

"Flying into the Darkness Revisited" by Allen H. Weg, Ed.D.

by Rachel Strohl, Psy.M.

On March 14, 2005, Allen H. Weg, Ed.D. presented at the New Jersey Obsessive Compulsive Foundation (NJOCF) quarterly meeting. Dr. Weg is a licensed psychologist who runs the private practice Stress and Anxiety Services of NJ in the East Brunswick area. He has presented on Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and other anxiety disorders at the local and national level. He is one of the original founders and presently serves as Vice-President of NJOCF.

Dr. Weg accomplished many tasks during his talk, which consisted of eighteen illustrative stories that each captured a different understanding of OCD. The stories served as rich metaphors for various aspects of the symptoms and treatment of OCD. He explained that individuals with OCD can feel crazy, alone, and isolated at times, and the stories communicate that family members, friends, and professionals can "get it." For instance, the stories "Driving" and "Locked Out" convey the message that everyone at one time or another has experienced the feeling of obsessive thoughts or repetitive behaviors, although OCD sufferers experience the obsessions and compulsions with greater severity and interference in their lives.

Another task Dr. Weg achieved through his stories was clarifying the complexity of treatment for

OCD. Exposure and response prevention therapy can be challenging and difficult for OCD sufferers. The stories provide professionals with a poignant way to communicate to their clients the rationale and importance of behavioral exposure therapy. Dr. Weg's story "Bee Trap" describes that when a bee gets stuck in a bee trap, a device made of a clear plastic bottle with dried honey at the bottom, black tape around the end with the opening, and which is hung upside down, the bee's natural instincts urge him towards the light; however, the opening for the trap is at the other end in the darkness. Dr. Weg highlighted the moving analogy that OCD sufferers, similar to the bee, must "fly into the darkness" to escape the trap of anxiety and to avoid reinforcing fear and avoidance.

A diverse audience listened to the presentation with enthusiasm and hope. OCD sufferers were offered a narrative model to help them better understand their OCD and its complexities. The stories provided encouragement to "fight back, challenge it, boss back the OCD," while recognizing a level of acceptance for themselves and their disorder. Loved ones and professionals treating those with OCD certainly gained an appreciation of

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NEXT MEETING LECTURE ON JUNE 13 - "Beyond Exposure and Response Prevention"

Our next quarterly meeting will be held in the Medical Education Building Room 108A at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in New Brunswick, NJ. The meeting will be held from 7 – 9 p.m. on Monday evening, June 13, 2005. The presenter, Milton Spett, Ph.D. is the co-founder of the New Jersey Association of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapists. He is a licensed psychologist in independent practice in Cranford, NJ. He has given numerous workshops and published numerous articles on the treatment of OCD and other psychological disorders.

Dr. Spett's presentation will be titled "Overcoming OCD: Beyond Exposure and Response Prevention." Exposure and response prevention is the standard treatment for OCD, but Dr. Spett will focus on treatment techniques which are new and/or not so well known. In his talk, Dr. Spett will discuss some unique ways of doing exposure and response prevention. He will also discuss cognitive techniques and enlisting the OCD patient's family in the treatment. Chronic OCD usually leads to or co-exists with depression. Dr. Spett will discuss simultaneously treating OCD and depression. Finally, he will describe

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hi Everyone!

We are currently updating our "Treatment provider list (psychiatrists, psychologists, behavioral therapists, and social workers). If you have the names, phone numbers, and addresses of these professionals, kindly call me with this information as it will benefit the many people that call the NJ OCF hotline for information and assistance.

Hope to see all of you at our upcoming quarterly meeting on Monday, June 13, 2005.

Ina Spero
President

Correction: In the March 2005 newsletter, an article was published by Karen J. Landsman, Ph.D., not Karen Landsman, M.A. The NJ OCF sincerely apologizes for the mistake!

**Thank You
to Everyone
who
continues to
support the
NJ OCF!**

NATIONAL OCD FOUNDATION CONTACTS

OCF
PO Box 9573
New Haven, CT 06535

Phone: (203) 401-2070
Fax: (203) 315-2196

E-mail: info@ocfoundation.org
Internet: www.ocfoundation.org

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YOU CAN HELP...

