Traumatic Disfigurement: Engaging the Unseen Realities within Body Dysmorphic Disorder
Presented by
Johanna Malone, PhD
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Location
DoubleTree by Hilton
Deerfield Beach
100 Fairway Drive
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441

Directions:
From the north or south, take I-95 to exit 42, Hillsboro Blvd (FL-810 E). Go East. Continue east on Hillsboro Blvd for half a mile. Turn left at the light into Fairway Drive/Hilton Way. The DoubleTree is located on your right. Ample parking is available

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This program, when attended in its entirety, is offered for 3 CE credits.

Please address questions or concerns to Emily Krestow, Ph.D., LMHC at 954-929-4199.
Patients diagnosed with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) are often consumed with distress about one or multiple parts of their bodies that they perceive as flawed. The impact of these thoughts and feelings can prevent engagement in relationships and meaningful pursuits. In order to meet criteria for this disorder the perceived bodily flaw must be invisible or barely noticeable to an outside observer, which poses unique challenges in the therapeutic setting. Drawing upon clinical examples, this presentation applies a comparative psychoanalytic lens to working with patients diagnosed with BDD in order to guide formulation and resulting intervention. It is hypothesized that these patients experience a form of “traumatic disfigurement” in the bridges between psyche and soma. As part of intervention the analyst must become dyadically immersed within the reality of the patient’s experience in order to more truly see the patient.

To introduce this topic, the existing research and theory on the development and presentation of BDD will be outlined. BDD will be explored in the context of general bodily expressiveness, which often exists in non-verbal realms often outside of consciousness. The presentation will highlight ways in which bodily perceptions are often clung to as forms of loyalty and attacks on both internalized objects and actual attachment figures. The cost and value of the bodily symptom is regularly tied to early traumatic needs for love that persist as very real “unseen” open wounds in patient’s life.