

Helping Your Family Member with OCD Manage Anger & Disruptive Behavior

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Our Talk

Anger & OCD

- 01.** Prevalence, function, impairment, general research

Anger in Adults

- 03.** Strategic pressure, contingencies, communication, expectations

Anger in Kids

- 02.** Emotional literacy, DBT skills, SPACE, accommodation, parent training

Medications

- 04.** Psychopharmacological intervention


Anger & OCD

How many of you have felt frustrated by a loved one's behavior and lack of response to logic?

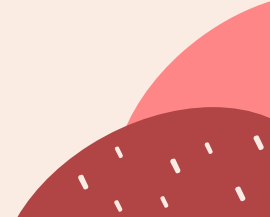
Imagine how it feels to be the one with OCD...

- To know that it's irrational & feel compelled in spite of this
- Or to NOT know that it's irrational and feel angry at others not following safe rules
- To mobilize against a threat
- To be overwhelmed with the injustice of having these strong emotions and urges





Anger is the emotional response that we have to an external or internal event perceived as *a threat*, a violation or an injustice.



Anger & OCD

Kids with OCD, relative to those without mental health concerns:

- Have more rage episodes
- Engage in more coercive/disruptive behaviors

Adults with OCD, relative to those without mental health concerns:

- Have higher state (in the moment) and trait (stable) levels of anger
- Anger expression may be higher or lower, can be toward self or others
- Anger suppression may be present as well (pot boiling over)
- Have higher anger rumination (thinking about the causes of anger)

Anger in the Family

“After I’m angry, I feel like a bad kid. I tell Mom and Dad sorry over and over even though I know it’s my OCD. Then I get mad again because they tell me to stop doing compulsions.”

“I feel awful after I snap at my husband. He does his best to keep my OCD calm, but then when he messes up, I unleash on him. And then I feel broken for acting that way.”