With production cost and postage rates climbing and our mailing list growing rapidly, we would like to mention that any voluntary contribution would aid us to keep this NJ Affiliate Newsletter going.

- Board of Directors

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Any Comments?????

The staff of the Newsletter encourages all comments on our published articles. Also, any letters and articles, which you wish to submit for our quarterly publications, are welcome. Please submit them to, Ina Spero, NJ OCF, 60 MacAfee Road, Somerset, NJ 08873.

Disclaimer

The information in this Newsletter should not be taken in lieu of proper medical and/or mental health professional services. The Board of Directors of the New Jersey Affiliate of the Obsessive Compulsion Foundation, as well as all other volunteers involved in the development and distribution of this Newsletter, do not endorse any particular viewpoint or information presented here. Again, nothing takes the place of proper medical/mental health professional services.

NJ OCF MISSION

The Affiliate is a community of those who have an interest in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and whose goals are:

- 1) To educate the public and professional communities about the disorder.
- 2) To support individuals afflicted and their significant others.
- 3) To support research into the causes and treatments of this disorder.

NJ OCF OFFICERS

Ina Spero - President
Dr. Allen Weg - Vice President, Newsletter Editor
Judy Cohen - Secretary
Rachel Strohl - Recording Secretary
Julian Spero - Treasurer
Nicole Torella - Newsletter Editor
Dr. Rita Roslyn Newman - Advisory Board member

SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!

The New Jersey Affiliate of the Obsessive Compulsive Foundation
will host our
Sixth Annual Conference
Sunday, September 25, 2005
Doubletree Hotel, Somerset, NJ

A renown speaker who is a specialist in the field OCD will be featured. Registration fees include a buffet brunch! Look for registration information in the next newsletter!

Make Your Reservation Now!
Annual National OC Foundation Conference
July 29 - 31, 2005
in San Diego

The OC Foundation Conference is being held at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center in San Diego, California.

This conference is beneficial to all people with an interest in learning more about Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Workshops will be held covering information of interest to people of all ages, including children and adult sufferers, and supporters, including family members, spouses, psychologists, and psychiatrists.

***For more information on attending the conference,
contact Ina Spero, NJ OCF President, at (732) 828-0099.***

Predator and Prey by Allen H. Weg, Ed.D.

This past summer I had the wonderful good fortune of taking a trip with my family to the Southwest. Near Albuquerque, New Mexico, there was this wonderful set of mountains you can drive up or climb (we did a little of both) called the Sandia Mountains. At the top of the main mountain there was this little restaurant/gift shop that we stopped at. There, among the tee-shirts and knick-knacks, was a sign describing in detail what one should do when one encounters a mountain lion in the area. Living my entire life in the New York City metropolitan area, this was not a particular area of expertise for me, so I read it carefully.

To my surprise, running away or freezing still and calling the "mountain lion police" on my cell phone (what would have been my first two inclinations) was not the recommended course of action. The sign instructed the reader to stand his/her ground, look the beast right in the face, and make lots of noise, including growling, yelling, and hitting a tree with a stick. The instructions added that it might be helpful to wave your hands in the air, or even to take your jacket, if you had one, and hold it up high over your head, swinging it back and forth, in order to "look" bigger to the animal.

This brought to mind the behavioral treatment of OCD. (I swear, sometimes I wonder what there is in the world that doesn't bring to mind the behavioral treatment of OCD!)- Anyway, what was clear to me was that the sign in the gift shop was teaching the reader the basic lesson that if you act like a prey (such as freezing or running), the cat will treat you like a prey, and attack, feeling emboldened by your reaction to its threat. If, on the other hand, you responded like another predator, taking an attack/threatening stance, you stand a pretty good chance that the mountain lion will lose interest and turn away.

