poster session opportunities for researchers. These allow researchers of all experience levels to share their findings to new audiences, network with leaders across all specialties in OCD and related disorders, and meet with potential future collaborators. Posters submitted by students and trainees will be judged by an expert panel of scientists, and authors of outstanding posters will be awarded cash prizes and honors.

For more information and to submit your proposal, please visit [iocdf.org/research/research-posters](https://iocdf.org/research/research-posters). The deadline for proposals is Friday, March 1, 2024.



## 2024 Topic of Interest: Increasing Access to Treatment for All

Although evidence-based treatments such as ERP and medications can help reduce OCD symptoms, they are currently not accessible to all people with OCD. Factors such as distance from providers, cost, misinformation, and stigma prevent many people from underserved and minority communities from receiving effective and potentially life-saving treatments (Oluyomi et al., 2023; Williams et al., 2012).

Vice-Chair of the IOCDF Research Grant Program, Jennifer Freeman, PhD, says: “While robust efficacy exists for exposure-based CBT and SSRI treatment of OCD, there also has been a staggering and longstanding failure to include people who have been historically underrepresented (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, or income) in our treatment trials. Consequently, we must prioritize the inclusion of those who have been historically underrepresented in clinical science and underserved in clinical practice.”

Recognizing this disparity and in alignment with our mission of help, healing, and hope — for all — we are proud to announce our 2024 Topic of Interest: Increasing Access to Treatment for All. We are particularly interested in proposals related to improving access to treatment for underserved and underrepresented groups, such as rural communities, people with lower socioeconomic status, and racial, ethnic, and sexual minority groups.

While this is our Topic of Interest for the 2024 Research Grant Program, suitable proposals for other OCD and related disorders topics will also be considered. [🔗](#)

### REFERENCES

- Oluyomi, A.O., Schneider, S.C., Christian, C., Alvarez, J.M., Smáráson, O., Goodman, W.K., & Storch, E.A. (2023). Geospatial distribution of obsessive-compulsive disorder specialists: Understanding access as a function of distance, insurance status, and neighborhood socioeconomic status. *Journal of Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders*, 38, 100829. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jocrd.2023/100829>
- Williams, M.T., Domanico, J., Marques, L., Leblanc, N.J., & Turkheimer, E. (2012). Barriers to treatment among African Americans with obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 26(4), 555–563. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2012.02.009>

**Research funded by the community,  
for the community.**

**[iocdf.org/donate-research](https://iocdf.org/donate-research)**



## RESEARCH NEWS

### Research Participants Sought

The IOCDF is not affiliated with any of the following studies, although we ensure that all research studies listed on this page have been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). The studies listed include online and in-person studies in the US and abroad.

If you are a researcher who would like to include your research listing in the *OCD Newsletter*, please email Boris Litvin at [blitvin@iocdf.org](mailto:blitvin@iocdf.org) or visit [iocdf.org/research](http://iocdf.org/research).

#### A Qualitative Exploration of OCD Unacceptable/Taboo Thoughts in Adolescence and Young Adulthood

We need participants with “unacceptable” or “taboo” OCD intrusive thoughts for a research study exploring lived experiences across adolescence and young adulthood.

- Are you a young adult (aged 19 to 23 years) who experiences intrusive and unwanted thoughts around themes of aggression and violence, scrupulosity (moral or religious), or of a sexual nature?
- Did these “unacceptable/taboo” intrusive thoughts begin between the ages of 14 to 17?

If yes, we are interested in understanding your experiences living with unacceptable/taboo thoughts during adolescence and young adulthood, and your personal experiences seeking treatment for these concerns.

Given how common OCD is among young people, it’s important for us to learn more about these experiences. We aim to explore how these experiences fit into a person’s overall life journey, particularly during the developmental years. By gathering this information, we hope to enhance and personalise the therapeutic treatments for OCD, making the support provided even more effective and tailored to individual needs.

If eligible to participate in this study, you will be reimbursed via a voucher for your time.

Who should not participate in this study?

While we strive for inclusivity in participant recruitment, there are certain eligibility criteria in place to minimise potential risks and ensure voluntary participation. You will not be eligible to participate in this study if you meet any of the following:

- You have a history of self-harm, suicidal ideation, or suicide attempts.
- You have been diagnosed with another psychological disorder, with the exception of depression.
- You possess a cognitive impairment or disability that might hinder your full understanding of the study’s purpose, tasks, and your role, including comprehending the terms of informed consent and your right to withdraw it at any point.

