



Winter 2022 Newsletter



Mental health matters as much as medical health. I believe the world is catching up to this concept now more than ever. In 2022, Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta will reinforce the importance and necessity of early intervention, of evidence-based care, and of increased attention to families, systems and communities supporting the individual anxiety sufferer.

In 2022, our 9th year in practice, you will also see a significant increase in the diversity of mental health support and treatment options offered by our dedicated anxiety specialists, including brand new support and treatment groups (see below) and Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOPs) coming back into rotation so we can treat OCD and social anxiety when higher levels of care are indicated.

I'm also eager to share exciting updates happening in the halls of our

clinic. To start, all of our clinicians are offering both in-person and telehealth services as we continue to prioritize the safety and health of our staff, our clients, and the families we support.

With the skyrocketing mental health needs of children, teens, and young adults during the pandemic, we couldn't be more excited to have two of our amazing clinicians back from maternity leave in 2022. Marti Munford, LPC (started back in February) and Rachel Warsett, LPC (starts back in April) took some much deserved time away from the clinic to focus on their beautiful growing families. Marti and Rachel, we all missed you dearly and we know the families you serve can't wait to benefit from your expertise once again.

We are always recruiting top notch clinicians to support the mental health needs of our Georgia communities and the 26 other states our staff are eligible to provide treatment services to. We are very fortunate when one of those outstanding therapists chooses us to begin or continue a career in service of all of you. We are thrilled to announce the addition of our newest therapist who started this January, and you can read all about her below. Welcome Dr. Gilly Kahn!!

We remain focused on connecting with each of you. We continue to innovate the way mental health gets discussed, prioritized, and destigmatized. If there is anything we can do for you, your community, or your organization, please don't hesitate to call, email, or message us on social media. As always....

Face your fears. Live with uncertainty. Take Control of your life.

Dr. Josh Spitalnick, CEO/Practice Owner
Licensed Psychologist
Board Certified in Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology

Email me at drspitalnick@anxietyatl.com if you have any questions, concerns, or positive news to share!

Team Highlights

Welcome Dr. Gilly Kahn, Licensed Psychologist

As we kickoff 2022, we are excited to announce the addition of a new licensed psychologist ready to serve the Atlanta community.



Welcome Dr. Gilly Kahn to our team. Dr. Kahn specializes in working with young populations struggling with anxiety, depression, and the many challenges they face on a regular basis. Dr. Kahn also specializes in working with parents of anxious kids. Her background in evidence-based practices such as CBT and ACT, her warm, collaborative therapy style, and her impressive experiences working with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including Latinx families and Hebrew-

speaking clients, collectively speak to just how impressive she is and how lucky we are to have her on our team.

If you want to learn more about her background, or what she does for fun away from work, click below. We are so very excited to have Dr. Kahn join our team as the mental health needs of our community continue to rise. Gilly, welcome to Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta!

[Click Here to see Dr. Kahn's bio and contact information](#)

Treatment and Support Groups



We are excited to announce several new groups that launch in March and April (online registration is open). Some are focused on anxiety sufferers and others on the loved ones who support anxiety sufferers. Several are free and the rest are lower in cost than any of our traditional therapy services. Some groups are in person (YAY!) and some are still over Zoom. Several now offer robust group-based treatment such as SPACE, ERP for OCD, and exposure therapy for social anxiety.

Each group is proposed, approved and then developed specifically to address the treatment gaps our team identifies based on the requests for services coming in. All groups are aimed at increasing the **accessibility, availability, and affordability** of evidence-based care. This remains core to our mission.

Check out our [EVENTS](#) section of our website for descriptions, full flyers, and registration details for these and all other upcoming groups and events.

UPCOMING GROUPS

Join our **In-Person Adult Social Anxiety Group**, led by Dr. Megan Faye, which begins Thursday March 3, 2022, will be weekly Thursdays from 6-730pm EST. Registration closes this week.

This group is for adults (18+) who are seeking group-based treatment and support for social anxiety. This group will be discussing common social anxiety concerns and practicing exposure-based tools to overcome social anxiety. This group will be offered in-person.



[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Join our **Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) Treatment Group for Adults with OCD or Health Anxiety**.

This group is a first of its kind, offering lower cost ERP in an online group format. Led by Dr. Jessica Nasser, this group is for Adults (18+) who struggle with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) or Health Anxiety. Group will be limited to the first 6 who RSVP and meet eligibility criteria.

Adults can reside in Georgia, Ohio, or the other 26 states covered by PSYPACT (including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia or

Wisconsin).



