

# Treatment of OCD

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## You Can Treat OCD

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1

## Objectives

1. Defend the importance of altering perception, as opposed to utilizing technique, to help clients with OCD
2. Describe & utilize a self-help strategy to frame the treatment protocol for OCD
3. Construct & assign behavioral experiments to test out the reliability & validity of this protocol without the use of hierarchies

Video clips courtesy of *Psychotherapy.net*  
Strategic Treatment of Anxiety Disorders

3

Here comes

“... the importance of altering perception,  
as opposed to utilizing technique, to help  
clients ...”

from Objective 1

4

## Therapist Tasks

- Get rapport (and get it again)
- Get placebo
- Get an outcome picture
- Persuade them to adopt paradoxical frame of reference
- Collaborative paradoxical strategies
- Behavioral experiments

5

- Pull them away, step-by-step, from their frame of reference (FofR)
  - dismantle their logical system
  - box it all up into one entity
    - “It’s irrelevant”
    - “It’s white noise”
    - “That’s the Disorder talking”

6

# Treatment of OCD

Build a compelling new logical system

- Don't just explain it; install it!
- It's NOT that. It's THIS!
- Install it NOW, at the beginning of treatment
- Install it deeply enough that it holds over time

But do all this with finesse

7

8

Your challenger—OCD—taught you rules so IT could win

Here they are...

**OCD Rules**

1. Be careful or you might cause a horrible problem OR  
Be worried that you've already caused one

Loved one dies    Lose something valuable    Contamination  
Be rejected  
Going crazy    I harm or kill someone    Go to Hell  
Poor grades    Be abandoned    Get sick

**OCD Rules**

2. If a fearful thought pops up, take it seriously

**"This is a signal!"**    **"Oh, no!"**  
**"What does this mean!"**  
**"I need to do something!"**  
**"This is important!"**

**OCD Rules**

3. Feel absolutely certain

(that you haven't caused or won't cause a problem; that you haven't made a mistake; that everyone will be safe)

**OCD Rules**

4. Use your anxiety as a gauge: if you feel uncomfortable, then there is still Danger

# Treatment of OCD

**OCD Rules**

5. Always act defensively

Back away/avoid	Give up territory
Worry/dread future	Do rituals/ compulsions

When you act 100% defensively, OCD always wins 14

You ↓ ↓ OCD

These are all the same! And... 15  
They are NOT relevant

- “I think that spot might have been blood?”
- “Did I run someone over?”
- “If I don’t undo that, something bad may happen.”
- “There’s a chance I just offended God.
- “What if I did something terrible without knowing it?”
- “This doesn’t feel right.”

Get.  
  
Off.  
  
Content. 16

<p style="text-align: center;">“I can’t handle that!”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humiliating self with coworkers</li> <li>• Allowing kids to be in danger</li> <li>• Harming family → salmonella</li> <li>• Accidentally burning house down</li> <li>• Realizing I’m bad person</li> <li>• Running someone over</li> <li>• Touching a child sexually</li> <li>• Causing something horrendous</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">“I don’t like it, but I can handle it”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A generic sense of uncertainty &amp; distress</p>
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17

# Treatment of OCD

Segment 4 3.5 min

**We want to go one level up in abstraction.**

**“...step out of...”**

**“I wash my hands to get rid of contamination”**

**“...then step into...”**

**“I do a repetitive behavior to get rid of my doubt about something that seems risky or dangerous.”**

19

Here comes

“... a self-help strategy to frame the treatment protocol ...”

from Objective 2

20

21

“I want this!”

Segment 8 5.5 min

[I stop to see if she is tracking me]

**This is not just exposure**

**It's an attitude change**

- “I'm asking you to want to feel contaminated, & then feel contaminated... go get it, on purpose.”

➤  
22

**EXTERNALIZE – DETACH**

**“What happens to OCD when you start saying, ‘I'm looking for opportunities to feel contaminated’?”**

- “It's not feeding it” [meaning “then my stance would not feed the OCD”]

➤  
23

**“What's going to happen to OCD if you say, ‘This is exactly what I want right now’?”**

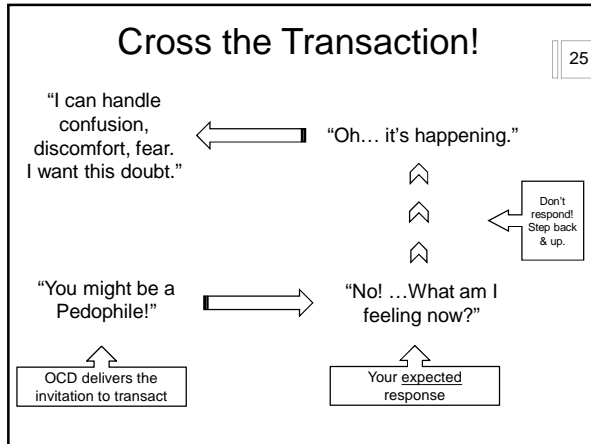
- “Maybe it makes the OCD uncomfortable”

**“...How would you like to turn tables on OCD?”**

- “That would be awesome!”