- You are a non-English speaker.

If you would like more information or are interested in participating in the study, please send an expression of interest to Lauren Moody-Stone at [lauren.moodystone@myacu.edu.au](mailto:lauren.moodystone@myacu.edu.au)

Chief Investigator: A/Prof Dr Keong Yap  
Student Researcher: Lauren Moody-Stone  
Co-investigator: PhD Candidate Michelle Laving

#### OCD Genetics Research Study at the University of California, San Francisco

The goal of the project will be to identify multiple Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) risk genes, each carrying large effects that will provide essential molecular clues to the origins of OCD and offer avenues for the development of new treatments.

This is a multi-center study with UCSF, Rutgers University, University of Iowa, University of Miami, Mass General Hospital, McLean Hospital, Yale University, and Rogers Behavioral Health.

We will be recruiting patients with OCD for this study and potentially their biological parents for this genetics study. This study will involve filling out questionnaires regarding psychiatric/medical history, OCD symptoms, and information regarding related conditions such as tic disorder, trichotillomania, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Subsequently, a more in depth psychological evaluation may also take place. A blood draw will then be performed for this genetics study.

If you are interested in participating, please let us know by emailing [ocdresearch@ucsf.edu](mailto:ocdresearch@ucsf.edu) with your phone number.

#### Comparative Study for Managing OCD and Anxiety Symptoms

Join a free treatment study to address childhood anxiety/OCD!

Is your child between the ages of 7 and 13? Does your child experience symptoms of anxiety and/or OCD? Do you currently reside in Texas?



If so, you may be eligible to participate in a study delivering one of three family-oriented telehealth interventions for anxiety and OCD in children. This program is delivered over videoconferencing and email to your home. Participation involves a free 12-14-week course of therapy for children with anxiety and/or OCD and several assessments conducted via videoconferencing.

Participants will receive: Free therapy intervention for children with anxiety and/or OCD.

This study is being conducted by Eric Storch, Ph.D. at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX. If you are interested or unsure if you meet the requirements, please contact the study coordinator at: [Daphne.Ayton@bcm.edu](mailto:Daphne.Ayton@bcm.edu) or call 832-206-4034. Or, fill out a brief survey to let us know that you are interested: <https://redcap.research.bcm.edu/redcap/surveys/?s=NECME9TCWLL47ELC>

### **Biohaven is studying an investigational drug to help treat the symptoms of OCD.**

Biohaven is studying an investigational drug to help treat the symptoms of OCD. The investigational drug is called troriluzole and is a glutamate modulator. Glutamate is a key neurotransmitter in the brain and research indicates that there is excessive glutamate in areas of the brain involved in the obsessions and compulsions that OCD patients experience. Troriluzole is expected to normalize glutamate levels in these brain areas, and thus improve OCD symptoms.

To be eligible to take part in this study, you must:

1. Be between the ages of 18 and 65;
2. Have been diagnosed with OCD or have had symptoms of OCD for at least a year;
3. Be taking an OCD medication that you do not feel is fully helping your condition.

Please note: you do not need to have a formal OCD diagnosis. Also, there is no cost to you to participate and insurance is not required.

For more information and to enroll in the trial, go to [OCDTrials.com](http://OCDTrials.com)

### **Patient Experiences of Disclosing Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

Do you have OCD? Are you over 18 years old? Have you disclosed your OCD to others?

Researchers at Baylor College of Medicine are interested in the experiences of disclosure in individuals who have

obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The study involves a brief, anonymous questionnaire about your experiences of and attitudes toward disclosure and your OCD symptoms.

To participate, please use the link below:

[https://bcmpsych.sjcl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cUeP1Mhm7R8eGKW](https://bcmpsych.sjcl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cUeP1Mhm7R8eGKW)

For more information, please contact Molly Church at [molly.church@bcm.edu](mailto:molly.church@bcm.edu)

Thank you for your time and participation!

NOTE: Health information shared online is not secure. Please do not comment on this post with any private or personal health information.

