

My name is Joel Seltzer, and I am a second-year Clinical Psychology student at the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP) at Rutgers University. I am a New Jersey native who moved to Ohio for 5 years to attend Kenyon College and then work at Cincinnati Children's hospital. During my time at Cincinnati Children's, I developed an interest in treating anxiety disorders and chronic pain. I have since returned to New Jersey to attend graduate school at Rutgers University where I can study treatment for anxiety and other mental health disorders.

Through the generous support of NJPAF, I am currently working as a clinician at the Anxiety Disorders Clinic (ADC) at Rutgers University. The ADC is a specialty clinic offering evidence-based treatment of anxiety and related disorders including, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, Separation Anxiety Disorder, and Phobias; as well as compulsive disorders including Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Body-Focused Repetitive Disorders (e.g., Trichotillomania). In addition, the ADC offers a PTSD program for Veterans and trauma-focused therapy for community members. In addition to individual therapy, the ADC periodically runs therapy groups for a range of anxiety disorders.

At the ADC, my roles include both a student-clinician and a clinic coordinator. As a clinician, I have received training and supervision in specific evidence-based treatments for a variety of anxiety disorders. This training has come in the form of weekly didactics from a licensed psychologist. The nomothetic treatments discussed in didactics provide a crucial framework for treatment but through supervision, the ADC also stresses the importance of treatments that address idiographic factors. This has allowed me to provide both short-term treatments for specific problems and long-term treatments that are tailored to the needs of clients with a complex set of comorbid disorders and life challenges. My training at the ADC has further stressed the importance of tailoring treatments to meet the needs of a diverse clientele that respects differences in cultural values and practices.

As the clinic coordinator of the ADC, I have had the opportunity to go beyond providing treatment and obtain experience managing administrative and systemic functions within the clinic. Veterans comprise one of the primary populations treated at the ADC and as a result, my coordinator role has included navigating aspects of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs at both the state and federal levels. Assuring that our veterans continue to receive the health care they need is a top priority at the ADC that comes with unique challenges. The clinic coordinator role has also allowed me to advocate for issues and populations that matter to me. This includes working to establish new treatment groups, improve community outreach, and encourage self-care for our clinicians.

Before joining the ADC, Rutgers University provided me with other opportunities to explore my clinical interests. Last year, I completed a practicum at the ADHD clinic. Before starting graduate school I had worked at the ADHD program at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. At the hospital, I implemented behavioral treatments and Parent-Child Interaction Training (PCIT) to help children with ADHD and their families. The Rutgers ADHD clinic used an entirely different approach based on psychodynamic mentalization treatment. Observing the successes and shortcomings of each approach has helped cement my interest in integrative treatments and case conceptualization. I have been lucky enough to find supportive faculty and supervisors at Rutgers University who have been encouraging of my integrative interests.

Another Rutgers clinic that has helped to foster my ability to think and work in an integrative mindset is the New Jersey Couples Clinic. Before starting graduate school, I did not have a specific interest in couples therapy. But since beginning at the clinic, I have formed an appreciation for the importance and impact that couples therapy can have for patients and their families. The couples clinic has allowed me to get experience with both Emotionally Focused Therapy (ETF) and Behavioral Couples Therapy. Seeing clients through the couples clinic has also given me a chance to explore using integrative approaches with diverse populations and non-traditional family structures.

Moving forward in my graduate studies and training, I am looking forward to a range of new experiences. At the ADC, I am excited to begin treating clients with presentations and disorders I have yet to encounter including Separation Anxiety Disorder, Phobias, and Body-Focused Repetitive Disorders. These disorders have a higher prevalence in child and adolescent populations compared to adult populations. After working at the ADHD clinic, I realized a commitment to working with child and adolescent clients. I recognize the importance that treating childhood disorders will have an individual and value that it can truly change the course of a client's life. I have been amazed by the resiliency that child clients possess and want to help foster that resiliency however I can. Additionally, I have always had an interest in non-pharmacological treatments for chronic pain. Going to school and later working in Ohio at the height of the opioid epidemic shaped my interest in psychotherapy as a solution to pain management. The ADC has provided me with an ideal situation to continue exploring all of my clinic interests. I look forward to completing my degree and using my training to provide treatment for anxiety and chronic pain to individuals from diverse backgrounds