



## Agenda

### ***Deconstructing Anxiety: A Powerful New Approach to Understanding and Treating Anxiety*** **Todd Pressman, Ph.D.**

- 9:00 - 9:10 Welcome and Introduction
- 9:10 – 10:30 The creation story revisited -understanding the birth of fear in the psyche  
Laying out the “Deconstructing Anxiety” model:
- Each of us lands on a particular core fear in childhood
  - Description of the 5 core fears, universal themes of lost
  - The first contact with fear is intolerable-we must restore our original innocence
  - We find our chief defense as a way of protecting us from the core fear
- 10:30 -10:40 Break
- 10:40 -12:10 Laying out the “Deconstructing Anxiety” model (continued):
- We develop secondary defenses, adaptations of the chief defense to the various circumstances we encounter in life
  - The core fear/chief defense dynamic becomes the foundation of our personality; we interpret and respond to all circumstances through that lens
  - All defenses backfire, actually creating the anxiety they are designed to protect us from
  - We therefore employ our defenses even more rigorously and the whole cycle spins out of control, creating an anxiety disorder
- 12:10 – 12:50 Lunch
- 12:50 - 2: 20 New strategies for diagnosing the sources of suffering:
- *Digging for Gold*: Finding the core fear
  - *Who Are You Really?*- Uncovering your chief defense
  - Analyzing secondary defenses
- New strategies for resolving suffering:
- The way to release fear is to “do the opposite” of the chief defense
  - *The Witness*: Enhance Vipassana (Mindfulness) technique
- 2:20 - 2:30 Break
- 2:30 – 4:00 New strategies for resolving suffering (continued):
- *The Alchemist*: Asking “What happens next?”
  - *The Warrior’s Stance*: Active “not doing”
  - A subtle defense: Letting go of the resistance to resistance
  - Vision Questing (the key to “Deconstructing Anxiety”)