



FOR KIDS

Modules 9-12

Adapted by Bronwyn Shroyer from: O'Connor, K., & Aardema, F. (2012). Clinician's handbook for obsessive compulsive disorder: Inference-based therapy. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.



Module Nine

Alternative Story







Do you remember when we talked about stories?







a middle,

and

an ending.









Beginning

Once upon a time, there was a cat.

Middle

He ate his food.

Ending

He was full and went to sleep.





Stories also have DETAILS! Details pull us into a story. They make it more interesting.

| | BEGINNING | Once upon a time, there was a cat. |
|-------------|-----------|--|
| | DETAILS | He was lost in the snow and so, so cold and hungry until a child found him, took him to back to her house, and gave him a large bowl of food. |
| | MIDDLE | He ate his food. |
| | DETAILS | After eating, the cat curled up by the fire and sat in the child's lap. The cat felt so loved and warm. His body relaxed, and he was so grateful to no longer be hungry. |
| | ENDING | He was full and went to sleep. |
| v .: | | |



Adding all of those details are what we call "bridging". We take one idea and link it to another.

He was full and went to sleep.

We made a bridge out of all of the details in the story to connect the beginning and the end.

Once upon a time there was a cat.

Which story is more interesting?

Once upon a time, there was a cat.

He ate his food.

He was full and went to sleep.

Once upon a time, there was a cat.

He was lost in the snow and so, so cold and hungry until a child found him, took him to back to her house and gave him a large bowl of food.

He ate his food.

After eating, the cat curled up by the fire and sat in the child's lap. The cat felt so loved and warm. His body relaxed and he was so grateful to no longer be hungry.

He was full and went to sleep.



When stories have details (bridging), we can see the story come to life in our imaginations in a more vivid way!

The second story gives us a picture of cold, lost kitty getting rescued, fed, loved, and cuddled. Then he falls asleep, warm and full.

The first story just tells us a cat ate some food and went to sleep. Not as fun to read.

Guess who loves details because they make you believe in all kinds of stories?



Do you remember, Bo?











Bo had all sorts of doubts going on back in Module 4.

"Maybe I will be a sheep who forgets to close the gate, and it won't be locked."

"Maybe I will be a sheep who doesn't listen when the farmer calls."

"Maybe I will be a sheep who gets mud on my fleece coat."

"Maybe I will be a sheep who annoys the other sheep."

Let's listen to Bo's Obsessional Story about this doubt:

Maybe I will be a sheep who forgets to close the gate, and it won't be locked.

Pay attention to all of the details (bridging) Bo has!



"I worry about the gate being locked because there are predators around. We see and hear them. I close it because it is important that we are safe inside our pen.

One time, a friend of mine said they used to live in another field and the gate there was rusty and didn't work well.

And one day, I saw the farmer try to close our gate, and he didn't watch it close very well and it didn't latch. So, I know we have to really make sure that the gate latches.

Sometimes I test the gate over and over because what if the latch is loose? Or what if there is hay stuck in the latch and it looks closed, but it really isn't?"

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Okay, Bo. First thing to know is that your story is actually about other times and places that have nothing to do with the Here and Now!

Let's find details in the story that actually come from other stories!



"I worry about the gate being locked because there are predators around. We see and hear them. I close it because it is important that we are safe inside our pen.

One time, a friend of mine said they used to live in another field and the gate there was rusty and didn't work well.

And one day, I saw the farmer try to close our gate, and he didn't watch it close very well and it didn't latch. So, I know we have to really make sure that the gate latches.

Sometimes I test the gate over and over because what if the latch is loose? Or what if there is hay stuck in the latch and it looks closed, but it really isn't?"





These parts of the story have nothing to do with Bo shutting the gate!

The first one is about another gate somewhere else.

One time, a friend of mine said they used to live in another field and the gate there was rusty and didn't work well.

The second one is about the farmer closing the gate, not Bo!

And one day, I saw the farmer try to close our gate, and he didn't watch it close very well and it didn't latch. So, I know we have to really make sure that the gate latches.



If we take those parts of the story away, we are left with...