Likewise, if we think of OCD as the attacking mountain lion, we can respond as prey or as predator. If we behave like prey and "run" by avoiding

OCD triggers, making attempts to reassure ourselves, or by acquiescing to the OCD behavioral demands, this serves only to invite the OCD to come after us with greater zeal and confidence, seeing us as the weak prey that we depict through our behavior. On the other hand, if we stand up to the OCD, and through behavioral exposure seek out the very triggers that stimulate our anxiety, and/or worsen our obsessions on purpose to undermine OCD's power over us, we are in "attack" mode, and we will be viewed more as an adversarial predator rather than a prey. Then, like the big cat in New Mexico, the OCD is more likely to turn and run.



Dr. Weg, Vice President of the OCF New Jersey Affiliate, runs an independent practice called Stress and Anxiety Services of New Jersey in the East Brunswick area. He can be reached at 732-390-6694, or see his website at www.StressAndAnxiety.com.

New Support Group for Adolescents Being Formed for the Summer

My name is Laura and I am now 18 years old, but I was diagnosed with OCD when I was fourteen. My mom and I searched for support groups in the area but could not find a single one. I had been going to therapy, which helped a great deal, however, I was looking for support from kids my own age as well. I was told that OCD was not as uncommon and that I wasn't as abnormal as I once thought. I still felt pretty alone, however, and wanted to meet other people my age who were experiencing what I was. This is why I am putting together, with help from the New Jersey OCF, a support group for adolescents ages 13-19, with OCD. This is an opportunity for teens to share their stories with one another, support each other, and realize that they're not alone. If you, or anyone you know that suffers from OCD, is interested please contact me at Jerseygr16@hotmail.com or 908-461-5530.

SAVE THE DATE! FOR THE 2005 MEETINGS!

The New Jersey Affiliate of the Obsessive Compulsive Foundation will have its quarterly meetings on the following Monday evenings:

FREE! FREE! FREE!

**June 13
September 12
December 12**

Please plan to join us! Our meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be held at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in New Brunswick, NJ. We hope to see you there!

***KIDS SUPPORT GROUP BEING FORMED
IN BRIDGEWATER, NJ
BEGINNING ON MAY 11, 2005***

When: Every 2nd Wednesday of the month beginning May 11, 2005

**Where: Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center
500 North Bridge Street, Bridgewater, NJ
Across from the Somerset County Library
Meet in Richard Hall Conference Room, First Floor**

Cost: FREE and no appointment necessary

Information: Contact Barbara at (908) 229-1367

NJ OCF Newsletter Has a Subscription Fee!

After careful budget review, the NJ OCF has come to realize that in order to continue the production and mailing of the quarterly newsletter, we are going to need to charge a minimal annual Subscription Fee. This fee will directly cover the printing and mailing of each quarterly newsletter.

The Subscription Fee for 2005 is \$5.00.

In order to continue receiving the newsletter, please either bring payment to the next meeting or return the form below with payment by cash, check, or money order to:
CNJAOCF, 60 MacAfee Road, Somerset, NJ 08873-2951

We at the NJ OCF appreciate your continued support and interest in OCD.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

"Flying into the Darkness – Revisited" by Allen H. Weg, Ed.D.

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the "phenomenological experience of having OCD" through Dr. Weg's descriptive and illustrative stories. As always, Dr. Weg incorporated compassion and knowledge into his talk. NJ OCF audience members were delighted by Dr. Weg's emotional, engaging, and humorous stories, and his unique presentation style certainly brought everyone back to childhood story time hours.

Please visit the website at <http://www.njocf.org>.



Rachel Strohl, Psy.M., is a Doctoral Student at the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP), Rutgers University. She is currently completing her clinical internship at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

" Beyond Exposure and Response Prevention"

continued

an approach to the synergistic integration of drug treatment with psychological treatment, as opposed to viewing these two interventions as separate treatments.

The talk will be appropriate for mental health professionals, OC sufferers, and family members.

**Be sure to visit us
online at
www.njocf.org**

DO YOU HAVE OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER? DO YOU STILL HAVE SYMPTOMS?

We are conducting a research study of an investigational supplemental agent for individuals age 18-65, who have been treated for obsessive-compulsive disorder but still have symptoms.