Exposure and Response Prevention for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Adult Group Therapy led by Jessica Nasser, PhD

Who is this group for?
This group is for adults (8 participants total) with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), including Health Anxiety, who have little to no experience with Exposure and Response Prevention and would like to receive treatment for OCD in a group setting.

It is also open to adults with OCD, including Health Anxiety, who have had ERP treatment before but would like a refresher on ERP and continued support in fighting OCD.

What will you do?
Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) is the gold-standard treatment for OCD, meaning, it works! Free yourself from OCD's grip no matter what your fears, obsessions, and compulsions are, with the support of other adults who are also battling OCD. Sessions are led by Dr. Jessica Nasser.

The initial meeting will cover psychoeducation about OCD and ERP. We will then identify how OCD impacts participants in order to build a plan for exposure and response prevention practice. The majority of sessions will focus on having participants practice exposures with response prevention, set goals for exposures and response prevention homework for each week, review homework at the beginning of each session, and support each other as each person battles and overcomes their OCD.

Start Date and Time: March 22 - May 17, 2022, 11:00am-12:15pm EST. Meets weekly on Tuesdays for 8 weeks.

Cost: \$1,000 for total program (\$125 per session). An individual intake (\$300) prior to joining group is required for patients new to Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta.

Location: Virtual through secure Zoom link.

For Questions, Contact: Dr. Jessica Nasser at jnasser@anxietyatl.com

To Register, go to the EVENTS tab: <https://anxiety-specialists-of-atlanta.com/events-2/>

ANXIETY SPECIALISTS of ATLANTA
Evidence-Based Psychological Services

[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Are you a parent of an anxious child? Are you struggling to know whether to help your child with her worries, whether to punish, or simply do nothing? **SPACE (Supporting Parents of Anxious Children's Emotions)** is a leading, evidence-based intervention for parents and caregivers of anxious youth.

Marti Munford, LPC has completed three amazing cohorts with parents, teaching them SPACE, and how to reduce family accommodations while installing a sense of confidence in your child's ability to manage their own anxiety.

Her next SPACE group starts Tuesday March 15, 2022 and will run through Tuesday April 19, 2022 (no group the first week of April for Spring Break). Each of the 5 sessions will take place over Zoom from 12-1:30pm EST.

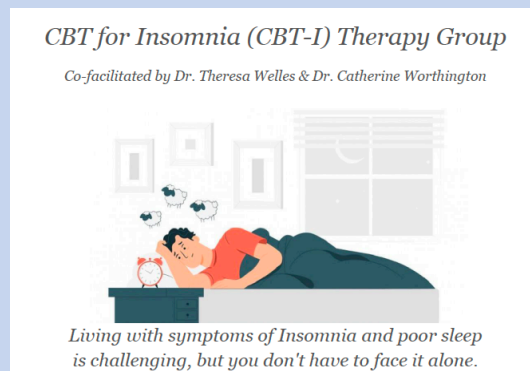


Understanding S.P.A.C.E.
Adjusting Accommodation to Support Anxious Childhood Emotions

[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Are you having difficulty with falling asleep, falling back asleep, daytime fatigue, reliance on naps, or a number of worries about your sleep? **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I)** is the highest recommended treatment for Insomnia by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

Come join CBT-I specialists Dr. Catherine Worthington and Dr. Theresa Welles for a 6-session therapy and education group aimed towards helping you sleep better. Enrollment will be limited to the first 8 who RSVP and meet eligibility criteria. Attendees will have to agree to be available for at least 5 of the 6 sessions.



This group will take place every 2 weeks, Thursdays from 11:30am-12:45pm EST, starting March 10, 2022 through May 19, 2022, via secure Zoom link that will be sent to each attendee individually.

Adults can reside in Georgia, Ohio, or the other 26 states covered by PSYPACT (including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia or Wisconsin).

[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Join our **Support Group for Mothers of Anxious children**. Learn to live with uncertainty, build confidence and encourage calm and joy, within the chaos of motherhood.



Facilitated by Dr. Theresa Welles, Licensed Psychologist and anxiety specialist, meetings will be held in person and start with answering common questions and challenges affecting mothers of children with anxiety. Group members will have the opportunity to share their own successes and struggles, past and current.

Members will be able to offer support and guidance to other group members as well as receive encouragement and inspiration from other members. Personal goals will be set at the end of each meeting and the group's universal goal is for every member to: find balance and thrive in daily life, increase self-care activities, rediscover your pride as a caregiver.