"I worry about the gate being locked because there are predators around. We see and hear them. I close it because it is important that we are safe inside our pen."

Sometimes I test the gate over and over because what if the latch is loose? Or what if there is hay stuck in the latch and it looks closed, but it really isn't?"

What part of that story is from the Land of Here and Now and what part from in the Land of Imagination?





This part:

"Sometimes I test the gate over and over because what if the latch is loose? Or what if there is hay stuck in the latch and it looks closed, but it really isn't?"

This part is DEFINITELY from the Land of Imagination! Do you see the "what ifs?" Is there any Reality Sensing going on?

No...Bo isn't uses the 5 senses or common sense here. Just imagination.

What about this part?

"I worry about the gate being locked because there are predators around. We see and hear them. I close it because it is important that we are safe inside our pen."

Is Bo wrong in thinking that the sheep need to be safe in the pen?

Is Bo wrong to want to make sure the gate is latched?

Well, let's look at things Bo knows.

Sheep can get hurt by predators, and they do need to be kept safe. And the story says that predators have been around. The sheep have seen and heard them!

So, no Bo isn't wrong for wanting the sheep to be safe in the pen or to want to make sure the latch is in place. Where is Bo getting that information?

The Here and Now. It isn't made up. Predators have been seen and heard around the sheep.

And Bo wanting to make sure that the latch is in place isn't bad either. AS LONG AS Bo isn't staring at the latch, or jiggling to make sure it is in place, or checking it over and over. It is okay to use VALID information that applies to the Here and Now ("predators have been around")

AND

it's okay to use VALID information from personal experience in IDENTICAL situations.

Let's look at an example of that last one.





This is Bo's friend Spark.

Spark helps guard the sheep but often stumbles in this one particular hole in the field.

Would it be okay for Spark to be cautious around that hole? YES! Because Spark has had personal experience in that same situation before. Spark has learned to check for the hole.



Time for a game!



Find the direct evidence for each story.









Maybe I didn't wash my hands well enough...

- A. because they don't feel "just right".
- B. because I still see mud on them.
- C. because I have this urge to keep washing them.







Maybe I didn't wash my hands well enough...

A. because they don't feel "just right".
B. because I still see mud on them.
C. because I have this urge to keep washing them.



Maybe I annoyed my friend...

A. because they told me to stop taking their ***** stuff and I didn't.

B. because I imagine that they are thinking I am annoying.

C. because I annoyed a different friend one other time.



Maybe I annoyed my friend...

A. because they told me to stop taking their stuff and I didn't.

- B. because I imagine that they are thinking I am annoying.
- C. because I annoyed a different friend one other time.





Maybe someone could get hurt..

A. because I didn't tap on the wall four times.

- B. because I had a bad thought.
- C. because I left my backpack, shoes, and coat on the floor in front of the door.





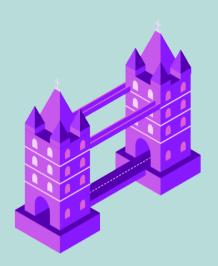
Maybe someone could get hurt..

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Remember how we used bridging (details) to make our lost cat story more vivid before?

And remember how Bo had a bunch of bridging details in the obsessional story we read?

Well, we can use details to help us create a vivid story based in the Land of Here and Now.







It's called an ALTERNATIVE STORY

An alternative story is like taking the obsessional story and doing the opposite.

Instead of starting with something we doubt and linking it to a compulsion we need to do, we can look at the situation, link it to certainty that things are okay, and show we can trust our senses.





You can build an Alternative Story of each of your OCD doubts. It's best to add some details to it each day so that you get a very vivid and believable story.



Time for another game!

This time, fill in details to link the beginning and end, but use reality sensing (information from our senses or common sense) to create a non-OCD story.







Here's an example. Let's say we had:

My backpack looks zipped up. I don't need to check to see if my folder is still



inside.

How could we link that with info from our senses?





Day 1 we might add:

My backpack looks zipped up. I heard the zipper zip closed. I don't need to check to see if my folder is still inside.







