

Our thoughts are with those impacted by
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Cognitive Behavior Associates Winter Newsletter



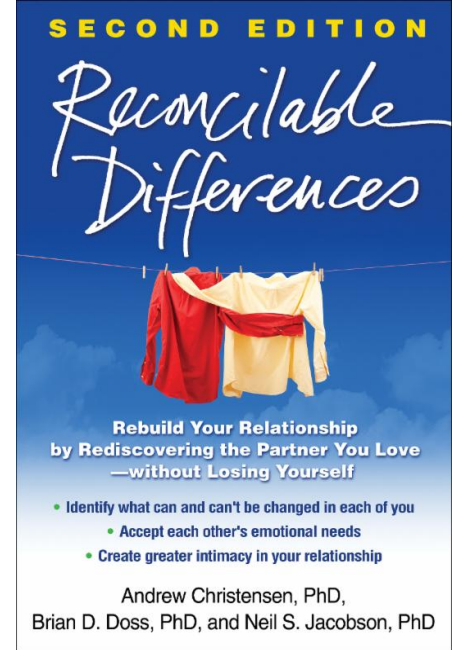
Caption: L to R: Megan Wagner, Jayson Mystkowski,
Denica Gordon-Mandel, Jenny Hay, Joel Becker, Pam
Elfenbaum, Melissa Magaro, Lauren Shapiro, Marvin
Hoefler

- Upcoming Webinar - Integrative Couples Therapy Workshop
- Article - A Parents Guide to Gift Giving Over the Holidays
- Best Read of 2017 - Attached by Amir Levine, M.D. & Rachel Heller, M.A.
- Article - Clinician Treatment of Panic Impacted by Intimate Relationships
- Social Anxiety Group - CBA Offices

Upcoming Webinar

Rebuilding Intimacy Through Acceptance: Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy Workshop

Couples often struggle with navigating differences and initiating positive behavioral changes in their relationship. Andrew Christensen, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), will discuss Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy (IBCT) and how it works towards the twin goals of acceptance and change through a behavioral treatment framework.



This workshop is designed to help you:

- 1) Distinguish IBCT from Traditional and Cognitive Behavioral Couples Therapy
- 2) Conceptualize themes and patterns in relationships
- 3) Understand IBCT strategies for resolving conflict and building intimacy

1.5 CE credits provided

Cognitive Behavior Therapy Institute (CBTI) is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. CBTI maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Joel L. Becker Ph.D., Founder and Director

[Link to Sign up for Webinar](#)



Andrew Christensen, Ph.D.
Integrative Behavioral Couple
Therapy (IBCT)

Partners & Parents Corner

A Parents' Guide to Gift-Giving Over the Holidays: Bring on the Joy, Leave out the Entitlement Lauren Shapiro, Ph.D.

How can we, as parents, instill a sense of gratitude and appreciation in our children over the holidays?

'Tis the season when they start to curate lists of trinkets, toys, games, and sometimes big ticket items that they hope to receive, and we parents think through which gifts will make our children light up with joy.

However, as we all know, some of our kids will slump down in disappointment when the surprise hidden behind the gift wrap does not meet their expectation. These days children may even demand certain gifts, fully expecting that their demands will be met when the big day rolls around. Although gift-getting is undoubtedly a highpoint of the holidays for children, there are specific things that parents can do to help instill a sense of appreciation and gratitude.

Talk about gift-giving beforehand. Sitting down with your child and talking about why we give and receive gifts over the holidays can help them think about it from a different perspective. You might focus on how we give gifts as one of the many ways we

show our love, express appreciation, and celebrate what another person is passionate about. Emphasize that there are different types of gifts we can give - they do not have to be expensive or tangible (e.g., making a meal for someone, helping a loved one with a task that they have been dreading, planning a fun activity together).

Involve your child in charitable gift-giving. In discussions surrounding gift-giving, talk to your child about the less fortunate and ways in which you as a family can help. It is important to remember that helping others can range from volunteering your time as a family, to searching online with your child to pick a charity that your family will donate to during the holiday season. Alternatively, you can invite your child to pick out a toy (either new or a toy that they have and are willing to part with) that will be donated to someone less fortunate. In short, amplifying the "giving back" aspect of the holidays can model for your child what it means to be part of a community.

Celebrate your child's personality and strengths when gift-giving. Instead of just adding to a pile of "stuff" that your child gets, share your rationale behind the gift when it is given. For example, if your child loves to create and draw, you might get them an art project and say, "I love how much you use your brain to be creative - I thought you'd have fun with this!" Or, if your child is passionate about team sports, you might get him or her sports equipment and say, "I think it's so great that you are such a helpful teammate when you play sports." This can shift the child's focus away from the material object and highlight a personality characteristic that you value in your child.

