

Supporting Yourself through Exposure and Response Prevention

Elena Fasan, LCSW
Kevin Foss, LMFT
Kelley Franke, LMFT
Lauren Rosen, LMFT

Supporting Yourself through Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP)

- Self-compassion
- Channeling your inner authoritative parent
- Motivational Interviewing
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Values
- Supporting yourself through community

Self-Compassion

“Self compassion is the simple process of turning compassion inward...We give ourselves support and encouragement rather than being cold and judgemental when challenges and difficulty arise in our lives.”

- Dr. Kristen Neff

Why Self-compassion?

- OCD is full of self-criticism and judgement
- How we talk to ourselves matters
 - Scientific research has shown that self-criticism, self-blaming and self-punishment activate the nervous system's threat detection, signaling your brain to send even more stress hormones throughout your body and resulting in even more anxiety, panic, and hypervigilance (Gilbert 2010).
 - Self-compassion is one of the most powerful sources of coping and resilience we have available to us, radically improving our mental and physical health (Neff 2012)
 - High levels of self-criticism decrease the outcomes of standard therapies (Rector et al. 2000)

Misconceptions on Self-Compassion

Self-Compassion is not:

- Self-reassurance
- Permission to do compulsions
- Delegating compulsions to others
- It's not letting yourself off the hook

What is Self-Compassion?

Basics:

1. Mindful awareness
2. Common humanity
3. Self-Kindness

Self-Compassion Exposure and Response Prevention (SC-ERP)

1. Intentionally connecting with your compassionate self
2. Self-compassionate exposure and response prevention
3. Nurture your uncertainty and discomfort with self-compassion
4. Reflect, Celebrate and repeat

How to Practice Self-Compassion

“I notice I am feeling discouraged because I’m finding it difficult doing this exposure (Mindful awareness). I bet other people who live with OCD struggle with this (common-humanity). I am doing a great job by noticing my OCD without giving into them. I am going to invite myself to do some ERP right now and then reward myself by watching my favorite show (self-compassion).”

Channeling Your Inner Authoritative Parent

- Embracing the principles and practices of the most effective parenting style
- Parenting yourself in a kind but firm way

Parenting Style

Parenting styles based on two dimensions:

1. Level of demandingness: Authority, expectations
2. Level of responsiveness: Affection, supportiveness

Also defined by being either:

- Child centered OR
- Parent centered

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology*, 4, 1–103.

Baumrind, D. (1989). Rearing competent children. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Child Development Today and Tomorrow* (pp. 349–378). Jossey-Bass.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.) & E. M. Hetherington (Vol. Ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology: Vol. IV. Socialization, Personality and Social Development* (4th Ed., pp. 1-101). Wiley.

Four Parenting Styles

Four parenting styles

1. Authoritative
2. Authoritarian
3. Permissive or Indulgent
4. Neglectful or Indifferent

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology*, 4, 1–103.

Baumrind, D. (1989). Rearing competent children. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Child Development Today and Tomorrow* (pp. 349–378). Jossey-Bass.

Maccoby, E. E., & Martin, J. A. (1983). Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In P. H. Mussen (Series Ed.) & E. M. Hetherington (Vol. Ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology: Vol. IV. Socialization, Personality and Social Development* (4th Ed., pp. 1-101). Wiley.

Parenting Styles

Authoritative

- Democratic, respectful, child centered
- Firm behavioral guidelines, monitoring
- Involved, supportive
- Collaborative, communicative
- Warm, accepting, nurturing

Authoritarian

- Autocratic, rigid, parent centered
- Strict, expectation of obedience
- Punitive punishment
- Open communication discouraged
- Lacking in warmth

Indulgent

- Passive, appeasing, child centered
- Few rules, lack of discipline
- Blurred roles, overinvolved
- Communicative, avoid confrontation
- Warm, accepting, nurturing

Indifferent

- Passive, dismissive, parent centered
- Lack of supervision
- Absent, withdrawn
- Poor or limited communication
- Detached, distant

Reflection:
How are you parenting
yourself during ERP?

Is it working for you?

