

APRIL 2023



CROSS CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS NEWSLETTER

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APRIL IS

National Month
of Hope



WHAT'S GOING ON AT CCE?

In Need of Therapy Services?

If you are in need of therapy services, we have some good news for you! CCE currently has immediate openings for sliding scale therapy services with our interns. Sessions can be as low as \$15/session for qualifying individuals. Our intern therapists have a language capacity for English, Farsi, and Arabic and can work with individuals, couples, and families of all ages.

If you are interested, please contact us at 818-860-1223 or connectwithcce@gmail.com.

Watch "Wake Up Sleeping Beauty" in Farsi & Russian

Wake Up Sleeping Beauty was a labor of love filmed and originally released during the height of the pandemic in 2020. It is a Cross Cultural Expressions original production in partnership with Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Directed by Shila Vosough-Ommi and Written by Mastaneh Moghadam, LCSW.

CCE Productions on Youtube now has both a Farsi and Russian version of the film available for our viewers. Search "CCE Productions Wake Up Sleeping Beauty" on YouTube to watch the film!

OBSSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

WRITTEN BY JEFF FRIEDMAN, CCE INTERN

When I first heard about the show *Monk*, I thought its portrayal of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) would be exaggerated and inaccurate. I was half right.

My first therapist diagnosed me with OCD because of my confessional behavior. Every night, I felt I couldn't sleep until I'd apologized to my mom for every action and thought that felt impure. Like Detective Adrian Monk, I exhibited compulsive behaviors—the “C” of the acronym. For instance, I was a balancer: if I didn't make movements on my left and right sides evenly, I felt something terrible would happen to my family and me.

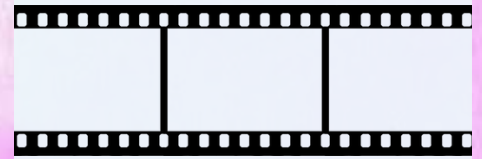
If there's something I wish more people knew about OCD, it's the emotions that come with it. When I was a kid, my therapist told me that OCD leads to anxiety and depression. In other words, we don't avoid cracks in the sidewalk for fun.

Each obsessive thought and compulsion feels dire. Whether we carry out the compulsion immediately or not, it comes with intense feelings. Fear and anxiety are big ones, along with guilt and depression. There are many vicious cycles, and at some points, my biggest fear has been fear itself.

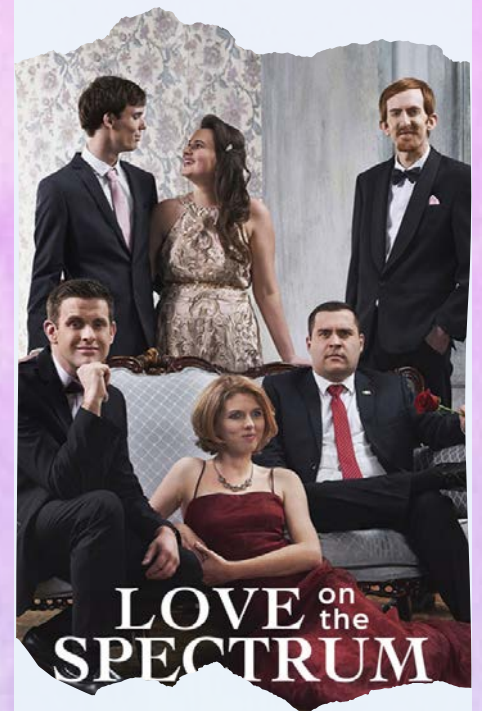
The type of therapy that addresses OCD most directly is Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), which, in a few words, involves facing your fears. Patients track their experiences of anxiety and discomfort from exposure to triggers until their discomfort decreases significantly. While I've practiced ERP and found it useful, it requires more endurance than I'd imagined.

More broadly, I've found Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to help—after all, it challenges thought patterns and actions that follow them. Reading about OCD might have contributed to my first panic attack, but learning about it has helped, too—even when my source was *Monk*.

SERIES OF THE MONTH



Love on the Spectrum
Streaming on Netflix



A documentary series following young adults on the autism spectrum as they explore the unpredictable world of love, dating and relationships.

Love on the Spectrum has the potential to open minds, foster genuine empathy for its stars and maybe even spark interest in more autistic stories.

MENTAL HEALTH HERO OF THE MONTH: NADIYA HUSSAIN

Since Nadiya Hussain won The Great British Bake Off in 2015, she's been catapulted in fame and endless TV appearances. Behind the scenes Nadiya suffers from extreme anxiety and debilitating panic attacks, which she's had since childhood. For decades, she has kept her anxiety a secret, ashamed to speak out.

In a documentary entitled "Nadiya: Anxiety and Me", Nadiya sets out to find the cause of her anxiety, exploring the most effective, available treatments, while having therapy herself, in the hope of managing her anxiety.

She speaks bravely and honestly about what it's like to live with anxiety and panic attacks; undergoing a course of cognitive behavioral therapy, each session is a step into the unknown. At times, it's a difficult process, revealing buried memories and key moments from her past. The sessions are raw and honest. Nadiya's openness is inspiring. Her bravery in seeking help rather than suffering in silence and documenting the process in hopes of encouraging others to prioritize their mental health makes her CCE's Mental Health Hero of the Month!

Anxiety is probably one of the most lonely, isolating things to have. You are your own worst enemy and you live inside your head. We need to talk...that's half the healing, we need to talk

NADIYA HUSSAIN



YARAN IRANIAN PEER COUNSELING HELPLINE

A program of Cross Cultural Expressions

Our trained volunteer peer counselors provide free and confidential supportive and referral services for Persian (Farsi) speaking community

Contact us if you're in need of:

Information/Referral Services

Support with Family Issues

Support with Mental and Emotional Health

Speak with one of our peer counselors via our telephone helpline:

(818) 332-7999