There will be 6 meetings and enrollment will be limited to the first 8 who RSVP and meet eligibility criteria.

Start Date and Time: Wednesday March 2, 2022 for 6 sessions, biweekly, from 6-7:15pm EST.

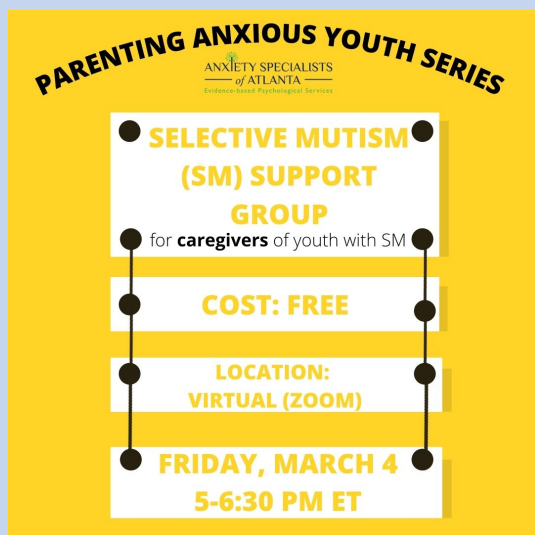
[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Join us for a new (and FREE) monthly support group for **Families of Anxious Children**, with topics changing each month. This is a support group for parents, caregivers, and family members of children and teenagers with anxiety and comorbid disorders. Discussions will focus on gaining insight into others' parenting and family experiences. Facilitator Dr. Cameron Mosley will provide information about the topic of the month, treatment options, and additional resources.

The first event will focus on Selective Mutism (SM) and takes place March 4, 2022, from 5-630pm EST.

Future topics will include:

- supporting siblings of youth who are anxious
- addressing co-occurring ADHD and ODD, and
- the unique challenges parenting a challenge with OCD.



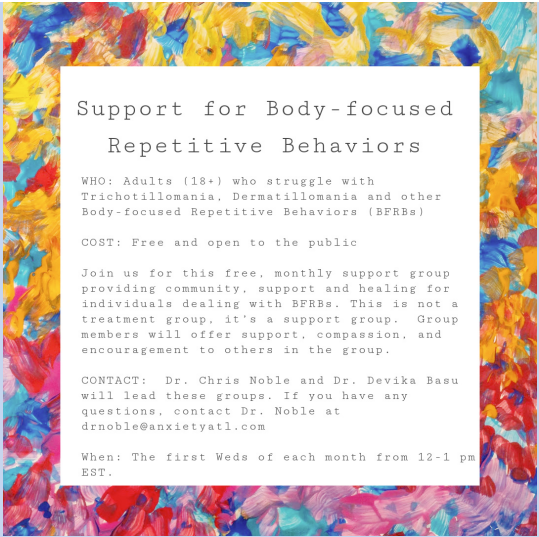
[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Free Support Group for Body-focused Repetitive Behaviors (BFRBs) for Adults

Join two of our BFRB specialists, Dr. Chris Noble and Dr. Devika Basu, for this free, monthly support group providing community, support and healing, for individuals dealing with BFRBs. This group takes place securely over Zoom.

This support group will provide a community of support and healing to help individuals give and receive compassion regarding BFRBs.

It will be held the first Wednesday of every month, from 12-1pm EST for adults aged 18+ who struggle with Trichotillomania, Dermatillomania and other BFRBs. Each group will allow for 20 group members, no registration required. Just click below to access access the Event page and the zoom link.



Support for Body-focused Repetitive Behaviors

WHO: Adults (18+) who struggle with
Trichotillomania, Dermatillomania and other
Body-focused Repetitive Behaviors (BFRBs)

COST: Free and open to the public

Join us for this free, monthly support group
providing community, support and healing for
individuals dealing with BFRBs. This is not a
treatment group, it's a support group. Group
members will offer support, compassion, and
encouragement to others in the group.

CONTACT: Dr. Chris Noble and Dr. Devika Basu
will lead these groups. If you have any
questions, contact Dr. Noble at
drnoble@anxietyatl.com

When: The first Weds of each month from 12-1 pm
EST.

[CLICK HERE to get full details and Register](#)

Join our monthly **FREE OCD Family Member Support Group**, specifically for family members and loved ones who support OCD sufferers aged 13+. This could be a caregiver, a loved one, or a spouse/partner.