Ask your child to help choose gifts for other family members. Even though deciding on and shopping for holiday gifts might be much more efficient sans child, it can be a valuable exercise to have your child help choose gifts for certain family members. You can model for them how to take another person's perspective and think through what others might enjoy and appreciate. And make it fun! This will show your child that giving to others is a valuable thing to do and that it feels good to give back.

Make gratitude part of your family routine. The act of practicing gratitude, taking time to think about things you are grateful for, can incur a number of benefits for both you and your family. The more it is part of your family's routine, the greater the benefit for everyone. For example, each evening before dinner, each family member can share something they were grateful for that day.

[Click here for more on empirically-based benefits of practicing gratitude](#)



Attached.

THE NEW SCIENCE OF ADULT ATTACHMENT

AND HOW IT CAN HELP YOU FIND—

AND KEEP—LOVE

AMIR LEVINE, M.D. and
RACHEL S.F. HELLER, M.A.

Best Read of 2017

Joel Becker, Ph.D.

Attachment theory, which was originally described by John Bowlby, explores how the early relationships with our caregivers results in each individual developing a specific "attachment style." Focusing on anxious, avoidant and the securely attached, the authors Levine and Heller explore how one's attachment style both determines the mates we choose and how to manage these styles (whether same or different) in a relationship. There has been a great deal of empirical evidence to support the notion of "attachment styles" and how they predict individual pathologies.

I found this perspective to complement the Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy (IBCT) that we use at CBA. The integration of some of their ideas gives both the

therapist and the clients another perspective and how to have more satisfying relationships.

[Buy Book](#)

Research that Impacts Outcome **Panic Treatment in the Context of Intimate Partnerships**

Jayson Mystkowski, Ph.D.

A growing body of evidence suggests the need to examine the presentation and treatment of a client's panic disorder in the context of a relationship with a significant other. A circular, homeostatic pattern often develops in which the dependent role of the person with panic disorder is complemented by their partner's caretaking role (Byrne et al., 2004). As a result, the panic disordered partner in the relationship receives too much reassurance and opportunities for continued avoidance behavior, which detrimentally reinforces their panic symptoms, as well as increases the likelihood of marital problems (Byrne et al., 2004).

Panic disorder is characterized as an abrupt, intense rush of fear or discomfort, often unexpected or out-of-the-blue, resulting in anxiety over having another attack, and marked avoidance of a variety of situations believed to trigger an attack. CBT for panic disorder is highly effective, with as many as 87% of clients being panic free at the end of treatment, and 67% of clients maintaining gains up to seven years post treatment. However, other data suggests that CBT for panic disorder still has high dropout rates, and as many as 50% of clients fail to achieve "symptom-free" status (Byrne et al., 2004).

With this mixed data in mind, researchers around the world have turned their attention to a variety of factors that may impact treatment outcome. Investigations that developed a couples-based CBT for panic disorder, which included such things as partner-assisted exposure and marital therapy components, have demonstrated significantly positive effects on reducing panic symptoms in the affected partner (as many as 84% of clients rated as treatment responders), and increased satisfaction in couples relationships, than do treatments with a more individual focus (Byrne et al., 2004).

Additional research is needed to replicate and expand these findings to the variety of "forms" couples relationships take in the modern age. In summary, the aforementioned findings are a reminder to clinicians to look at the dynamic system in which a client's presenting symptoms take place, in order to promote the well-being of all parties involved.

(Byrne, M., Carr, A., & Clark, M. (2004). The efficacy of couples-based interventions for panic disorder with agoraphobia. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 26, 105-125.)

Social Anxiety Group

Location: CBA Offices

Social anxiety, the fear of being negatively judged or evaluated by others, is not always experienced in the same way. Some individuals are fearful of a variety of social situations, whereas others may experience anxiety in only one or two contexts. Research has found that the most effective treatment for social anxiety is cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). The Social Anxiety Group at CBA is based upon CBT principles. It is designed to help members develop ways to successfully cope with social anxiety, and utilizes methods such as:

- Learning effective communication techniques
- Testing feared social situations in a deliberate, gradual manner (i.e. exposure therapy)
- Identifying negative thought patterns related to social situations and developing new ways of thinking
- Relaxation and mindfulness training

This social anxiety group will offer an environment in which these methods can be efficiently learned and practiced, with the added benefit of real-time feedback from fellow group members. Limited to 8 members, the group will meet weekly for 90 minutes, with one week off per month.

[Please inquire for further details.](#)

Cognitive Behavior Associates (CBA) is one of the largest clinical practices in the Los Angeles area offering short-term, problem-focused therapy from a cognitive-behavioral perspective.

All of our treatments are based on scientific research, and we continually measure and quantify progress for each client so we know when therapy is working. Each of our clinicians differs in areas of expertise and interest, and these factors are taken into account when matching a client with a clinician.

Joel Becker, Ph.D.

Founder and Clinical Director of CBA & Cognitive Behavior Therapy Institute
Clinical Professor, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA

Jayson Mystkowski, Ph.D.

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