24

# Treatment of OCD



26

“Did I do something wrong?”

“Oh, no! I need to find out!”

automatic

“**Good.** There is my obsession. I am not answering that question. I WANT to not know.”

“I am scared!”

“**Good.** I am looking for anxiety too.”

27

“Could I really act on that thought?”

“Oh, no! I need to find out!”

automatic

“**Good.** There is my obsession. I am not answering that question. I WANT to not know.”

“I am scared!”

“**Good.** I am looking for anxiety too.”

28

## Act as though...

I want to take actions right now as though...

- ✓ everything is OK just the way it is unfolding
- ✓ this is exactly what needs to be happening right now
- ✓ I have enough skills
- ✓ The content of my obsession is irrelevant

## Stepping Forward

29

Step 1: Create Your Strategy

1. Act as though the content is irrelevant
2. Accept the worry when it pops up
3. Seek out uncertainty
4. Seek out anxiety
5. Create rules if you need them

Step 2: Generate Motivations or Commands

➔

30

Messages of motivation

Self-instructions/commands

30

# Treatment of OCD

Here comes

“...behavioral experiments to test out protocol without the use of hierarchies ...”

from Objective 3

31

Segment 10 1.5 min

**Ownership**

- Put your game face on

**Detachment & Absorption**

- Focus on outcome picture
- I want my family back
- So, I don't like it, but I want it!

**Take the hit**

32

Segment 11 3.5 min

**DETACHMENT & OWNERSHIP**

- Challenging the difference between what Disorder tells her to be afraid of & what she's actually afraid of. She is just plain scared. Perfect.
- Therefore, we can [but don't have to] go to the highest item on Disorder's list. And why not? It's a meaningless hierarchy.
- She picks the dirtiest spot on the floor to touch. Ownership in the protocol!

33

Bob: Making the messages his own

- “What's next?” He's all in!
- “Let 'em come – Give me your threats”
- “I don't care... I'm not playing this game”
- “You wanna go? Give it to me – Let's go”
- He's mindful
  - starting activity that might trigger thought

34 Clip 6 5 min

- Self talk: “I can handle this” REID! Not showing video
- “...as long as I keep that mentality, & as long as I don't back away”
- “Biggest thing: I'm challenging it... that mentality, with the phrases”

35

- “...not sitting on couch, doing exposure... acting scared the whole time”
- “You become the aggressor” [This is an aggressive sport!]
  - “I can't hear you”
  - “If one slips through, ‘That's a good one. Give me more. What's next? Let's go.’”

36 Clip 7 3 min

# Treatment of OCD

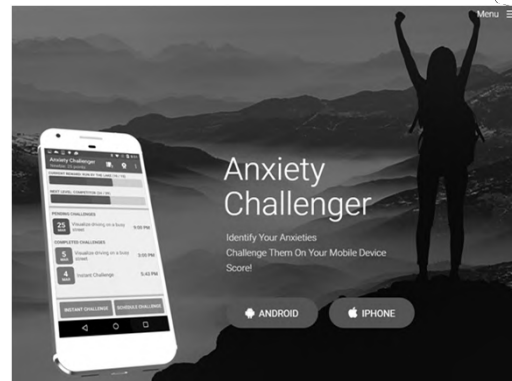
## The Game

37

“The only function of this game is to train you in the tactics of our strategy”

## The APP -- Anxietychallenger.com

38



## How to Score a Point

39

1. Generate at least some uncertainty or distress regarding your theme
2. When you feel bothered by doubt or distress (whether before, during or after that task)...
  - Step back & acknowledge it (“Ugh. This is hard.”)

## (continued)

40

- Sub-vocalize a message that helps you stay engaged in your chosen activity:
    - Encourage yourself (“I can do this”)
    - Instruct yourself (“Keep moving!”), or
    - Talk in a cunning way to Anxiety (“Give me more, please”)
  - 3. Then turn your attention back to your chosen task, even while you still feel uncertain & uncomfortable
- SCORE!**

## NoiseInYourHead.com

*Free, short videos*

- How Anxiety Uses Basic Human Nature against You (5 min.)
- Why You Should Step AWAY from Your Worries” (5 min.)
- Why You DON'T Need to Relax to Get Control” (6 min.)
- How to Transform Fear” (6 min.)