

New Jersey Psychiatric Provider Explains When Stress Becomes an Anxiety Disorder

As Fall brings renewed routines, ANK Behavioral Health encourages New Jersey adults to recognize when anxiety begins interfering with everyday life

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Stress is a normal response to demanding circumstances, but when worry persists after the immediate stressor has passed, becomes difficult to control, or begins interfering with everyday life, it may be time to look beyond ordinary stress.

As Fall brings many adults back into more structured work, school, family, and social routines, ANK Behavioral Health, a telehealth psychiatric practice serving adults throughout New Jersey, is highlighting the distinction between situational stress and anxiety symptoms that may warrant a professional evaluation.



Sometimes the hardest part is recognizing when everyday stress has started to feel like something more.

“

Sometimes the most useful first step is simply understanding what you are experiencing and whether it has reached a point where additional support could make a difference.”

*Alyssa Killion, MSN, APN,
PMHNP-BC*

“Stress is something almost everyone experiences, especially when life becomes demanding or uncertain,” said Alyssa Killion, MSN, APN, PMHNP-BC, founder of ANK Behavioral Health. “The important question is whether the anxiety begins to feel persistent, difficult to control, or out of proportion to what is happening around you. When it starts affecting sleep, concentration, relationships, work, or your ability to function normally, that is worth taking seriously.”

Stress and Anxiety Are Not Always the Same

Stress generally develops in response to an identifiable external situation, such as a demanding workload, financial concern, major life change, relationship difficulty, or other immediate

challenge. It may ease when the situation changes or is resolved.

Anxiety can be different. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, anxiety disorders involve more than occasional worry or fear. Anxiety may persist even when there is no immediate threat and can interfere with daily activities.

For adults trying to determine whether what they are experiencing is simply a stressful period or something that deserves further attention, several patterns can provide useful context:

- The worry does not seem to switch off. Persistent worry that continues even after a stressful situation has passed may deserve closer attention.
- The worry becomes difficult to control. Feeling unable to stop or manage anxious thoughts can be an important distinction from ordinary situational stress.
- Anxiety begins affecting daily functioning. Changes in concentration, sleep, work performance, relationships, or other everyday responsibilities can signal that anxiety is becoming more disruptive.
- The physical effects continue. Anxiety can be accompanied by symptoms such as muscle tension, restlessness, fatigue, headaches, stomach discomfort, or difficulty sleeping.
- Avoidance starts shaping daily life. Regularly avoiding situations because of fear or anxiety can reinforce the problem and limit a person's normal activities.

"These signs do not automatically mean someone has an anxiety disorder," Killion said. "There can be many reasons a person may experience anxiety, and understanding the full picture is important. A psychiatric evaluation can help determine what is actually happening rather than assuming that every period of stress requires medication or a specific diagnosis."

When Persistent Worry May Point to Generalized Anxiety Disorder



When stress starts affecting focus, rest, or everyday life, it may be worth taking a closer look.



Making space to pause and reflect can help us notice when everyday stress may be becoming something more.

Generalized anxiety disorder, or GAD, is one example of an anxiety disorder that can sometimes be mistaken for ordinary stress.

The National Institute of Mental Health describes GAD as excessive anxiety and worry about a variety of everyday concerns that occurs more days than not for at least six months and is difficult to control. Diagnosis also involves additional symptoms, such as restlessness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, or sleep problems.

That does not mean someone should attempt to diagnose themselves based on a checklist.

Instead, persistent symptoms can be a reason to start a conversation with a qualified mental health professional.

“People often become accustomed to functioning while anxious,” Killion said. “Someone may continue going to work, meeting deadlines, taking care of their family, and appearing fine on the outside while internally feeling overwhelmed or constantly on edge. Functioning does not necessarily mean that anxiety is not affecting quality of life.”

An Evaluation Can Help Separate Stress From Something More Persistent

ANK Behavioral Health approaches psychiatric care by starting with a comprehensive understanding of the individual's symptoms, history, functioning, and concerns. The practice offers comprehensive psychiatric evaluations with longer initial appointments designed to allow time for assessment and diagnostic clarity.

Treatment is not automatically centered on medication. ANK describes its approach as conservative and evidence-based, with medication management integrated with psychotherapy, patient education, and therapeutic support when appropriate.

For adults who are already wondering whether medication may be part of their treatment conversation, ANK also provides an online Medication Management Quiz as an educational starting point:

Medication Management Quiz: <https://ankbh.com/medication-management-assessment/>

The quiz is intended as an educational resource and does not replace an individualized psychiatric evaluation.

Telehealth Makes Psychiatric Evaluation Available Across New Jersey

ANK Behavioral Health provides psychiatric care to adults throughout New Jersey through secure telehealth appointments. The practice's current services include comprehensive psychiatric evaluations, medication management with integrated psychotherapy, and statewide telepsychiatry.

Initial evaluations are typically 60–90 minutes, with follow-up appointments generally lasting 30–45 minutes. ANK emphasizes diagnostic clarity, patient education, and treatment plans that are explained clearly rather than relying on rushed medication checks.

“Getting help does not mean that you have failed to manage stress on your own,” Killion said. “Sometimes the most useful first step is simply understanding what you are experiencing and whether it has reached a point where additional support could make a difference.”

Adults who are experiencing persistent anxiety, difficulty controlling worry, or changes in sleep, concentration, mood, relationships, or daily functioning can speak with a qualified healthcare provider about whether an evaluation is appropriate.

ANK Behavioral Health serves adults across New Jersey through telehealth. More information about psychiatric evaluations and services is available at <https://ankbh.com/>.

About ANK Behavioral Health

ANK Behavioral Health is a New Jersey telehealth psychiatric practice founded by Alyssa Killion, MSN, APN, PMHNP-BC. The practice provides psychiatric care for adults throughout New Jersey, including comprehensive psychiatric evaluations, medication management with integrated psychotherapy, and telepsychiatry. ANK emphasizes thoughtful evaluation, diagnostic clarity, patient education, and conservative, evidence-based prescribing.

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