### **Transcranial magnetic stimulation effects on urge suppression in obsessive-compulsive disorder using individualized targeting of the postcentral gyrus: A proof-of-concept investigation**


**Do you have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder?** If so, you might be eligible for a research study investigating the effects of transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) on brain function in the disorder at the Nathan Kline Institute (NKI). You must be between the ages of 18 and 60 and in good physical health.

If eligible:

- Participation involves 1 remote screening appointment and 3 in-person appointments to NKI
- We will ask you about your health and to fill out some questionnaires about your symptoms
- During each in-person appointment, you will perform a computer task while having your brain activity measured using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI; lasting under an hour), and receive a brief administration of transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS; lasting under a minute) on the 2nd and 3rd in-person appointments
- Total time commitment is approximately 11 to 16 hours
- You will be reimbursed for your participation at a rate of 25 dollars per hour
- We will provide round-trip transportation between NKI and the NYC area

If you want us to contact you to tell you more about the study, please fill out our study

interest form: <https://redcap.link/TMSstudy>

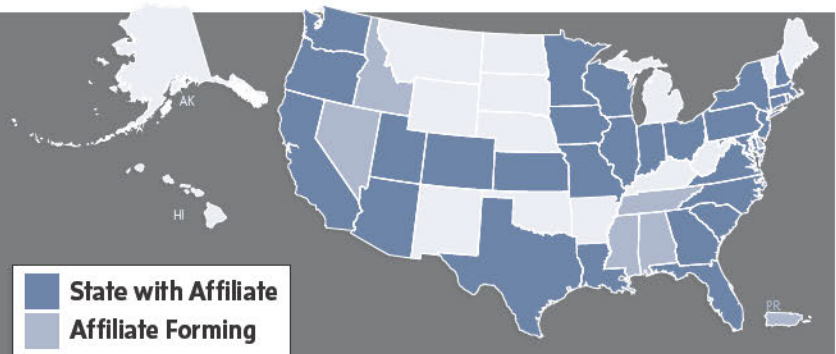
For more information, call the Psychiatric Neurocognition Laboratory at 845-398-5590, email us at [pnclab@nki.rfmh.org](mailto:pnclab@nki.rfmh.org) or visit us at [psychneurocoglab.com](http://psychneurocoglab.com). Please do not disclose any personal or sensitive information via email. 



## FROM THE AFFILIATES

### Affiliate Updates

Our Affiliates carry out the mission of the IOCDF at the local level. Each of our Affiliates is a non-profit organization run entirely by dedicated volunteers. For more info, visit: [iocdf.org/affiliates](https://iocdf.org/affiliates)



#### OCD ARIZONA

[ocdaz.org](https://ocdaz.org)

OCD Arizona was incredibly honored to have hosted our first One Million Steps for OCD Walk on Sunday, October 15th at Kiwanis Park in Tempe, Arizona. Nearly 150 people gathered to walk together in support of OCD Arizona's mission to build community, resources, and awareness for OCD and related disorders, locally. This was Arizona's first ever OCD Walk, and we are so grateful to everyone who helped to make it the great success that it was.

OCD Arizona is looking forward to creating more opportunities to facilitate community, educate providers, and improve support and awareness. Please feel free to contact us at [info@ocdaz.org](mailto:info@ocdaz.org) if you have any ideas or feedback on how to support this mission, or if you're interested in getting involved with our local Affiliate.

#### OCD CENTRAL & SOUTH FLORIDA

[ocdcsfl.org](https://ocdcsfl.org)

[facebook.com/OCDCSFL](https://facebook.com/OCDCSFL)

As we approach the holiday season, we look back at the wonderful events we have held this year. We made certain 2023 ended off with a bang!

OCD Central & South Florida's (OCDCSFL) annual One Million Steps for OCD Walk took place on October 22nd in Orlando, and was a huge success! Over 100 attendees showed up to support OCD awareness. A huge thank you to all of our sponsors, vendors, and volunteers who helped make this year's Walk so special.

"Obsession," our art exhibition and auction, took place on November 11th at the Sydney Merling Center for OCD & Anxiety in West Palm Beach. This event, sponsored by Anxiety Institute, Compassionate Healing Institute, and Caron Renaissance, featured original works of art by those whose lives have been impacted by OCD. Refreshments and classical music was included!

OCDCSFL also hosted a Pediatric BTTI in Tampa, FL from December 1st to 3rd.

