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International OCD Foundation

Do you know about the benefits of joining the International OCD Foundation? There are many! First, you'll get discounted conference registration rates, so it makes sense (and dollars/cents!) to join the IOCDF if you are going to go to the conference. Second, you'll get the IOCDF's information-packed newsletter each quarter—I learn something new in every issue. Third, as a member of the IOCDF, you'll automatically become a member of OCD Georgia (www.ocdgeorgia.org), the official Georgia affiliate of the IOCDF. I hope you'll support the IOCDF's invaluable work as the resource for millions of people in the US suffering from OCD by becoming a member today!

I know firsthand how transformative an experience the conference can be because, as some of you may know, I have OCD. Had I not gone to my first OCD conference several years ago, I would be living another life today—one where I was held hostage by my OCD, even though it might have looked from the outside like I was in charge. Thanks to the people I met and the information I learned at the conference, I have built a new life where OCD is not in the driver's seat. I will be sharing the story of my triumph over my OCD, called "Is Fred in the Refrigerator?" including the role of the conference in my recovery, as the keynote speaker at this year's conference. ~Shala

Intolerance of uncertainty—it's at the heart of OCD. OCD wants absolute, undeniable, 100% certainty about everything. It forces its sufferers to jump through countless hoops in a never-ending quest for something that just doesn't exist. Because the only certainties in life are death and taxes, right? (And some people might argue about whether taxes even belong on this short list!) In his book *Freedom from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: A Personalized Recovery Program for Living with Uncertainty*, Jonathan Grayson, Ph.D. delves into the concept of uncertainty as the core of OCD and how embracing uncertainty is a crucial part of getting better. In this self-help book, Dr. Grayson shows readers how to best incorporate uncertainty into scripts for imaginal exposure and response prevention (ERP) exercises. In fact, in the back of the book he presents an entire library of scripts for readers to use and customize for all sorts of OCD obsessions. The book also offers an extensive checklist of obsessions and compulsions that readers can use to identify all the ways that OCD is controlling their lives. This is one of my favorite OCD books to recommend to clients. It helps them to understand that because OCD wants certainty, we want the opposite in treatment. That we can revel in the uncertainty of life, and while it may cause us anxiety in the short term, in the long term it puts us on the road to freedom from OCD.

Life changing...that's one phrase I'd use to describe the International OCD Foundation's annual conference. That probably sounds overly dramatic. However, for people who have OCD, an incredibly isolating and debilitating disorder, a conference focused on their issues and how to overcome them can literally change the course of their lives.

We're fortunate that this year the **20th Annual OCD Conference will be in Atlanta on July 19-21**. Conference attendees include people with OCD, their families and friends, treatment providers, and researchers. The conference offers more than 100 workshops and presentations as well as support groups, the Virtual Camping Trip, Dr. Reid Wilson's popular 2-day OCD treatment group, and lots of fun social activities. If you have OCD, have a family member or friend with OCD, provide treatment for people with OCD, or research OCD, this is a conference *not to miss!* In fact, I recently wrote a blog post for the IOCDF about the Top Five Reasons Not To Miss This Year's Conference, which you can read on the conference website at www.ocd2013.org.

I hope you and your clients and patients will join me at the conference. If you register by June 17 at 5 p.m. EST you get early bird rates (and IOCDF members get even better rates!), so don't delay - register for the conference today!