All study-related procedures and evaluations are provided at no expense.

Reimbursement for participation and transportation available.

For more information and to find out if you are eligible for this study, please call:

**The Nathan Kline Institute
Outpatient Research Program
at (845) 398-2183**

ATTENTION PARENTS!

A New Tool for Parents and Guardians that have Children with OCD!

The NJ OCF has been notified of a new e-mail address in which parents and guardians can write to for more information on the treatment of OCD in children. Please send your inquiries to:
ocdhelp4kids@yahoo.com

WANT TO HAVE A SUPPORT GROUP IN YOUR AREA? WE CAN HELP!

If you look at the back of this Newsletter, you will see that there is only a small handful of support groups for OCD around the state. It is one of the goals of NJ OCF to help create more of these groups. We at NJ OCF receive several phone calls every month asking for support groups in areas of New Jersey where there are none. Northern counties and southern counties are especially devoid of groups.

If you are interested in having a group in your area, we can help. Here's how:

- 1) If you want to have a group, you need to find a place to meet. Local churches, synagogues, libraries, high schools, hospitals, and community mental health centers are good places to find free rooms. If you say you will be working with the NJ Affiliate of the OC Foundation, it might also give you some "clout."
- 2) Determine the day and time- this will in part be determined by room space availability- no more than twice a month is needed, and once a month is often a good place to start. An hour and 15 minutes or an hour and a half is usually the length.
- 3) Contact us. Call Ina Spero at 732-828-0099. We can put your name and contact number on our website and in our Newsletter. We will announce the formation of your group at our quarterly meetings. We will help to put out the word. You can also do your part by letting local mental health professionals and facilities know about the group (sometimes this means going door to door with a flyer). Decide whether this is a group only for adults, only for sufferers, or open to everybody- we recommend the latter- friends, family, and children with OCD.
- 4) Once you have a minimum number of people- 5 is enough to get started, let us know. We will give you some guidelines about how to run the group, provide you with handouts that you can give to members of the group, and answer questions that you may have regarding the mechanics of how to facilitate group discussion.- Don't worry if you've never done anything like this before. We will "hold your hand" in the early phases of the group until you feel more comfortable. WE ARE HERE TO HELP!
- 5) If you have any questions of a clinical nature regarding running or forming a group, you can phone Dr. Allen Weg at 732-390-6694.

SUPPORT GROUP IN ATLANTIC COUNTY AREA

To all who suffer from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, you are invited to attend a meeting once per month on the last Thursday night at 7:30 p.m. We will meet at the Bacharach Institute for Rehabilitation Conference Room in Pomona, NJ. The Institute is located in the same building as the Atlantic City Medical Center, Mainland Division, which is at 61 W. Jimmie Leeds Road and can easily be found by following the blue "H" signs (Hospital) on the White Horse Pike, which is also Route 30. Use the main entrance to the hospital and take the right corridor to the end. Make a right and then the 2nd left. The Conference Room is about 50 feet ahead on the right. We expect to have guest speakers from time to time, but mostly it will be a gathering of people who, like you, suffer from OCD. The dress is casual, the format is informal, and no one is expected to share if they choose not to do so. You may come and just listen to others, if you wish, and you may bring a relative, if desired. Please contact Wayne at (609) 266-3666 with any questions.

SUPPORT GROUP TO BEGIN IN LIVINGSTON, NJ

Poonem Dutte is interested in starting a Support Group in the Livingston, NJ area. Anyone interested in attending her group, please call her at (973) 535-0826.

NEW OCA SUPPORT GROUP IN MATAWAN

There is a new OCA support group that meets in Matawan, New Jersey every Sunday of the month from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Meetings will be held at the First Presbyterian Church, Room 201, 883 State Highway 34 East and Franklin Street, Matawan, NJ. For information on this support group, please contact Matt C. at (732) 331-6494.

New Support Group In Princeton Area Looks For Participants

I would like to put together a support group for parents of children with OCD, one that would meet in the Princeton area. Interested parents should contact me at griffith@princeton.edu.