Contact us at [info@ocdcsfl.org](mailto:info@ocdcsfl.org) for more information about

any of our events, volunteering, or sponsorship opportunities. Upcoming events and/or community resources are available on our website.

#### OCD CONNECTICUT

[ocdct.org](https://ocdct.org)

[facebook.com/OCDConnecticut](https://facebook.com/OCDConnecticut)

@ocdct

OCD Connecticut held two significant events to celebrate OCD Awareness Week 2023:

A grassroots community walk was held on Saturday, October 14 at Jennings Beach in Fairfield, CT. The Walk promoted increased awareness and a supportive community for the IOCDF and our Affiliate. It enabled us to raise \$1,482 for the OCD and related disorders community.

On Wednesday evening, October 18, an estimated 150 individuals attended a colloquium entitled "OCD: Getting Help and Support for Recovery" at Sacred Heart University (SHU) in Fairfield, CT. It was led by SHU professor emeritus and OCD CT clinical board advisor, Dr. Christina Taylor. Panel members included OCD CT and Fairfield County OCD Support Group members. The discussion focused on OCD symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment — as well as answering audience questions.

On November 16, we held a virtual Zoom workshop on Inference-Based Cognitive-Behavior Therapy for OCD (I-CBT). Katie Marrotte, MSW, LCSW, a specialist in I-CBT, was our guest speaker.

In 2024, we intend to hold more events. Virtual as well as in-person sessions will be considered to optimize our statewide mission of education and outreach.

#### OCD JACKSONVILLE

[ocdjacksonville.com](https://ocdjacksonville.com)

OCD Jacksonville partnered with OCD Central/South Florida to host the One Million Steps for OCD Walk in Orlando on October 22. We were the top fundraising team as well as an event sponsor. Board members Catherine Porter, Joshua Decker, Mike Vatter, and their families had a great time at the event.



## FROM THE AFFILIATES

**OCD MID-ATLANTIC**

[ocdmidatlantic.org](http://ocdmidatlantic.org)  
[facebook.com/ocdmidatlantic](https://facebook.com/ocdmidatlantic)  
 @ocdmidatlantic

OCD Mid-Atlantic would like to welcome Madeline White, our new social media guru. Madeline has already helped out with our social media presence on Instagram and is pitching in to help in other ways as well.

We had a great turnout at the One Million Steps for OCD Walk at Valley Mill Special Park in Colesville, MD, on October 7 despite it raining through the whole event. You can see pictures from the Walk on our website and social media accounts!

We will be resuming our online OCD 101 series of talks soon. You can check the website for more details, sign up for events, and let us know topics you would like to hear more about.

We still have a few spots for more board members and would especially like to invite individuals with OCD and/or family members to join us. Please email us through the website if you are interested in getting involved.

**OCD MIDWEST**

[ocd-midwest.org](http://ocd-midwest.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDMidwestAffiliate](https://facebook.com/OCDMidwestAffiliate)

This past October, OCD Midwest was excited to host four annual One Million Steps for OCD Walks in Akron/Canton, OH, Columbus, OH, Cincinnati, OH, and Chicago, IL. We raised over \$22K combined!

Back in May 2023, we donated five scholarships to board member Dr. Lisa Conway's continuing educational event on Treating BFRBs.

Additionally, in October, we donated 10 scholarships to Depression and Anxiety Specialty Clinic (DASC) of Chicago's ERP presentation and afterwards hosted a networking event.

**OCD NEW HAMPSHIRE**

[ocdnewhampshire.org](http://ocdnewhampshire.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDNH](https://facebook.com/OCDNH)  
 @ocd\_new\_hampshire

On October 13th during OCD Awareness Week, we hosted our third annual ERP training for clinicians at Rivier University in Nashua, New Hampshire. Executive board member Dr. David Bradley provided instruction for the training, and we had 60 registered participants!

Our Fall 2023 SPACE (Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions) Training also began this October and is at full capacity. This six-session training is facilitated by executive board member Jeanette Nogales (MEd, CAGS).

In mid-November, we will be hosting a Y-BOCS (Yale-Brown Obsessive Compulsive Scale) Lunch & Learn training. Participants will receive an overview of the Y-BOCS, and strategies and resources for effective administration of the Y-BOCS will be offered and demonstrated.

