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Summer 2022 Newsletter



Why the OCD Avengers logo? It has several wonderful meanings for our team's past, present, and future.

First, the logo represents our team's name for the International OCD Foundation's annual fundraising event, One Million Steps for OCD Walk. The One Million Steps for OCD Walk provides a supportive community, increases awareness, and raises funds for the IOCDF and its Local Affiliates, enabling them to continue their missions. Team OCD Avengers has been our team name since 2014, raising over \$10,000 over this time period. This event takes place all around the country, with the Atlanta event being held October 23, 2022, sponsored by OCD Georgia. More details are below if you like to join our team or donate to a cause that is so important to the work we do.

A second reason this logo means so much to me, and our team, is that as of August

2022, with the addition of two more clinicians and one more administrative staff member, Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta's superpowers bring together 20 amazing OCD specialists. We are now have clinicians working in three different states (Georgia, Ohio, and Illinois) with the capacity to treat anxiety/OCD sufferers and their families in 32 different states (via telehealth). Twenty OCD specialists! When I launched this practice in 2014, I had no vision or plan to build such a large team of OCD specialists. Our growth has been organic, steady, and primarily grassroots, with the majority of our team starting as pre-licensed trainees or newly licensed therapists. Our senior staff dedicate significant training resources and mentorship to each of them on a regular basis. We are all always learning from one another, training each other, and discussing best practices together as a team, in smaller breakout groups each week, in individual supervision, or in our newly launched OCD case conferences. The growth has not taken away from our passion, dedication, kindness, creativity, or sense of humor; in fact, it's enhanced all of this. Twenty anxiety/OCD specialists means we will keep combining our superpowers to improve the availability, affordability, and accessibility of evidence-based practices for OCD treatment, including more low-cost and free group-based treatment offerings (see below).

Finally, the logo: it's brand new to you and me. It's our first one for the OCD Avengers team, and it was presented to me out of the blue just this month by one of our newest clinicians, Jessie Jensen, APC. Why share this?...because its awesome!

And, because Jessie is using her creative passions in a new role: our first social media manager. I have never prioritized social media as part of our company's resources but, it's time, especially with the growth and reach of our team. It's time to share the passion and knowledge of our 20 specialists with those who choose to follow us. We hope our social media efforts (mostly Instagram and Facebook) offer more advocacy, education, and support while we share more of what we do. And, if you happen to visit our offices, you'll likely see many of Jessie's amazing superheroes that she makes for our team. They're usually just hanging around the offices, sharing their superpowers with everyone we work with.



It has been a busy summer for our team as I'm sure it has been for you as well. I'm

ready for the brutal Atlanta heat and humidity of summer to move on and make room for the crisp fall evenings, leaves turning colors, and maybe an occasional pumpkin spiced latte. I'm especially ready for everyone's favorite sports teams to give us one more reason to enjoy some food and drink with friends as we all tailgate in the driveway or backyard.

**Face your fears. Live with uncertainty. Take Control of your life.
And seek out more meaningful experiences.**

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!

Click Here to visit our OCD Avengers Team page if you want to walk with us, donate to the team, or send us words of encouragement.

In the Community

Our team has been quite busy this summer, with some highlights including several of us attending the annual IOCDF Conference in Denver, Colorado and our team coming together to give back to our community and help those in need.

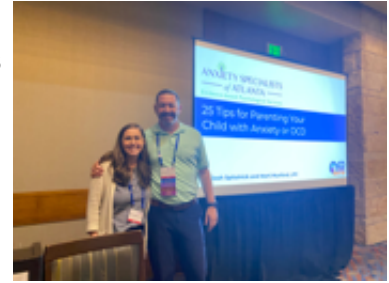
While in Denver for the 47th annual IOCDF conference, we visited Red Rocks, we ate a “killer” meal at a reformed mortuary, we enjoyed the lights of Denver, and we were surrounded by the best and the brightest in the OCD community. Our team had the pleasure of attending a variety of talks and presentations by leading professionals in the field, Dr. Spitalnick and dear friend and colleague Dr. Michelle Witkin (California) led a support group for family





members and loved ones of those who battle OCD. Finally, Dr. Josh Spitalnick and Marti Munford, LPC presented their recently published guide on parenting the child with OCD/anxiety to a packed audience. The parents and loved ones in attendance were inspiring. Moms and dads, there is hope! The

team looks forward to continuing this tradition next year as many of us will be attending and presenting at the 48th annual IOCDF conference in San Francisco, July 2023.



