

## OCD New Jersey Fall 2020 Newsletter



### Julian Spero 1928-2020

Julian Spero, shown here with his wife of 64 years, Ina, died this week at the age of 92. He and Ina, together with Dr Allen Weg, formed the IOCDF affiliate OCD New Jersey back in 1998. Ina and Julian owned and ran a furniture store for over 30 years on Staten Island, and became involved in the OCD community after the diagnosis of a family member. Ina served as President, and Julian as Treasurer from the start, and both maintained those positions for over a decade afterwards. A very sweet man and incredibly devoted husband to the love of his life, Ina, Julian is survived by Ina and their two children. He leaves a legacy of hope and caring in the world of OCD, and will forever be remembered fondly in our hearts.



Julian Spero 1928-2020

## **OCDNJ 2020 Annual Conference Review**

by Rachel Strohl, Psy.D.

On Sunday October 25, 2020, Eric Storch, Ph.D. presented at the 20th annual conference of OCD New Jersey (OCD NJ) and the 1st virtual conference. Dr. Eric Storch is Professor and McIngvale Presidential Endowed Chair in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM). He serves as Vice Chair and Head of Psychology and oversees the CBT for OCD program at BCM. Dr. Storch has received multiple grants from federal agencies for his research (i.e., NIH, CDC), is a Fulbright Scholar, and has published over 14 books and over 550 articles and chapters. He specializes in the nature and treatment of childhood and adult obsessive-compulsive disorder and related conditions, anxiety disorders, and anxiety among youth with autism.

Dr. Storch began his talk by stating that obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) causes impaired functioning and distress. There are two evidenced-based treatments for OCD: 1) cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which has multi therapeutic components, specifically exposure and response prevention (ERP). 2) Serotonin reuptake inhibitor medications (SRIs). He discussed the effectiveness of using CBT alone, and when it is recommended to use combined therapy and medication.

He discussed the predictors of CBT treatment response, including the following factors that impair treatment response: severity and impairment (higher), family accommodation (more), insight (worse), family history of OCD (1st degree relative), comorbidity, motivation (poor), family factors, and inadequate dose of treatment. Other factors that impair treatment include lack of treatment access, delayed diagnosis, incomplete treatment, inadequate treatment, or the wrong treatment. For example, acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) can be used effectively within ERP, but not as a stand alone treatment. Dr. Storch reported from the studies that cognitive therapy alone with children is not effective, and the exposure element is key.

To read the rest of the article, click this link: <http://www.ocdnj.org/meetings/annual-conference/2020-annual-conference-review/>



*Dr. Eric Storch presented on "Clinical complexities in treating youth with OCD: Tips for parents and professionals" and "Determining the right level of care for people with OCD"*

## **COVID-19 & OCD**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified the ongoing worldwide outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) a pandemic. In response, public health experts around the world have asked individuals and organizations to take action to prevent and limit the transmission of this disease in their communities. This may create unique challenges for people in the OCD and related disorders community as we work to balance what's best for population health and what's best for our individual mental health.

The International OCD Foundation has put together a list of resources that may be helpful.

For more information, click this link: <https://iocdf.org/covid19/>

## **"Just Right" OCD**

by Marla Deibler, PsyD

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a psychiatric disorder, which involves both obsessions (recurrent, persistent, intrusive thoughts, images, or urges that cause anxiety or distress) and compulsions (repetitive behaviors or mental acts that are aimed at neutralizing or reducing anxiety or

distress or preventing the feared outcome.)

Obsessions, thus, are unwanted private events, which typically result in not only anxiety regarding the persistence of the obsession itself, but also a feared catastrophic outcome. Feared outcomes commonly involve anticipatory anxiety regarding themes such as, being responsible for harm to oneself or to others, being defined as unethical or immoral, or imperfection. For example, obsessions regarding dirt and contamination may result in overwhelming fear that if the dirt and contamination are not mitigated, one may become ill or unintentionally cause others to become ill. This fear becomes so overwhelming that it drives compulsions to minimize the perceived potential for harm and decrease the distress. In the case of contamination, one might choose to engage in washing or cleaning compulsions to reduce the chances that illness will occur and drastically diminish the anxiety.

There is, however, a subtype of OCD, for which a feared outcome is not the driving force. This is often referred to as “just right OCD” or “tourettic ocd (TOCD).” TOCD involves compulsions such as counting, symmetry/evening up, arranging, ordering, positioning, touching, and tapping. In TOCD, there is no elaborate obsessional belief structure or feared outcome, which drives these behaviors, but rather, intense somatic and/or psychological tension or discomfort, often described as something feeling incomplete or “not right.” Sometimes, the distress is heightened by a belief that unless the behavior is performed, the discomfort will be intolerable and/or infinite. The behaviors are then carried out to relieve these uncomfortable sensations.

To read the rest of this article, click this link: <https://www.verywellmind.com/just-right-ocd-2510668>

## Research Study

Was your family impacted by the coronavirus? Are you or your child struggling with anxiety or depression about the coronavirus or social distancing? Help CWRU researchers learn more about the impact of the coronavirus on children, parents, and families. If you have a child ages 7-17 and have been impacted by the coronavirus, please fill out our online questionnaires! We hope to use this study to learn more about how families have been impacted by recent events related to the coronavirus. If you complete the surveys, you will be entered into a raffle to win one of four \$25 gift cards.

You can participate by going to [https://cwru.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8678F95dgxjCcm1](https://cwru.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8678F95dgxjCcm1)

## OCDNJ DVDs for Sale

We record our annual conferences and the speakers from our quarterly meetings, and provide copies of them to anyone interested. All moneys charged are pumped back into OCDNJ to help defray the costs of the organization. This is a great way to learn more about various topics of interest within and related to OCD. For a listing of DVDs available, click this link: <http://www.ocdnj.org/newsletter/dvds/>

## OCD Support Groups in NJ

There is information on support groups throughout the state on our website. Click on the following link to find out if there is a support group in your area: <http://www.ocdnj.org/get-help/support-groups/>

## **Professional Directory**

OCD NJ has a list of professionals who choose to advertise on our website. OCD NJ does not review, does not approve, does not endorse, nor certify the qualifications of any mental health professionals to provide any mental health care services. OCD NJ therefore, in making available, for the interest of the public, a list of professionals and their areas of practice, is not making any representations, warranties, nor any guarantees, regarding the providing of mental health care services by these professionals. This link leads to the pages of professionals on our website: <http://www.ocdnj.org/get-help/professional-directory/>