**OCD NEW JERSEY**

[ocdnj.org](http://ocdnj.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDNewJersey](https://facebook.com/OCDNewJersey)  
 @ocd\_newjersey

OCD New Jersey will hold its annual conference at the Westwood in Ridgewood, NJ on February 25, 2024, featuring invited guest speaker, Michael Heady, MA, LCPC, who will present "Inference-Based CBT: A New Hope for OCD." Individuals will also discuss their lived experiences with OCD and related disorders in a "Living with OCD" panel session moderated by discussant Marla Deibler, PsyD, ABPP. We look forward to our return to an in-person OCD NJ annual conference and invite you to join us. Details and registration can be found at [OCDNJ.ORG](http://OCDNJ.ORG).

**OCD SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

[ocdsocal.org](http://ocdsocal.org)  
[facebook.com/OCDSocal](https://facebook.com/OCDSocal)  
 @ocdsocal

OCD Southern California was honored to partner with the International OCD Foundation to bring you the 2023 Online OCD Conference! The conference brought together mental health providers, people with OCD, their family and loved ones, and others interested in learning more about the disorder. Presentations on OCD, community support groups, the "Ask the Experts" wrap-up panel, and the Keynote were just some of the event's offerings. We want to thank each of the keynote speakers — Ian and Hayden Wright, Val and Mel Andrews, Uma Chatterjee, and Jan and Andrew Stewart — for opening up and sharing their raw and emotional true-life stories, bringing attendees so much hope. Attendees enjoyed 60 days of access to the recordings as well.

OCD SoCal is excited to gear up and bring more events, both in person and virtually, for 2024! This includes our in-person and virtual Speaker Series, participation in the One Million Steps for OCD Walks representation at the in-person Annual OCD Conference, collaborating with IOCDF for the 2024 Online OCD Conference, OCD awareness Week events, our holiday party, and more!

Make sure to email us at [info@ocdsocal.org](mailto:info@ocdsocal.org) to be part of our mailing list, and we look forward to seeing you at our 2024 events!

**OCD TEXAS**

[ocdtexas.org](http://ocdtexas.org)  
[facebook.com/ocdtexasforsure](https://facebook.com/ocdtexasforsure)  
 @ocd\_texas

OCD Texas earned the APA accreditation certification to host certified continuing education events for psychologists! We are looking forward to hosting talks in 2024. Through our certification, we can partner with other Affiliates to host continuing education events. For more information, please contact [education@ocdtexas.org](mailto:education@ocdtexas.org).



## FROM THE AFFILIATES

OCD Texas leadership and volunteers participated in local conferences to spread awareness about OCD treatment. Thank you to Johann D'Souza for presenting on OCD treatment at the Houston NAMI talk. OCD Texas thanks Ginny Fullerton, Ivy Ruths, and Melissa Fasteau for presenting on the New Frontier of Exposure Therapy and Artificial Intelligence to the Texas Psychological Association Conference.

OCD Texas thanks the 2023 One Million Steps for OCD Walk chairs Katy Rothfelder, Angela Coreil, and Gabbi McGivern! Walks were held in Dallas and Austin, and we are so excited for the walks in 2024! Together, there were over 285 walk participants in Texas this year.

If you would like to be involved with OCD Texas, please contact [volunteer@ocdtexas.org](mailto:volunteer@ocdtexas.org).

### OCD WASHINGTON

[ocdWASHINGTON.org](http://ocdWASHINGTON.org)  
[facebook.com/ocdWASHINGTON](https://facebook.com/ocdWASHINGTON)  
[@ocd\\_washington](https://twitter.com/ocd_washington)

Happy winter from OCD WA! We were so pleased to host a BTTI in Seattle with Evidence Based Treatment Center of Seattle in November. Helping to disseminate quality training for clinicians to treat OCD is a priority of ours.

OCD WA is excited that we will have a partnership with OCD Oregon in early 2024 for an arts sale. Stay tuned for more info!

Finally, our very own Shereen Morse is hosting free Yoga classes on a monthly basis. Check out her website for more info here: [weyogatogether.com](http://weyogatogether.com) 🕒

# Make your year-end gift to the IOCDF

Your gift enables us to educate, train, advocate, foster community, and support research in pursuit of our vision: a world where everyone affected by OCD has immediate access to effective treatment and support.

Join us in making this vision a reality!

[iocdf.org/give](http://iocdf.org/give)