SUPPORT GROUP IN BOONTON

The support group that meets in Boonton, New Jersey will now be meeting on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. For information on this support group, the phone number has changed to (973) 827-6818.

NJ OCF VIDEOTAPES

We videotape 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 NJ OCF to help defray the costs of the organization. The following are videotapes now available for purchase and pickup, or delivery:

"Red Flags, Relapse, and Recovery," Jonathan Grayson, PhD	\$15.00_____
"Families and OCD: How to Coexist," Elna Yadin, PhD	\$15.00_____
"Flying Towards the Darkness", NJ OCF First Annual Conference: Parts 1 & 2 (combined discount price)	\$25.00_____
"Flying Towards the Darkness"- Part 1 only, Allen H. Weg, EdD, NJAOCF 1st Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
"Flying Towards the Darkness"- Part 2 only: The OCD Panel, NJAOCF 1st Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
"Generalized Anxiety Disorder and OCD", David Raush, PhD	\$15.00_____
"OCD Spectrum Disorders", Nancy Soleymani, PhD	\$15.00_____
"Living With Someone With OCD...", Fred Penzel, PhD, Part I- NJ OCF 2nd Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
"The OCD Kids Panel" Part II- NJ OCF 2nd Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
NJAOCF- 2nd Annual Conference, Parts I and II	\$25.00_____
"Panic and OCD", Allen H. Weg, EdD	\$15.00_____
"Medications and OCD", Dr. Rita Newman	\$15.00_____
"OCD", Dr. William Gordon	\$15.00_____
"You, Me, and OCD: Improving Couple Relationships", Harriet Raynes-Thaler, MSW, ACSW	\$15.00_____
"Freeing Your Child from OCD", Dr. Tamar Chansky, Part I - NJ OCF 3rd Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
"The Parents Panel of Kids with OCD" Part II - NJ OCF 3rd Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
NJOCF - 3rd Annual Conference, Parts I and II	\$25.00_____
"Neurobiology of OCD," Dr. Jessice Page	\$15.00_____
"Getting Past Go", Dr. Allen H. Weg, EdD	\$15.00_____
"Hoarding", Dr. Dena Rabinowitz	\$15.00_____
"Improving Outcomes in Treatment for OCD", Deborah Roth Ledley, Ph.D	\$15.00_____
"Using Scripts to Counter the Voice of OCD", Jonathan Grayson, Ph.D Part I - NJOCF 5th Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
"Panel of Drs. Grayson, Springer, & Weg" Part II - NJ OCF 5th Annual Conference	\$15.00_____
NJOCF - 5th Annual Conference, Parts I and II	\$25.00_____

Add \$3.95 each for S & H: _____ @ \$3.95 ea _____ Your Total cost: _____

Send check or money order, made out CNJAOCF, and mail to: NJ OCF, 60 MacAfee Rd, Somerset, New Jersey 08873-2951
 Questions? Call Ina Spero at 732-828-0099

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

DIRECTIONS TO OUR MEETING LOCATION!

Our next quarterly meeting, which will take place on *Monday evening, June 13, at 7:00 p.m.* The location is: **Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, New Brunswick, NJ, in the Medical Education Building, Room 108A.**

From the New Jersey Turnpike:

Take Exit #9 (New Brunswick) and proceed on Route 18 North, approximately 2 miles to the exit Route 27 South (Princeton Exit). Follow Route 27 South (Albany Street) to the 4th light (New Brunswick train station on left). Make a right onto Easton Avenue. Proceed one block and make a left at the next light onto Somerset Street. Proceed one block to the first light and make a left onto Little Albany Street. The hospital is on the right side and the NJ Cancer Institute is on the left side. Pass the Emergency Room entrance and the hospital's Parking Deck on your right hand side. (Parking Deck fee: \$1 per hour). To get to the meeting, in Room 108A, follow the directions under Medical Education Building.