Examples of being:

1. Authoritative
2. Authoritarian
3. Indulgent
4. Indifferent

Authoritative Parenting During ERP

Demandingness:

- **High but reasonable expectations**
- **Firm behavioral guidelines**
- **Monitor practice and progress**
- **Stay involved**

Authoritative Parenting During ERP

Responsiveness/Supportiveness:

- **Respect for self**
- **Flexibility**
- **Warmth and loving kindness**
- **Acceptance of ups and down**
- **Trust process and capacity for change**
- **Verbal give and take with supporters**

Motivation



ERP Efficacy

- Studies show ERP is
 - 71% effective for **treatment completers**.
 - 52% when including those who do not complete treatment.

Study Using Motivational Interviewing with ERP

- Study using Motivational Interviewing for treatment non-completers
 - 86% of people in the study undertook treatment (compared to 20% of controls)
 - 50% dropped out
 - Those who completed had comparable outcomes to initial treatment completers.

Maltby, N., & Tolin, D. F. (2005). A brief motivational intervention for treatment-refusing OCD patients. *Cognitive Behavior Therapy*, 34 (3), 176–184.

Motivational Interviewing

A “method for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence.”
Miller & Rollnick (2013)

Reference: Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Ambivalence

“Most people who need to make a change are ambivalent about doing so. They see both reasons to change and reasons not to. They want to change and they don’t want to, all at the same time. It is a normal human experience.”

Reference: Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Language that Ignores Ambivalence

- I don't want to...
- I should...
- I'm supposed to...
- I have to...
- I'm sorry I didn't...

Power Struggles

“Argue for one side and the ambivalent person is likely to take up and defend the opposite...there is nothing pathological about such responses. It is the normal nature of ambivalence and debate.”

Reference: Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Power Struggles

“motivation to change should be elicited from people, not imposed on them”

Reference: Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Eliciting Change Talk

1. 'Why would you want to make this change?'
2. 'How might you go about it in order to succeed?'
3. 'What are the three best reasons for you to do it?'
4. 'How important is it for you make this change, and why?'

Reference: Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Eliciting Change Talk

Desire

- I want to...
- I would like to...

Ability

- I can...
- I am able to...
- I could...

Reason

- I would probably be more present.
- I would be free from all of these compulsions!

Need

- I need to...
- I have to...
- I must...

Reference: Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

What are values?

From the perspective of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT):

“Values are your heart’s deepest desires for how you want to behave as a human being. Values are not about what you want to get or achieve; they are about how you want to behave or act on an ongoing basis; how you want to treat yourself, others, the world around you.”

- Russ Harris

Why focus on values?

- Allowing the qualities you want to embody and the person you aspire to be to dictate your behavior breeds contentment, independent of outside circumstances.

Values and Exposure & Response Prevention

- Values can inform the exposure we decide to do.
- Examples:
 - Pedophilia-themed OCD
 - Harm OCD
 - Contamination OCD

Supporting Yourself Through Community



Contributors To Isolation

Fear of judgement

Shame

Embarrassment

No useful support from others

Lack of therapist/ reasonable help for mental health



Supporting Yourself Through Community

Epidemic of Isolation

“ The longer a person is disconnected, the easier it is for them to stop believing that others have their interests in mind or that it’s possible to find common cause.”

Potentially significant physical impact:

- Half of people reporting measurable levels of loneliness
- 29% increased risk of heart disease
- 32% increased risk of stroke
- 50% increased risk of developing dementia

<https://www.npr.org/2023/05/02/1173418268/loneliness-connection-mental-health-dementia-surgeon-general>

Supporting Yourself Through Community

Epidemic of Isolation

Loneliness looks different:

- Going inward
 - Depression
 - Rumination
 - Reduced interests in activities
 - Avoidance of responsibilities
- Going outward
 - Irritable
 - Angry
 - Violent

<https://www.npr.org/2023/05/02/1173418268/loneliness-connection-mental-health-dementia-surgeon-general>

Facing Vulnerability And Building Trust

It's your story

Start small

Be picky

Not everyone gets the same information

Let people support you, and be supportive of others

Your identity is what you say it is



Supporting Others Supports Yourself

Makes you feel good

Reinforces a focus on progress, positivity

Lets you exercise compassion and support, which is the blueprint for yourself

Serves as a reminder to yourself of the tools/ techniques as you remind others

Keeps you connected to the common goal

Gives a sense of purpose

“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.” -Winston Churchill

“ There can be no definition of a successful life that does not include service to others.” - George HW Bush

“No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.” - Charles Dickens

“Since you get more joy out of giving to others you should put a great deal of thought into the happiness you are able to give.” -Eleanor Roosevelt

