



OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

NEWSLETTER

INSPIRA MENTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT, INC.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder in which time-consuming obsessions and compulsions significantly interfere with a person's routine, making it difficult work or to have a normal social life.

Answer "yes" or "no" to the following questions, and show it to your health care professional at your first visit.

Yes or No?

- Do you have unwanted ideas, images, or impulses that seem silly, nasty, or horrible?
- Are you constantly worried that something bad will happen because you forgot something important, like locking the door or turning off appliances?
- Are you afraid you will act or speak aggressively when you really don't want to?
- Are there things you feel you must do excessively or thoughts you must think repeatedly in order to feel comfortable?
- Do you have to check things over and over again or repeat those many times to be sure they are done properly?
- Do you avoid situations or people you worry about hurting by aggressive words or deeds?
- Do you keep many useless things because you feel that you can't throw them away?

If you suspect OCD, the first step toward regaining control of your life is to seek help.



**Call Us, we can help...
1-800-284-9515**

*Please visit
<http://www.inspirapr.com>
"Excellence in Employee
Assistance Programs"*

WHAT IS OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER?

OBSESSIONS. Obsessions are recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images that cause distressing emotions such as anxiety or disgust. People with OCD recognize that the thoughts, impulses, or images are a product of their mind and are excessive or unreasonable. Yet these intrusive thoughts cannot be settled by logic or reasoning. Most people try to ignore or suppress such obsessions or neutralize them with some other thought or action. Typical obsessions include excessive concerns about contamination or harm, the need for symmetry or exactness, or forbidden sexual or religious thoughts.

COMPULSIONS. Compulsions are repetitive behaviors or mental acts that the person feels driven to perform in response to an obsession. The behaviors are aimed at preventing or reducing distress or a feared situation. In the most severe cases, a constant repetition of rituals may fill the day, making a normal routine impossible. Compounding the anguish these rituals cause is the knowledge that the compulsions are irrational.

SOME EXAMPLES ARE:

Cleaning - To reduce the fear that real or imagined germs, dirt, or chemicals will "contaminate" them some spend many hours washing themselves or cleaning their surroundings.

Repeating - To dispel anxiety, some utter a name or phrase, or repeat a behavior several times. They know these repetitions won't actually guard against injury but fear harm will occur if the repetitions aren't done.

Checking - To reduce the fear of harming oneself or others by, for example, forgetting to lock the door or turn off the gas stove, some develop checking rituals. Some also repeatedly retrace driving routes to be sure they haven't hit anyone.

Ordering and arranging - To reduce discomfort, some like to put objects, such as books in a certain order, or arrange household items "just so", or in a symmetric fashion, or to have things perfect.

Hoarding - To reduce discomfort, some hold onto newspapers, magazine, clothes, papers, and scraps, such that they form piles, and disrupt the household.

Mental compulsions - In response to intrusive obsessive thoughts, some silently pray or say phrases to reduce anxiety or prevent a dreaded future event.

* This information was taken from The American Psychiatric Association and The National Institute of Mental Health.