From Southern New Jersey:

Take Route 18 North to Route 27 South (Princeton exit). Follow Route 27 South (Albany Street) for 4 lights (New Brunswick train station on left). Make a right onto Easton Avenue. Proceed one block and make a left at the next light onto Somerset Street. Proceed one block to the first light and make a left onto Little Albany Street. The hospital is on the right side and the NJ Cancer Institute is on the left side. Pass the Emergency Room entrance and the hospital's Parking Deck on your right hand side. (Parking Deck fee: \$1 per hour). To get to the meeting, in Room 108A, follow the directions under Medical Education Building.

From Route 1 (North or South):

Take Route 18 North to Route 27 South (Princeton Exit). Follow the Route 27 South (Albany Street) directions above. To get to the meeting, in Room 108A, follow the directions under Medical Education Building.

From Route 287:

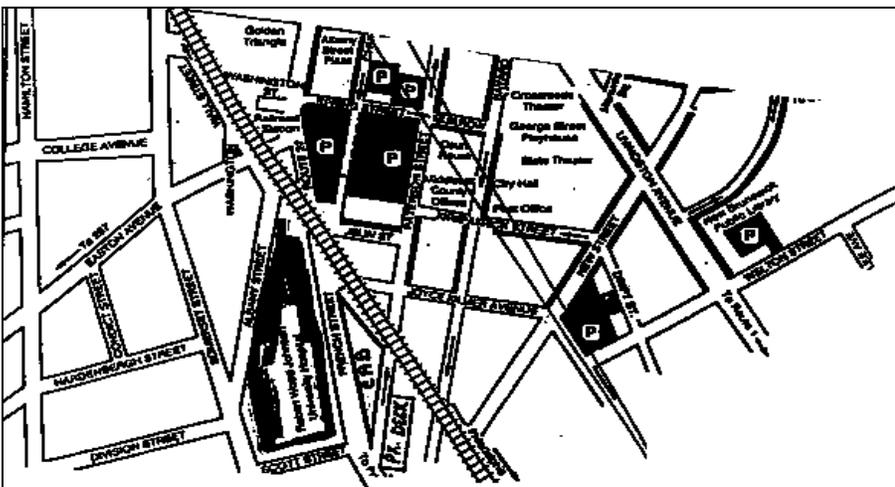
Take Exit #10 (formerly Exit #6) "Route 527/Easton Ave./New Brunswick" and continue on Easton Avenue for approximately 6 miles. Make a right onto Somerset Street. The hospital is on the right side and the NJ Cancer Institute is on the left side. Pass the Emergency Room entrance and the hospital's Parking Deck on your right hand side. To get to the meeting, in Room 108A, follow the directions under Medical Education Building.

From the Garden State Parkway:

Exit Route 1 South. Proceed approximately 9 miles to Route 18 North. Take Route 18 North to Route 27 South (Princeton Exit). Follow Route 27 South (Albany Street) to the 4th light (New Brunswick train station on left). Make a right onto Easton Avenue. Proceed one block and make a left at the next light onto Somerset Street. Proceed one block to the first light and make a left onto Little Albany Street. The hospital is on the right side and the NJ Cancer Institute is on the left side. Pass the Emergency Room entrance and the hospital's Parking Deck on your right hand side. To get to the meeting, in Room 108A, follow the directions under Medical Education Building.

Medical Education Building (MEB):

Take the hospital's parking deck elevator to the first floor and upon exiting make a right. Walk across the Arline & Henry Schwartzman Courtyard to the double glass doors; the sign above will read "Medical Education Building". For Room #108-A, make an immediate right and the room is on your left-hand side.



Parking is also available by the Clinical Academic Building (CAB)!

Parking at the CAB is provided by the New Brunswick Parking Authority in the Paterson St. Parking Deck (across from the CAB). To park in this deck you have to access it via Paterson St. From Rt. 287N, make right onto Paterson St. From Rt. 287S, make a left onto Paterson. From the Turnpike, take exit 9 to Rt. 18N, exit at Rt. 27S (towards Princeton), pass the train station and CAB is on left. After it, make sharp left onto Paterson St. Parking deck is on right. For Rt. 1N or S follow directions above from Rt. 18. For Garden State Parkway, follow directions above from Turnpike.