Day 2 we might add:

My backpack looks zipped up. I heard the zipper zip closed. This backpack has never magically opened on its own before. I don't need to check to see if my folder is still

inside.



Day 3 we might add:



My backpack looks zipped up. I heard the zipper zip closed. This backpack has never magically opened on its own before. It tumbled down the stairs one time and didn't open up. I don't need to check to see if my folder is still inside.



Do you see how the story becomes more and more vivid with each detail we add?

The more reality sensing we put in and the more details we write showing we can trust our senses, the more believable the story becomes!

It is good to practice your alternative story when you aren't in the OCD bubble.



And if an obsessional OCD doubt comes up, notice when you get sucked up into the OCD bubble. Pause. Then turn to reality sensing like we've been practicing in earlier models.

You can unwind the story and look for sense information that proves it's false.

Soon you will start to notice that your OCD doubts don't pull you in as much and that you are trusting your senses more.





And alternative stories are much more fun! They don't make us feel yucky inside. Instead, they make us feel good about trusting ourselves and our senses! Here's Bo's Alternative Story:

It is important to make sure our gate is latched. I have never had the gate open back up after I latched it. One time Spark even bumped into it after I latched it, and it stayed shut. In the mornings, I always have to unlatch it, so I know it stays shut all night. My sight and hearing do a good job telling me the latch is shut. So, I don't have to re-check it anymore.

YAY FOR BO!!







Module Ten

Tricks of OCD





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Trickster!





SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT OCD:

Gets its info from our imaginations

Likes to apply info from other stories/situations

Doesn't use info from our senses

Wrongly believes it is keeping us safe

Is a trickster

OCD's Tricks...

Are part of your obsessional story: Thoughts Beliefs Links between things Anything that makes you doubt

They help make your obsessional story believable to you. What also matters is that you take these thoughts (tricks from OCD) and apply them to the situation in front of you where they don't belong.

Like taking a rule meant for you dog and applying it to your situation. You don't eat out of a bowl on the floor do you? Your dog eats that way, but it doesn't apply to you.



Here are some things we need to learn about OCD now:

Never argue with OCD!

Instead: Let's learn why OCD is wrong !





One thing ALL OCD tricks have in common:

They make you believe they are telling the truth about the Here and Now, but they are NOT!



Let's learn some of these tricks!

And remember...every single trick to done to make you believe you are in the Land of Here and Now. But you won't be if you listen to them! You will be in the OCD Bubble in the Land of Imagination!





Let's learn about each one so you can spot them!

Ready to be a detective?





Uses things that happened in some other place or with other people in order to get you to believe it could happen in the Here and Now. Example: My friend's family sometimes forget to lock their door. So, I might do the same thing.

Facts from Elsewhere

This trick uses real facts. BUT, it applies them to your situation when there isn't direct evidence in the Here and Now to back them up!

Example:

People can get a stomach bug from touching surfaces.

But if everyone at your house is healthy, then this fact doesn't apply. There is no evidence those germs are currently on your kitchen faucet! This trick makes you FEEL like the bad thing is actually happening even though it isn't!

Living the Fear

Example: You have a doubt that your throat might hurt, and then it starts hurting! Or You have a doubt that a bug is crawling on you, and you start to feel itchy!

