

I'M MORE THAN MY OCD: PUTTING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

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OBJECTIVES

- Sufferers will be able to identify overlooked characteristics of their identity from a more rational, neutral and/or positive perspective
- Attendees will be able to differentiate between being "an obsessive-compulsive person" vs "a person with obsessive-compulsive disorder"
- Participants will leave this workshop with a personal plan to apply the techniques they have learned to their daily lives

WHAT IS OCD?

A. Presence of **obsessions, compulsions, or both**:

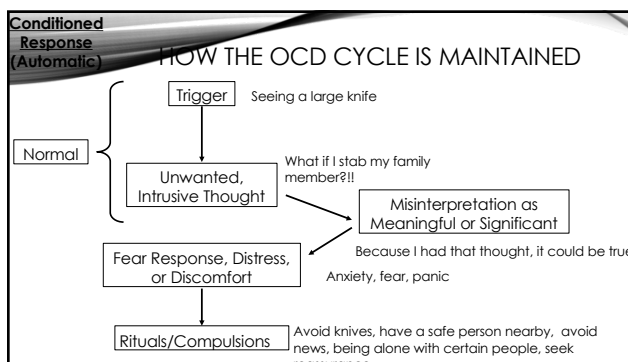
- **Obsessions** = recurrent **unwanted intrusive thoughts**, images, doubts, etc.
- Obsessional thoughts **cause anxiety and/or distress**

B. **Compulsions**: attempts to ignore, avoid, suppress such thoughts or neutralize them with some other thought or behavior

- The **purpose** of the compulsions/rituals is to **reduce anxiety and/or distress**

C. The obsessions or compulsions are **time consuming** and **cause distress or impairment**

(DSM-5, 2013)



WHAT OCD IS NOT

- OCPD (ego syntonic)
- "I'M SO OCD!": NOT a desirable personality trait
- About being very clean or orderly "Neat Freak"
- Pleasurable
- A chosen behavioral pattern
- Schizophrenia or a delusional disorder (regardless of the content of the obsessions)
- Something that makes a person dangerous or violent (polar opposite)
- NOT a condition involving lack of self-control of emotions & behaviors

COMMON OCD THEMES

- Contamination
- Losing control
- Harm
- Perfectionism,
- Unwanted sexual thoughts
- Religious obsessions
- Health
- Superstitious ideas

(Clark & Radomsky, 2014)

WHAT THEY MEAN ABOUT YOU

- Over 35 years of studies show that intrusive thoughts are universal (Rachman & deSilva, 1978, Radomsky, et al, 2014)
- Obsessional thoughts are ego-dystonic: the obsessional content is incongruent with your personal belief system-it's not the type of thought you'd expect yourself to have (Abramowitz, 2006)
- The thoughts hit where it hurts: They scare you because you care
- The thoughts are likely brought on by life events, concerns, personal interests, external stimuli often trigger intrusions (i.e., knives, guns, scissors, etc.) (Abramowitz, 2006)

YOUR PERSONAL IDENTITY: HOW IT MAY BE IMPACTED

STIGMA IMPACTS YOUR IDENTITY:

Public stigma-the general population's beliefs & stereotypes about OCD

- What are some classic stereotypes that you've heard about OCD?

(Chasson, et al, 2018)

YOUR PERSONAL IDENTITY: HOW IT MAY BE IMPACTED CONTINUED

- **Self-stigma**-when you internalize these public views

(Chasson et al, 2018)

- Consider whether these views have impacted you

COMMON CORE BELIEFS

- Core beliefs are central ideas about the self

Examples:

POSITIVE

I am basically a good person
I am likeable
I am pretty competent at what I do
I am a strong person
I am thoughtful

NEGATIVE

I am defective/crazy
I am unlovable
I am not good enough
I'm weak
I am inadequate

(Wilhelm & Steketee, 2006)

YOU ARE MORE THAN OCD: HOW TO DEFEAT SELF-STIGMA

- I) Self-Compassion
- II) Cultivate your personal strengths
- III) Challenge negative core beliefs
- IV) Live your life in accordance with your life values instead of OCD
- V) Live a productive and fulfilling life despite OCD

SELF-COMPASSION

"Self-compassion entails being kind and understanding toward oneself in instances of pain or failure rather than being harshly self-critical; perceiving one's experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than seeing them as isolating; and holding painful thoughts and feelings in mindful awareness rather than over-identifying with them."

(Neff, et al 2006)

SELF-COMPASSION CONTINUED

- Healthy form of self-acceptance/healthy attitude toward oneself
- It involves being kind and understanding toward yourself when you are suffering or feeling inadequate
- Approaching painful feelings with self-compassion is linked to a happier, more optimistic mindset and is associated with increased psychological well-being

(Neff, et al 2006)

SELF-COMPASSION EXERCISE

"HOW WOULD YOU TREAT A FRIEND?"

DISCUSSION

CULTIVATE YOUR PERSONAL STRENGTHS!

- Exercise: 50 Neutral or Positive Statements

*Created by Dr. Jeff Szymanski, Executive Director of IOCDF

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT PERSON?

PUTTING THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE:
DOES THAT PERSON YOU JUST DESCRIBED
DESERVE TO BE BULLIED BY OCD?

How are you going to beat the bully and achieve the life you want to live?

YOUR PLAN FOR STAYING TRUE TO YOU

EXERCISE: "My Plan for Staying True to Me Instead of OCD"

***RECREATE LIFE UNDER YOUR OWN TERMS, NOT OCD'S TERMS!**

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- Having OCD does not mean that you are an "obsessive-compulsive person"
- Sometimes we feel as though we are alone in our suffering
- Public stigma often causes us to internalize those views
- Self-stigma can negatively impact our core beliefs and make us feel even worse
- You are a whole person with a unique set of qualities
- EMBRACE that person

THANK YOU

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