

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

- OCD can make you feel lonely and isolated, especially if you are struggling to talk about it to loved ones.
- It is normal to find it difficult to talk about your worries, and it can also be difficult for family members to help when they are not sure how their loved one is feeling, and that's why we have created this booklet.
- This booklet aims to help young people who are struggling to talk, face to face, to others about OCD.
- If you are struggling to talk about how you feel, what you are worrying about, or what behaviours you are struggling with, this booklet may help you.

Before we begin, let's look at the difference between 'obsessions' and 'compulsions'. We talk about obsessions and compulsions a lot in this booklet, so we are going to explain what these are here!

OBSESSIONS

Obsessions are unwanted and uncontrollable thoughts. These can be images, impulses, worries, feelings and doubts too! Some examples of intrusive thoughts are: worrying about getting germs on you, getting horrible images of something bad happening to someone you love or worrying that you are a 'bad person'. Intrusive thoughts are very normal, in fact EVERYONE gets intrusive thoughts from time to time. These intrusive thoughts become obsessions when they become bothersome and generate feelings of anxiety.

COMPULSIONS

Compulsions are behaviours and actions, such as checking, washing, asking people questions over and over again, avoiding certain objects, places or people, counting, ordering, tapping (and so on). These behaviours are carried out to try and make the worry go away, or to try and stop something 'bad' from happening.

Let's start with today! The people who love you want to help, but sometimes it is difficult for them to know how. Explaining how you feel will help your loved ones to help you the best way they possibly can. Example; I feel worried that if I talk about OCD to other people, they won't understand and treat me differently.

TODAY

Some worries are hard to say out loud, so here is a list of common **obsessions** for you to tick if they apply to you. Don't worry if none of them do, you can fill in your own on the next page. If you are not yet ready to talk about any obsessions you have ticked, put a star next to it. You can then talk about it in time when you feel ready.

I worry that I am unclean or contaminated

☐

I worry that I will hurt myself or other people

☐

I feel distressed if I don't complete certain tasks in a particular way

☐

I worry that I, or others around me, will get a disease or an illness

☐

I feel distressed if things aren't in a specific order

☐

I worry that I have offended someone and can't remember

☐

I worry that harm will come to others, or myself, because of an action I have/haven't done

☐

I worry that if I say my worries out loud they will come true


☐

Were your **obsessions** not listed on the previous page? No problem! Worries come in all themes, shapes, and sizes. The worries listed on the previous page are just a small fraction of different examples. If you can, try and write down some **obsessions** on this page.



Now, let's help your loved ones understand which **obsessions** bother you the most, and which ones bother you the least. On the left column write down the **obsessions**, and on the right column rate how anxious they make you feel.

obsession	Anxiety Rating
	<p>This obsession makes me feel the most worried</p> <p>This obsession makes me feel the least worried</p>



The next two pages have a list of different **compulsions** which are common in OCD. Just like before, try and be as honest as you can, this will help your loved ones understand how you are struggling a little bit better. Don't worry if none of them apply to you, there will be a page a little bit later for you to write down some of the **compulsions** you are struggling with.

I clean myself or my things repetitively

☐

I spend a lot of time checking something bad hasn't happened

☐

I spend a lot of time re-doing certain tasks because it doesn't feel right/I haven't done it right

☐

I ask people the same question over and over again

☐

I spend a lot of time checking I haven't upset someone

☐

I avoid certain objects because I am scared I will hurt someone

☐

I go over past events in my head to make sure I haven't done something bad ☐

I need to check the locks in the house, and other items, to keep myself and others safe ☐

I struggle throwing things away, even something small like a piece of rubbish or a wrapper ☐

I have to count to a specific number when I am doing something, either out loud or in my head ☐

I need to tap something or touch something to make me feel less worried/prevent something bad from happening ☐

I spend a lot of time arranging my things in a specific order ☐

I have to tell someone what I am worrying about before bed time ☐

I have to say a certain phrase in my head, or out loud, when I am doing something, to stop something bad from happening ☐

I have to think about a good thought to cancel out a bad thought ☐

Were the **compulsions** you are struggling with not listed on the previous pages? Don't worry! Those behaviours were just a small fraction of different examples. If you can, try and write down some **compulsions** you are struggling with on this page.



WELL DONE

We are a charity run by people with lived experience of OCD, so we know how hard it can be to be honest about what you are struggling with. So, from the OCD-UK team, well done.

You will be pleased to know that there are no more questions about obsessions or compulsions. The aim of the next section is to give you the opportunity to let your loved ones know what makes you feel better and how they can help you. Let's go!

We are all very different and often need different things when we struggle. It is really helpful if your loved ones know what might help you when you are finding things challenging. Circle any suggestions below that you feel would help you, so you can share this with your loved ones.

Don't put too much pressure on me

Don't force me if I am not ready

Encourage me to keep going

Ask me how you can help

Read with me

Be patient with me

Just listen

Tell me you are proud of me

Give me space if I ask for it

Give me a hug

Try not to reassure me

Take me for a walk

Help me to do something creative

Ask me if I want to talk about it

Get in touch with my therapist/mental health professional

Don't ask me too many questions



Here is a blank page to write down ways that people can help in case it wasn't listed on the previous page. You can also use this section to write down anything else you would like to share with a loved one.



WHAT NEXT?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this booklet. The next step is to pass this booklet to a loved one, caregiver, or teacher so they can read it and understand the struggles you are experiencing right now.

If you would like to read some articles, blogs, or look at some artwork created by other young people with OCD, you can visit our young ambassadors page on our website. Reading their stories and experiences might make you feel connected to other young people who feel the same way you do. www.ocduk.org/ocdukya

STRUGGLING TO TALK ABOUT OCD?



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