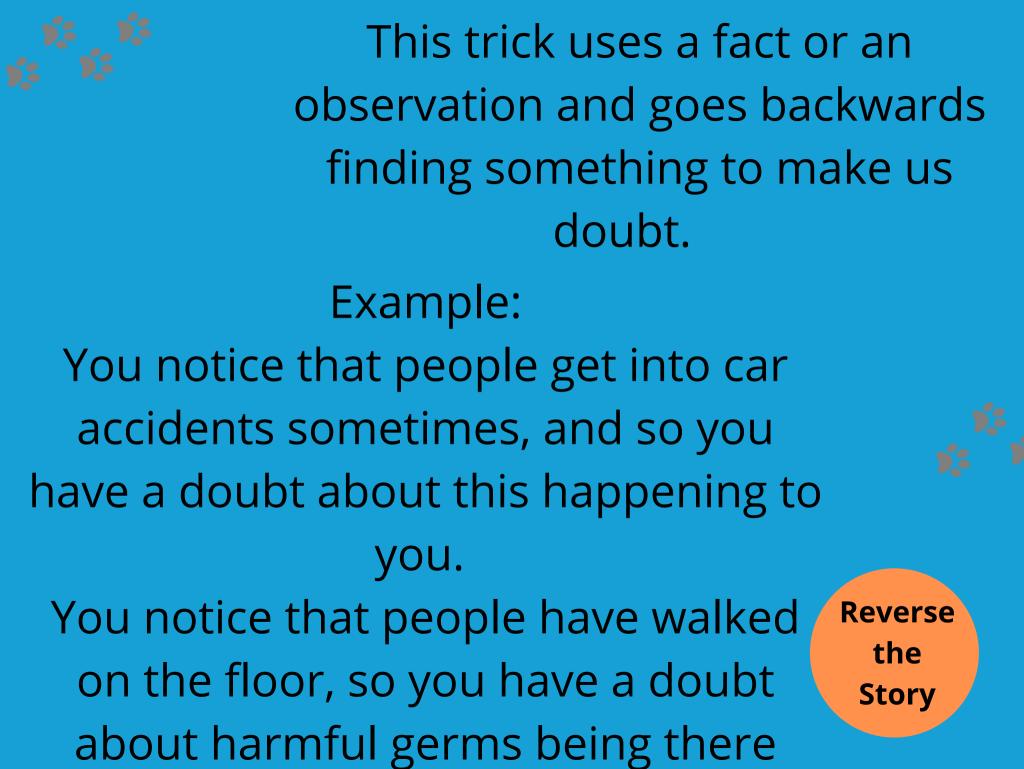


OCD uses this trick to make you feel like it is taking you further into reality. But really, it is taking you more into your imagination.

Example:

You have a doubt about harmful germs being your hands. OCD tells you that if you had a microscope you'd have proof. So, it feels like reality, but really it is imagination. Most germs are good for us!

Going Deep



Making you distrust your senses is the what OCD is all about. It tells you that your senses and common sense aren't REALLY sure even when they would be totally certain if OCD wasn't there.

Distrust the Senses

Example:

I saw my cat on the couch. I felt my hand close the front door behind me. I heard it close. I start to walk away, and I have the doubt, Maybe I didn't close it and my cat escaped. This is twice as tricky! OCD takes you into your imagination TWICE. First you have an obsessional doubt, which you then do a ritual to feel better about. And THEN, OCD says that you messed up the situation by doing the ritual.

> Double Tricking

Example:

OCD tells you the light might not be off. So, you check the light switch. And THEN, OCD tells you the light was probably off before you checked it and now that you checked it, it might be messed up. Testing It Out Here OCD tells you a doubt. Then you try to show yourself that OCD is wrong by testing out the doubt. But then when you do that, OCD tells you that you testing out the doubt proves the doubt to be true.

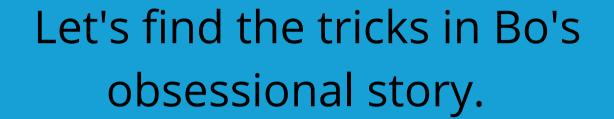
Example:

You have a doubt that maybe you might hate your dog. So, you try out thinking about hating your dog to see if you really do. Then OCD says you thinking about hating your dog means you really do hate your dog. In this trick, OCD gets you to doubt yourself. OCD pulls you into discussing the doubt to see if you should really listen to it.

Let's Discuss lt

Example:

OCD will say things like, "But maybe this time.." or "We should really think about this though..." or "It could happen sometime, so we should keep thinking about it."









"I worry about the gate being locked because there are predators around. We see and hear them. I close it because it is important that we are safe inside our pen.

One time, a friend of mine said they used to live in another field and the gate there was rusty and didn't work well.

And one day, I saw the farmer try to close our gate, and he didn't watch it close very well and it didn't latch. So, I know we have to really make sure that the gate latches.

