



~~CANCEL~~ CULTURE and OCD

Justin Hughes, LPC
Jenna Overbaugh, LPC
Nathan Peterson, LCSW
Amanda Petrik-Gardner, LCPC, LPC, LIMHP

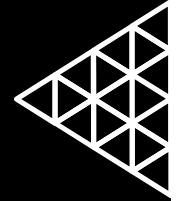
Cancel Culture in a nutshell:

YOU GET CANCELED! YOU GET CANCELED!



EVERYBODY GETS CANCELED!!

What is
Cancel
Culture?

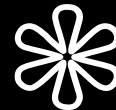




~~CANCEL CULTURE~~

A trend of publicly shaming and ostracizing a person, business or product due to offensive or inappropriate views or actions.

Personal Examples



Justin

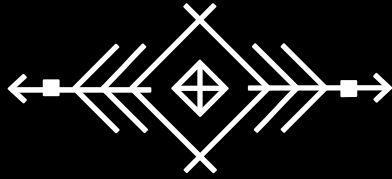
Faith & OCD Conference
glitch

Amanda

Facebook Fiasco

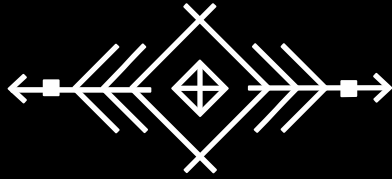
Nate

YouTube & POCD



~~OCD?~~

The fear of cancel culture has become an easy target
for OCD to latch onto.



As humans, we intrinsically want to be included and to feel part of a community.

The concept of social exile, disappointing others, and generally being *CANCELED* can evoke huge fears that provoke us to the core.

Social media and other modern advances have made cancel culture feel more possible.

And we know how OCD feasts on possibility.

Obsessions

- Fear of being canceled due to comments about:
 - Race*
 - Sexuality*
 - Gender*
 - Disabilities*
 - Neurodiversity*
- False memories that you did something offensive
- Fearful that something you said in the past would get you canceled now
- Fear of posting on social media
- Fear of advocacy work and content creation





Obsessions Might Sound Like:



What if I did/said
something
offensive?



What if I said
something racist
or homophobic?



What if I didn't
use the correct
language?



What if something
I did 20 years ago,
comes back to
hurt me?



What if I did something and don't remember?



Common Compulsions

Checking (emails, texts, social media)

Mental reviewing (actions/words)

Comparing (self to others, beliefs, actions)

Reassurance (from others, online research)

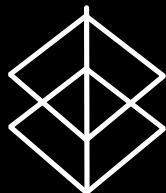
Avoidance

Rehearsing what you will say/do

Challenging or arguing with thoughts

Giving too much attention to the thoughts

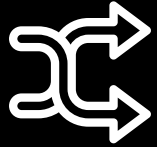
~~CANCEL~~
~~CULTURE:~~
CORE
FEARS



What would it mean to be canceled?

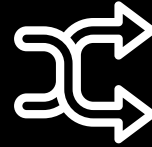
- Lose everyone that loves me
- Lose my ability to live (job, money)
- Feel miserable and shamed forever
- Social exile

Difference from actual racism/homophobia/ sexism/ableism



Ego-dystonic

These thoughts go against
our actual beliefs and
character



Unwanted

These thoughts are
unwanted and not
intentionally created



Distressing

Obsessions cause anxiety.

Treatment Options

**Different Content,
Same OCD Treatments**

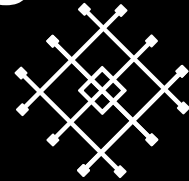




Exposure & Response Prevention

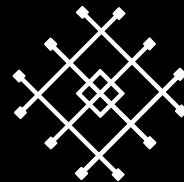
- Gradually confront fears while decreasing compulsions
- Can do so in a way that's challenging but manageable
- Values based exposures
- Don't have to actually push you to get canceled in order to expose you to the fear

Exposure Examples

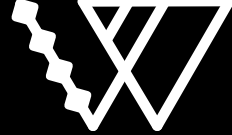


- Exposures to content:
 - Make a mistake/typo in a social media post
 - Reading articles about individuals who have been canceled
 - Worst case scenario stories about past mistakes
- Exposures to core fear:
 - Imaginal script about losing your job or loved one
 - Doing things (within reason, that you value) that may lead to disappointment from others

Response Prevention Strategies



- Resisting
- Reducing
- Postponing
- Undoing
- Mindfulness
- Non-engagement responses
- Changing routines
- Messing with OCD's pattern any 🙌 way 🙌 you 🙌 can



Acceptance & Commitment Therapy

Opening yourself to internal experiences and
committing back to a valued lifestyle

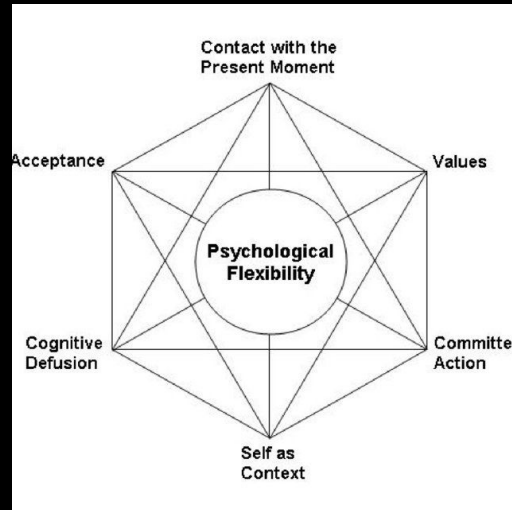


Acceptance & Commitment Therapy

Live in the here-and-now

Allow obsessions to be present

Create distance between you and the thoughts



Identify how you genuinely want to live

Behave in a manner that honors your values

Become an observer of your internal experiences

When ~~cancel~~ culture fears turn scrupulous?



- Scrupulosity is a subtype of OCD focused on the moral, spiritual, or religious aspects
- Cancel culture can merge themes quickly, looking like:
 - Am I a bad person?
 - Will God reject me?
 - Have I trampled that person's humanity?
- Scrupulous cancel culture obsessions transcend a fear of harm or negative consequences and have a religious/faith/moral flavor to them
- Compulsions can lead to more clergy involvement, compulsive prayer, or other spiritual practices done out of fear that can go unnoticed



Final

Thoughts



Questions