Since this is not a treatment group, anyone above the age of 18 anywhere in the U.S. can join the meeting. This monthly group will provide a space for support and discussions about the do's and don'ts of supporting a loved one with OCD. We will discuss family accommodations, treatment considerations, and self-care in the process.



Do you have a spouse, a partner, a teenager, a parent, an adult child, or a loved one with OCD?

Are you looking to connect with others who recognize the struggles of loving and supporting someone with OCD?



**Join our Monthly (free)
Family Member OCD Support Group**

For anyone 18+ who supports loved ones (over the age of 13) struggling with OCD

This group is facilitated by Dr. Josh Spitalnick, Licensed Psychologist, Board Certified in CBT, and faculty member of the IOCDF BTTI Training Institute. It is held the 3rd Monday of every

month, from 8-9:15pm EST. Each group will allow for up to 20 group members.

Dates for the next three groups are: March 21, April 18, and May 16, 2022. No registration required, just click below to access access the Event page and the zoom link.

[CLICK HERE to access details and the Zoom link](#)

Check out our [EVENTS](#) section of our website for descriptions, full flyers, and registration details for these and all other upcoming groups and events.

Science Matters

Latin American Trans-Ancestry Initiative for OCD Genomics (LATINO)

There is a worldwide study of OCD genetics with more than 46,000 people with OCD participating. However, this remarkable initiative is limited by almost exclusively representing those of European ancestry (>95% of current participants). This Eurocentric bias would likely result in OCD genetic findings being more accurate for individuals of European ancestry than other ancestries, thereby contributing to health disparities in potential future applications of genomics in precision medicine.

At the request of our colleagues at Baylor College of Medicine and University of North Carolina, we are thrilled to share their recently approved study, Latin American Trans-Ancestry Initiative for OCD Genomics, or LATINO.

Led by Drs. James Crowley and Eric Storch, this new study seeks to collect the world's largest ancestrally diverse sample of OCD

cases (N = 5,000 Latin American individuals). This study will feature international collaborations with OCD clinics in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay, Peru, and Mexico, as well as OCD clinics in the U.S., including Houston, Miami, New Jersey, San Diego, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.



This monumental study will address the current Latino representation gap in OCD genetic research by conducting a novel, wide-scale OCD genomic study with robust phenotyping. We hope that increased representation of Latin individuals will advance the ability to detect, diagnose, and treat individuals of Latino ancestry using precision medicine, as well as contribute to the diversification of OCD genomics as a whole.

To get involved, email Latinostudy@bcm.edu

News and Notes

Dr. Gilly Kahn and Dr. Cameron Mosley completed SPACE (Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions) training, a 2-day workshop for therapists taught by Dr. Eli Lebowitz of the Yale Child Study Center.

Dr. Jessica Nasser completed SPACE (Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions) training, a 2-day workshop for therapists taught by Dr. Eli Lebowitz of the Yale Child Study Center, specifically for subspecialties in applying SPACE practices

to treat ARFID (Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder) and FTL (failure to launch) young adults.

“Raising Resilience: 25 Tips for Parenting Your Child with Anxiety or OCD,” a resource guide authored by Dr. Josh Spitalnick and Marti Munford, LPC, was accepted for publication in the IOCDF’s Spring 2022 Quarterly newsletter (be on the lookout).

Dr. Josh Spitalnick has joined the IOCDF BTTI training faculty and is providing bi-monthly consultations to OCD/Health anxiety specialists to increase training and delivery of evidence-based practices.

Dr. Josh Spitalnick was featured as a Health Anxiety expert in his contribution to a nationally published article in Die Welt, a German national daily newspaper, on February 23, 2022. The article, titled “Krank vor Angst, krank zu sein,” authored by award-winning Atlanta-based journalist Katja Ridderbusch, translates to mean "sick with fear of being sick." [Click here](#) for the link to the article, published only in German.

Dr. Spitalnick was featured as an Anxiety expert in his contribution to published article, “Is high functioning anxiety actually a thing?” authored by Casey Gueren and published in SELF (online) on January 4, 2022. [Click here](#) for the link to the article.

Joining 5 other psychologists at Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta, Dr. Megan Faye completed the certification process to become a PSYPACT-approved psychologist, granting her the ability to legally practice as a telehealth psychologist in 26 states other than Georgia.



You are receiving this email because you expressed interest in Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta's services or you are a valuable member of our professional community.

Our mailing address is:

Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta, LLC
1360 Center Drive, Suite 200
Dunwoody, GA 30338

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).