Embrace Your Elephant



Making Connection

Reach out to those who you know support you

Join groups

- College interest groups
- Religious organizations
- Networking events
- MeetUp.com

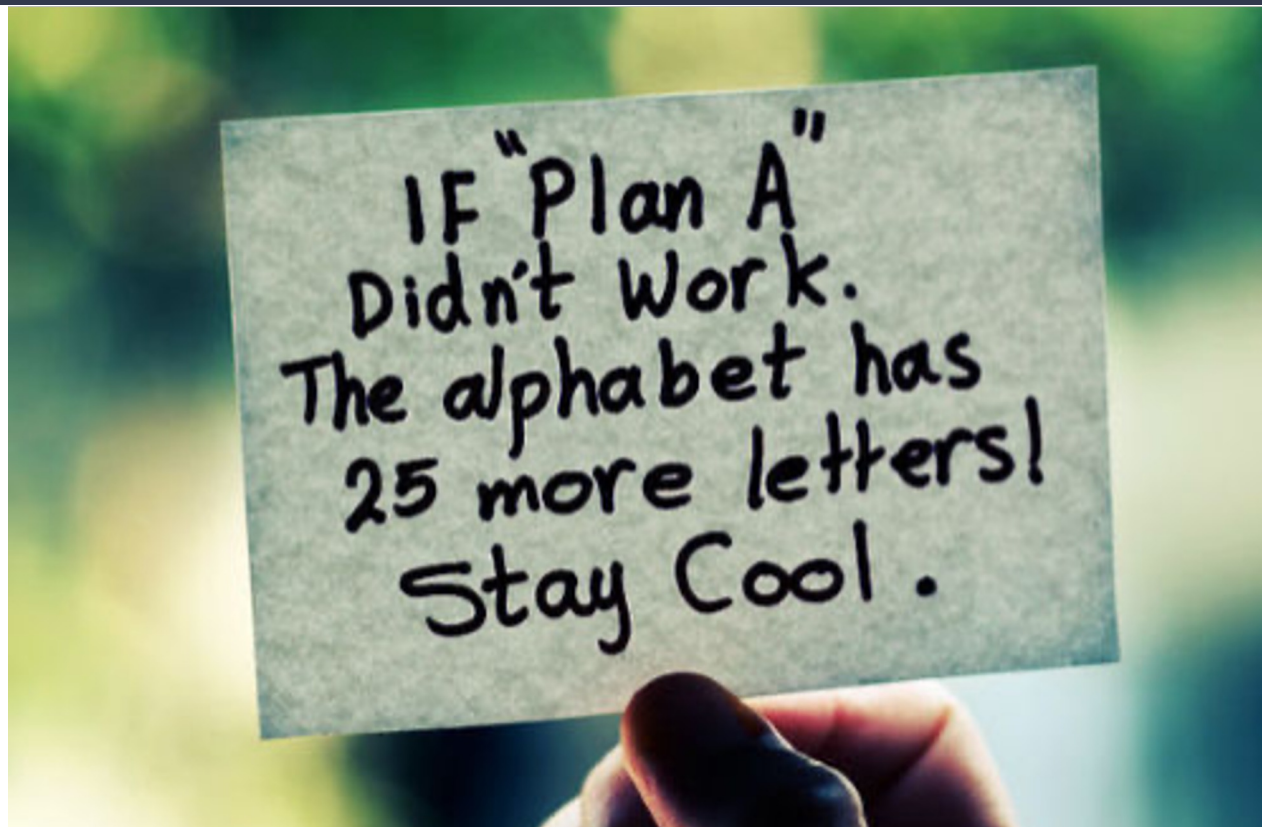
Find connection online

- Facebook groups
- Reddit

OCD specific

- OCD conference
- Local IOCDF affiliates
- Online group therapy
- Online support networks

Don't Give Up On Yourself



Lauren Rosen, LMFT

Director and Psychotherapist
The Center for the Obsessive Mind
lauren@theobsessivemind.com
(949) 991-2600 ext. 2

Kevin Foss, LMFT

Director and Psychotherapist
California OCD & Anxiety Treatment Center
kevin@calocd.com
(714) 423-3779

Kelley Franke, LMFT

Director and Psychotherapist
The Center for OCD
kelley@centerforocd.com
(949) 779-2100

Elena Fasan, LCSW

Director and Psychotherapist
Children's OCD & Anxiety Collective
elena@childrensocdandanxiety.com
323-991-6692