Just this past week, our team, coordinated by Jen Powell, LPC (one of our senior clinicians and staff supervisors), along with friends and family, donated our time by volunteering with Feed Marietta. We also made a company donation of \$180.



We put together personal bags, purchased diapers, and separated out portions of perishable foods. Feed Marietta serves over 200 families on north Metro Atlanta by providing non-perishables, fresh produce, meat, another hygiene products to families in need. We were honored to be able to

support them and their wonderful cause. Jen, we are grateful of your leadership and sense of community.

Team Updates

Welcome Michael Stier, LCPC, LPC, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

We are excited to announce the addition of Michael Stier, LCPC, LPC, who joins our team as one of the leading OCD and anxiety experts in the state of Illinois and Missouri. He will be accepting new patients starting September 2022.

Michael Stier, LCPC, LPC is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in Illinois and a Licensed Professional Counselor in both Missouri and Georgia. He specializes in



using evidenced-based treatment approaches such as Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) to treat OCD, health anxiety, and other related anxiety-based disorders (including panic disorder, phobias, social anxiety). Located in Illinois, about 25 minutes outside of St. Louis, Michael conducts all of his sessions via telehealth. He is often joined by his co-therapists in session Fred and Edith, his two Boston Terriers. They will often want to come say hello when they aren't sleeping/snoring, of course.

Before joining Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta, Michael owned and operated a successful solo private practice. Michael leads seminars in the St. Louis metro area about the assessment and treatment of OCD and related disorders using evidenced-based treatment approaches. He presents annually at the annual IOCDF conference and provides clinical consultation to other professionals. Michael has lived in the St. Louis area for his entire life and enjoys spending time with his wife and two boys.

We are so very excited to have Michael join our team. He further expands our reach by serving as our second clinician operating out of the state of Georgia. Josh and Michael have collaborated on a variety of projects over the last few years and have developed a wonderful working relationship, making this opportunity to work together even more rewarding for both of them. We couldn't be happier to welcome Michael to Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta!

[Click Here to see Michael Stier's bio and contact information](#)

Welcome Dr. Tauralee Tenn, Postdoctoral Clinical Fellow

We are also excited to announce the addition of Dr. Tauralee Tenn, who joins our team for the next 12 months as a Postdoctoral Fellow working towards licensure as a Psychologist. She will be accepting new patients starting September 2022.



Dr. Tauralee Tenn specializes in the treatment of anxiety, OCD and related disorders, including social anxiety, generalized anxiety and specific phobias in children, teens, and adults. She is also a specialist in treating issues related to post-traumatic stress, relational conflict, and adjustment difficulties to adverse life experiences. Dr. Tenn utilizes evidence-based techniques grounded in cognitive-behavioral and interpersonal approaches.

Dr. Tenn received her M.A. in Counseling and Spirituality from Saint Paul University in 2016. She then began her doctoral training at Ball State University in 2017, completing her M.A. in School Psychology in 2018 and her Ph.D. in the summer of 2022. During her doctoral work, Dr. Tenn engaged in advocacy efforts to combat injustices amongst racial, sexual and gender minority populations. Dr. Tenn is currently being supervised by Dr. Theresa Welles, Clinical Director at Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta.

Dr. Tenn was born in Kingston, Jamaica, grew up in Ottawa, Canada and is now pleased to call Atlanta, Georgia home. She played collegiate basketball at the Division 1 level. During her spare time, she loves to travel, spend time with family, referee and play basketball, as well as attend sporting events and concerts.