Anger & The Family

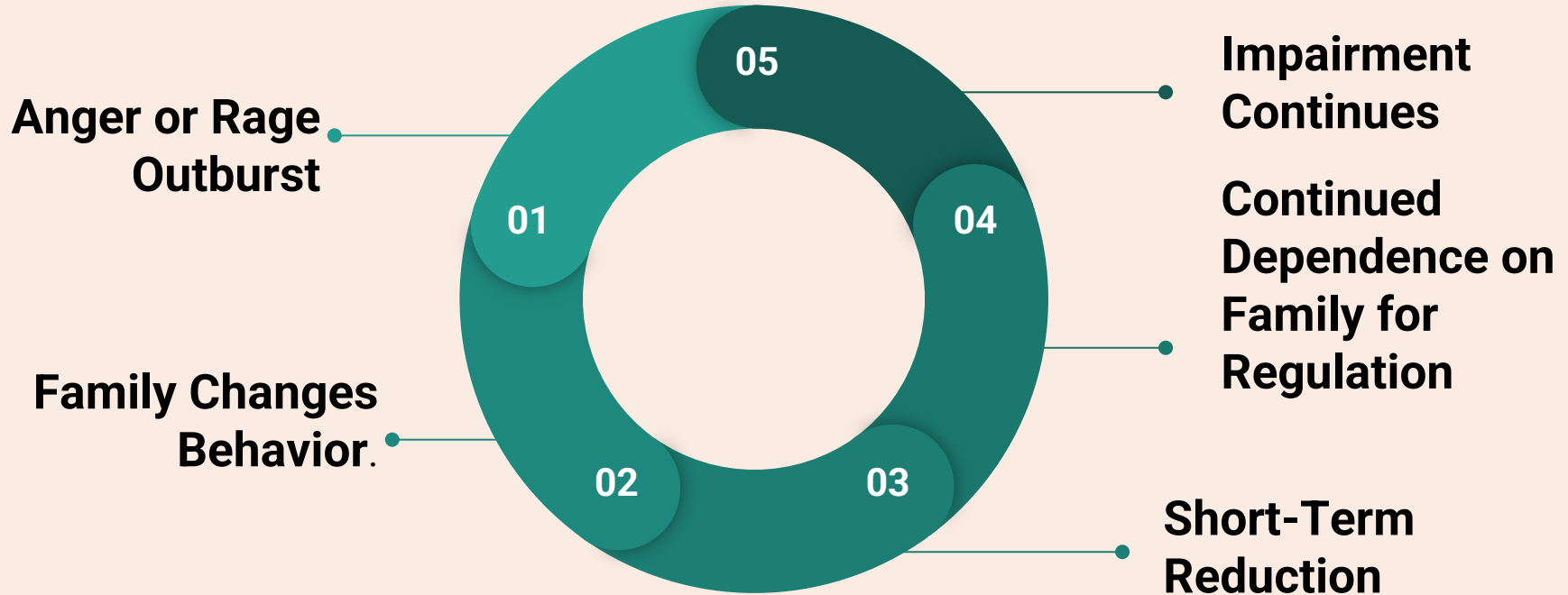


Accommodation: any changes made by family members to help their loved ones reduce or prevent distress

Examples with anger:

- Avoiding going into family member's room to avoid unsafe altercations
- Saying goodnight just so with child to avoid tantrum
- Allowing family member not to take on responsibilities that provoke frustration and verbal aggression
- Keeping phone location services on to avoid anger from spouse

Anger & The Family



Anger in Kids



Affective Labeling Skills:

- Kids often need to learn what anger feels like in the body
- Labeling is a part of emotion regulation, can change physiological reactions
- “I can tell you’re angry because you’re hitting the wall. Let’s find something else for you to hit so that it’s not hurting you.”

Flipped lid metaphor - reasoning is not accessible while anger is in the driver’s seat!

- Coping corner
- Taking space

Anger in Kids

DBT Skills

Dialectics: Yes, you can be angry AND you can make a good choice.



- Mindfulness - being in the moment without judgment
- Distress Tolerance - reacting to strong emotions and making good choices
- Interpersonal Effectiveness - assertiveness without aggression
- Emotion regulation - practices to buffer kids from emotional extremes

Anger in Kids

Behavioral Strategies: Tough love is still love

What it is NOT:

- Punishing kids for having OCD or showing symptoms
- Teaching them to not show strong feelings like anger or frustration

What it IS:

- Teaching that we have *choices* in response to strong feelings
- Demonstrating importance of respecting others even when we are upset / learning how our actions impact others
- Reinforcing and rewarding adaptive coping skills

Examples:

Behavior Plans/
Behavior Contracts
Sticker charts
Token-based systems
Time-outs
Job Cards
Selective attention

Beware the
extinction
burst!

Anger in Kids

Modeling: Teaching by example

Provide examples when you felt your temperature rising and coped effectively...even better, show them in the moment!

Dealing with Safety Concerns

Consider spots for time outs or cool downs that are going to be safe - for your kiddo and anyone else around!

The case of Molly

Anger in Adults

Behavioral Contingencies: Not just for kids!

Consider - what is motivating to your loved one?
Your love isn't conditional, but your time & attention can have (appropriate) terms.

Strategic Pressure: SPACE grown up
Particularly appropriate for adult children still dependent on loved ones in some way

Use your words: Communicate to de-escalate anger

Focus on your shared goals - Collaboration, not confrontation!

DEAR MAN: Describe, Express, Assert, Reinforce



Anger in Adults

Case Presentation: Howard

- White, cisgender man, aged 42
- MFA in Creative Writing, currently unemployed
- Living with elderly parents
- Contamination, harm, hoarding, and just right symptoms
- Clutter presenting hazards in the home
- Culture of secrecy about symptoms outside of the home

Interventions:

- Dialogue about helpful and unhelpful behaviors
- Support people - brother involved
- Parental involvement in therapy

Medications

SE to complete



Thank you for your time!



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Here you can talk a bit
about this person