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Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)



Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, also known as OCD, affects about 2.2 million American adults.¹ In recent years, OCD has become more popularized due to things such as television shows. Many people living with OCD feel as if there is no hope for them, but with the help of therapy they can return to a normal life. In this newsletter you will learn the obsessions and compulsions that make up OCD and about a specific type of OCD known as hoarding.

What is OCD?

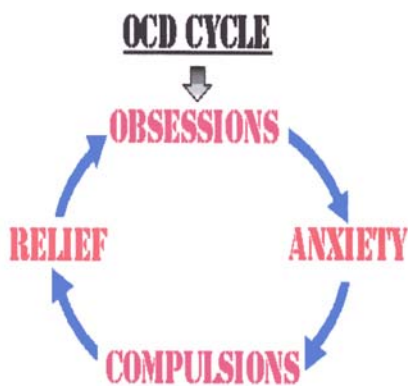
OCD is a condition in which an intrusive thought causes anxiety. In response, the individual is compelled to think some other thought or take some action that neutralizes the anxiety caused by the intrusive thought. The OCD sufferer often feels trapped in a vicious cycle that ends up making them even more anxious. The classic example of OCD is an obsession with germs and dirt, or the compulsion to wash. Other forms include Checking, Counting, Repeating, Neatness and Hoarding.

Obsessions³

Obsessions are a part of OCD where there are recurrent, persistent and unwanted thoughts that cause a person much anxiety and distress. Obsessions can be ideas, impulses or images that are consistently running through a person's mind. While these thoughts are unwanted, the person with OCD cannot seem to control them.

Compulsions³

The other side of OCD involves compulsions, which are physical or mental repetitive behaviors that are used to relieve the anxiety caused by the obsessions. The behaviors or mental acts try to help prevent or reduce anxiety or are done to prevent a dreaded event or situation. Although the person continues to engage in these compulsions, they are aware that their actions are not realistically connected to what they are trying to prevent.



Source: <http://www.ocdhelp.org/ocdfacts.html>

Online Resources may be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

Contact Us

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30-5:00pm. Evening hours are available on a limited basis.

(540) 989-6605 or 800-699-9396

Nights and weekends call RESPOND:

(540) 776-1100 or 800-541-9992

Advantage EAP does not necessarily endorse any products or services mentioned.

Signs and Symptoms²:

OCD symptoms involving obsessions may include:

- Fear of being contaminated by shaking hands or by touching objects others have touched
- Doubts that you've locked the door or turned off the stove
- Thoughts that you've hurt someone in a traffic accident
- Intense distress when objects aren't orderly or facing the right way
- Avoidance of situations that can trigger obsessions, such as shaking hands
- Dermatitis because of frequent hand washing
- Skin lesions because of picking at your skin
- Hair loss or bald spots because of hair pulling

OCD symptoms involving compulsions may include:

- Hand washing until your skin becomes raw
- Checking doors repeatedly to make sure they're locked
- Counting in certain patterns
- Making sure all objects face the same way

What is Hoarding³?



Hoarding has become of particular interest to the American public in recent years. Hoarding involves keeping large amounts of items that to the outside world are considered excessive or worthless/useless. For those who hoard, it creates a vicious circle in which they almost literally become trapped. The mess will or can become so dominant that their self-esteem and social life will/may suffer from it. It is important to realize however that hoarding isn't solely linked or associated to OCD, but can be another sign of distress.

Getting Help

If you think you or someone you know is suffering from OCD getting help is vital to return to a normal daily routine. On the second Thursday of each month from 6:00pm to 7:30pm, Dr. Sam Rogers meets with an OCD Support Group at Psychological Health Roanoke, at 2727 Electric Road, Roanoke (La Premier Office building) -- talking about what OCD is, how it affects your life, and what you can do about it. This group is open at **no charge** to anyone who thinks they may have OCD. Friends and family members are also welcome. Your Advantage EAP also offers individualized counseling for those suffering from OCD.

For more information about the Support Group please call: 540-772-5140.



References:

1. NIMH, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder,
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd/index.shtml>
 2. Mayo Clinic, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder,
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/obsessive-compulsive-disorder/>
 3. UOCD, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder,
[http://understanding_ OCD.tripod.com/ocd_obsessions.html](http://understanding OCD.tripod.com/ocd_obsessions.html)
 4. UOCHD, Introduction to Hoarding,
http://understanding_ OCD.tripod.com/hoarding.html
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