Sometimes I test the gate over and over because what if the latch is loose? Or what if there is hay stuck in the latch and it looks closed, but it really isn't?" "I worry about the gate being locked because there are predators around. We see and hear them. I close it because it is important that we are safe inside our pen.

Any tricks in this part of the story?

No tricks just yet. And Bo has seen and heard predators so the gate does need to be locked. But let's see if Bo stays in the Land of Here and Now.



This second part is where the reasonable doubt becomes obsessional. Bo is using someone else's story to influence the story. What trick is here?

"One time, a friend of mine said they used to live in another field and the gate there was rusty and didn't work well."

The OCD trick here is:

Mismatching

This part of the story doesn't belong in Bo's story.

"And one day, I saw the farmer try to close our gate, and he didn't watch it close very well and it didn't latch. So, I know we have to really make sure that the gate latches."

It's Mismatching again!

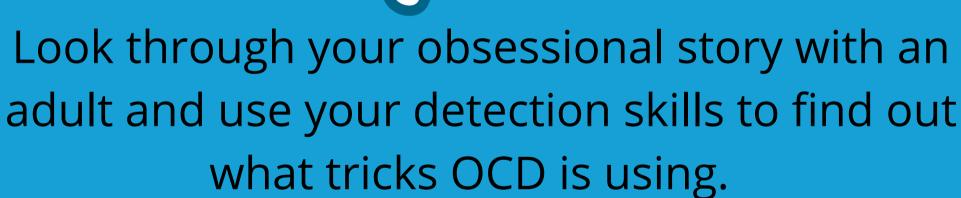
OCD is taking a story from someone else. This has nothing to do with the Here and Now.

"Sometimes I test the gate over and over because what if the latch is loose? Or what if there is hay stuck in the latch and it looks closed, but it really isn't?"

What trick is here?

Distrust the Senses

In this one, OCD isn't trusting Bo's ability to see or feel that the latch is okay.









OCD is so good at getting us to not trust our senses and our common sense.

It is also good at getting us to not trust our REAL SELVES. We will learn more about that in our next module. And Bo is going to help us!





Module Eleven

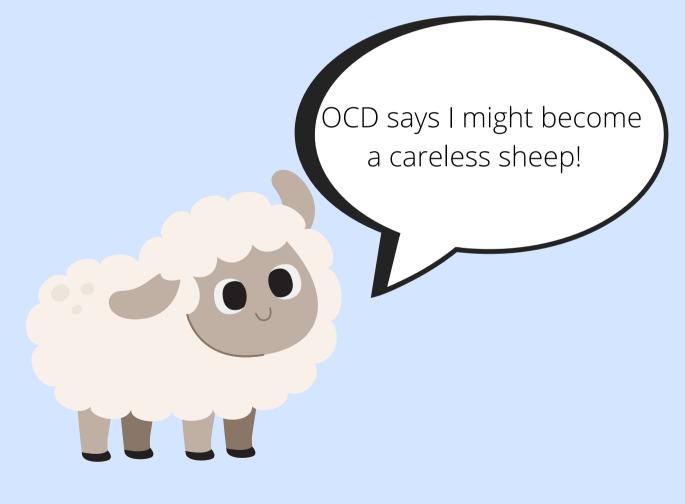
The Real Self







Do you remember what Bo's Vulnerable Self was?





The Vulnerable Self is really the exact opposite of who we really are.

It is another one of OCD's tricks.

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OCD knows that if we believe we might become the person we don't want to be, then it can talk us into having all sorts of doubts.





The other sheep in Bo's herd said:

Bo is sweet, funny, and someone to count on.

Being someone to count on is the exact opposite of being careless. The other sheep are using their senses and common sense, and they don't see Bo as careless at all!



Why do we doubt ourselves?

Sometimes it's because we compare ourselves to other people. Sometimes it's because we don't give ourselves credit for things we do well. Sometimes it's because we feel toxic shame making us believe we really are bad people.





When we can tune in to the things that are real about us, we discover a different person than who OCD says we might be.

How do we do that?