As the sole clinical fellow this year, Tauralee will represent the 3rd class of Postdoctoral Fellows at Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta and the twentieth specialist on our team (no pressure!). We are thrilled that Dr. Tenn chose us many months ago during the Fellowship match process and we look forward to an exciting year of training. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Tenn to Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta!

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

Welcome Ashley Thomas, Office Manager

With the growth of clinical team, office expansion in 2021, and return to more in person services in our two Dunwoody, Georgia, locations, it was time to expand our administrative team. We are lucky to have found a wonderful person to provide additional support to our clinicians and office facilities so our practice manager, Jessica Kalin, can continue to offer best in class service to all of our clients and

their families. Welcome Ashley Thomas to our team.



Ashley Thomas is a highly skilled and driven person with more than eighteen years of experience in administrative and office support. She has the ability to quickly build a rapport with those around her with her relatability and use of humor. Serving as the Office Manager at Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta, she utilizes her skills to support the needs of our providers and leadership team so they can prioritize the resources on the needs of their clients and families. Ashley is also responsible for maintaining the facilities and resources our team utilizes so our staff and guests feel welcomed and comfortable whenever in our offices. And, yes, our waiting rooms are officially back open (hooray!).

Ashley has been in Georgia for most of her life and has resided in Tucker for the last eleven years. She lives with her husband, two daughters, one son, and two cats.

[Click Here to see Ashley's bio and contact information](#)

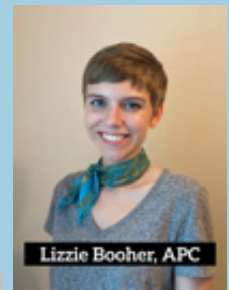
Congratulations to Lizzie Booher, APC, Dr. Catherine Worthington, & Dr. Devika Basu

The growth, success, and sustainability of our clinic is due, in large part, to our senior leadership identifying and recruiting junior clinicians and then dedicating a significant amount of time, energy, and resources to their professional maturation and skill development. Towards the completion of training, our senior staff, and the trainees, evaluate the training experience and, when possible, we offer career opportunities to trainees who not just meet but exceed our expectations.

Over the last 5 years, every clinician who joined us pre-licensed successfully completed their training requirements and have been offered career positions. All of these trainees have accepted our offers and ALL remain on staff with us today!! In this spirit, we couldn't be more excited and proud to announce that the next three pre-licensed clinicians who have trained with us have been offered positions and all three have accepted positions as staff clinicians with Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta, starting this Fall.

Lizzie Booher, APC, who started her training at the Anxiety and Stress Management

Institute and completed her training with our team. She will complete her requirements to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) this Fall.



Dr. Devika Basu and Dr. Catherine Worthington, both current Postdoctoral Fellows for the 2021-2022 cycle, will both complete requirements for fellowship this fall and then sit for the Georgia Psychology licensure exam. Both will be joining us as staff Psychologists soon after.



From our entire team, congratulations to all three of these outstanding clinicians. Lizzie, Devika, and Catherine, your patients adore you, our team is stronger with you on it, and we can't wait to see what lies ahead for your careers. Congrats!!

Upcoming Events



Atlanta 1 Million Steps 4 OCD Walk Fundraiser October 23, 2022

The 1 Million Steps 4 OCD Walk provides a supportive community, increases awareness, and raises funds for the International OCD Foundation (IOCDF) and its local affiliates (OCD Georgia), enabling them to continue their mission.

Please join [Team OCD Avengers](#) (Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta's annual

team name) on October 23, 2022, for the 1 Million Steps 4 OCD Walk fundraiser at Pernoshal Park in Dunwoody, GA, just minutes away from our offices. Please walk with us, donate to the team, or send us words of encouragement. Our team is hoping to break \$2,500 this year. Ambitious we know, but we can do it together as a community!!

To join Team OCD Avengers or simply to donate to our team and support us from afar, [CLICK HERE](#)

Support us by either registering to walk with us or by making a donation to our team. The process is fast, easy, and secure... and you can be sure that it will benefit a great cause.

And just to entice you to join the team (or donate) and have some fun with all of us, here is Dr. Spitalnick and his family at the 2016 "1 Million Steps 4 OCD Walk."



Treatment and Support Groups





We are excited to announce new (and recurring) and innovative groups that launch in this Fall, with online registration now open on our [Treatment and Support Groups Page](#).

We continue to offer a variety of monthly FREE support groups, along with our low-cost group therapy services and family-focused workshops. Below, you will see many of our recurring groups that always fill up, but I'm so impressed with my team's desire to think outside the box and create innovative (and fun) groups for kids and teens with anxiety and OCD.

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

Check out our [Treatment and Support Groups Page](#) for all the details.

Tuesdays 6-7:30pm Beginning September 6	Offered in-person in Dunwoody, GA
 <h1>IMPROV</h1> <h2>FOR TEEN SOCIAL ANXIETY</h2>	
Teens will learn mindfulness and exposure therapy-based skills to manage their social anxiety.	
6 total groups, \$100 per session	
Register at anxietyspecialistsofatlanta.com under "Treatment Groups"	
Contact Dr. Cameron Mosley at drmosley@anxietyatl.com	

**ANXIETY SPECIALISTS**
of ATLANTA
Evidence-based Psychological Services

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#)

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 several 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.

The next SPACE group starts Wednesday, August 31, 2022 and will run through Wednesday, September 28, 2022. Each of the 5 sessions will take place over Zoom from 1-2:30pm EST.



[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 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, and 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, and rediscover pride and joy as a caregiver.

There will be 6 meetings and enrollment will be limited to the first 8 who RSVP and meet eligibility criteria. If attendees or their child have not been treated by a member of Anxiety Specialists of Atlanta, an abbreviated intake may be required. Attendees will have to agree to be available for at least 5 of the 6 sessions to be eligible.

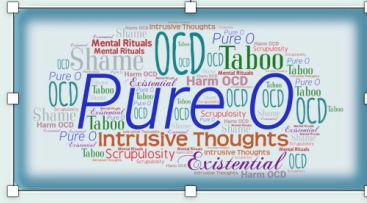
Start Date and Time: Tuesday, Sept 27, 2022 for 6 sessions – biweekly, from 5 - 6:15 pm

Location: In person at our office (1360 Center Drive, Suite 200, Dunwoody, GA 3033)

Contact: Dr. Theresa Welles at drwelles@anxietyatl.com with questions

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

An OCD/Health Anxiety Support and Skills Group



Facilitated by Dr. Josh Spitalnick, participants will revisit the basics of OCD/Health Anxiety along with strategies driven by Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). Group members will support each other and set treatment goals each meeting.

This group will be held Tuesdays, starting October 4, 2022, 230pm-4pm. It meets every week for 8 sessions. 7 spots available.

To register, go to our:

TREATMENT GROUPS page @

<https://anxietspecialistsofatlanta.com/groupservices/>

Location: Virtually through secure Zoom link

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#)

Living With OCD FOR KIDS!

Join us for a FREE, virtual, monthly support group for kids living with OCD who want to...

- **Fight Back.**
- **Live with Uncertainty.**
- **Connect with Other Kids who Know what it's Like!**

WHEN: Every 2nd Sunday from 3:00-4:00 pm EST (9/11, 10/9, 11/13, 12/11...)

WHERE: Online! A secure ZOOM link will be sent out once registration is approved

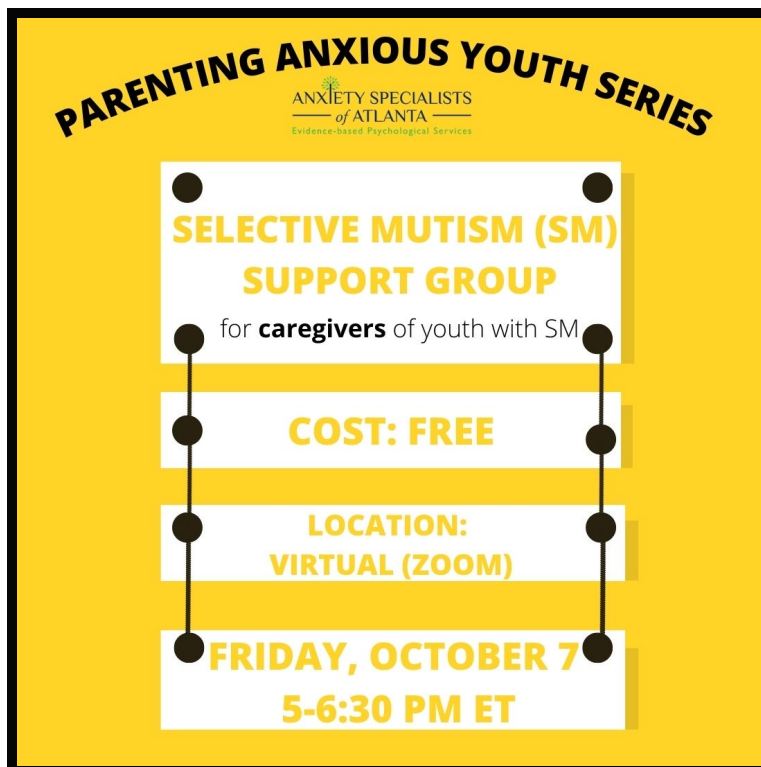
WHO: This group is designed for kids ages 9-15 who have an existing diagnosis of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Register **HERE:** anxietspecialistsofatlanta.com/groupservices/

****PARENTS MUST REGISTER CHILD TO GET SECURE ZOOM LINK****

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#)

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 next event will focus on Selective Mutism (SM) and takes place Friday October 7, 2022 from 5-6:30pm EST.



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

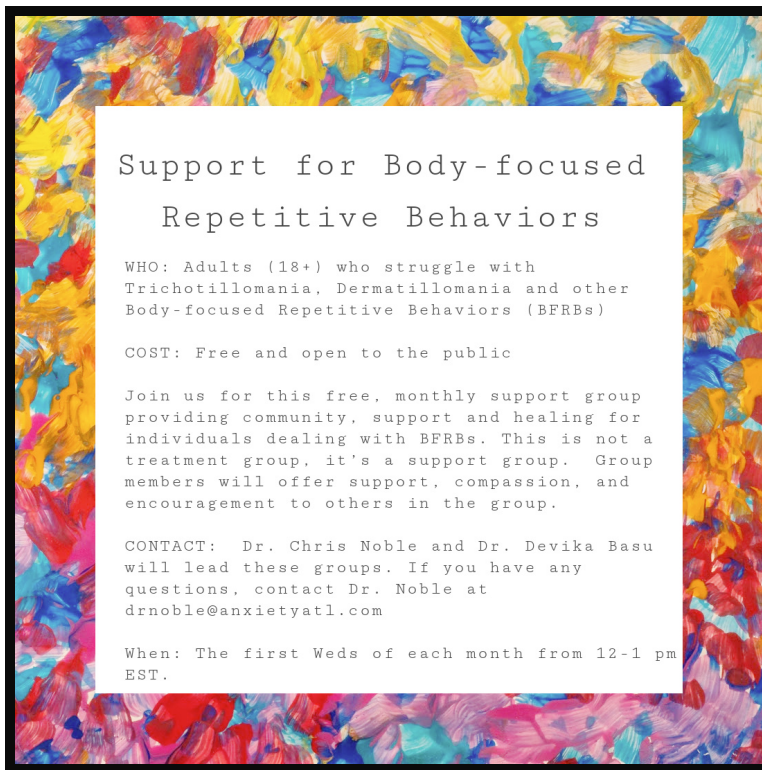
Free Support Group for Body-focused Repetitive Behaviors (BFRBs) for Adults

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](#)



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**

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#)

Check out our [Treatment and and Support Groups Page](#) on our website for descriptions, full flyers, and registration details for these and all other upcoming groups and events.



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