One of the biggest ways of finding out who you REALLY are is to trust your REAL feelings and wishes. NOT what OCD says they MIGHT be.



Heres an example: OCD says you might be someone who could be a bad friend. But you can notice that you feel kind and happy feelings toward your friends. You do nice things for them, and you smile when you see them. You want them to be happy.

Your real feelings and wishes show that you are a GOOD friend. Not a bad one. Let's look at Bo's feelings - remember the Vulnerable Self here is that Bo is "a sheep who is careless".

Bo, when you are doing something you think is important, are you not taking it seriously? Are you goofing around?

No, my feelings are that those things matter, so I pay attention. I like doing a good job.



But, OCD tells you that you might be a careless sheep. How would you be a careless sheep if you are doing things to the best of your ability?

Maybe I'm not a careless sheep. I like to try to do things correctly. Sometimes, I mess up, but I fix it when I can.



What are things you think you do well?

Hmm...I'm good at making sure all of my things are put away. And the farmer put me in charge of taking attendance!





What would have to change for you to actually become a Careless Sheep?

I guess I'd have to change a lot of things about myself. I'd have to care less about the other sheep. I'd have to try really hard to not be responsible. So, is there really a chance you could become a CARELESS sheep?

No! I don't think that could really happen. I like being who I am. I like being responsible.



Let's work on YOUR Real Self for a moment before we return back to Bo.

What are things you do well?

What would have to change about yourself so that you could become your Vulnerable Self?

How likely is it that you could actually become your Vulnerable Self?



Bo, we are going to do something else now to find out a little bit more about your REAL self.

We want you to ask others who are in your life what they think about you. Ready?

Okay





Hi! What do you think I'm good at doing ?

You are good at keeping track of everyone's favorite toys!





Why do you like being my friend?

You are kind. You do a good job noticing when someone is upset.



What do you think is a strength of mine?

That's easy. You are so good at making sure everyone is included!

What did you learn from your friends?

That I'm responsible, kind, and look out for others.

Does that match up with what OCD says? NO!



Let's work on YOUR Real Self again while Bo thinks about what everyone said.

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What would your family say you are good at doing?

What about your teacher?

What about your friends?

What about your pets?



Bo, you know that no one is perfect, but what are traits that you value that you want to live up to? What goals do you have? What rules do you have for yourself to do those things?

I value looking out for others. I want to be a good friend. And I try to be kind and find ways to help.

While Bo thinks about all of that, what about you?

What kind of a person do you want to be?

What goals do you have?

What rules or principles do you have in place to help you reach those goals?





Let's put it all together for Bo:

You feel that you like to do things well. Your loved ones think you are kind, responsible, and go out of your way for other people. You value looking out for others and try to be kind and notice when there is something to be done that could help someone.





e yoursel

Let's compare the Real Self story to the OCD Vulnerable Self story for Bo.



You feel that you like to do things well. You loved ones think you are kind, responsible, and go out of your way for other people. You value looking out for others and try to be kind and notice when there is something to be done that could help someone.

Reality

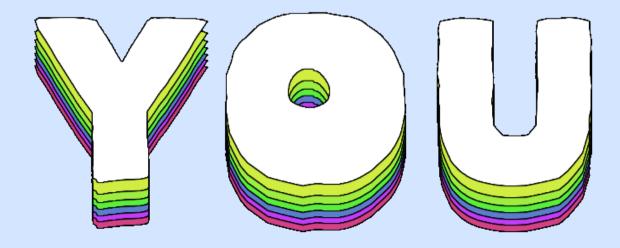
You might be careless. OCD Imagination

This one is the REAL self

Now, how about you? Can you put all of the things we've talked about together to make the story of who YOU really are?



How does it compare to who OCD says you might become if you don't listen to the OCD?





You are not your Vulnerable Self at all!

Keep your story of your Real Self handy so that you can remind yourself of who you really are when OCD tries to tell you that you might become your Vulnerable Self.

Because, when you can trust in your REAL self that means you can trust your senses and your common sense too.

And OCD won't be able to trick you anymore.



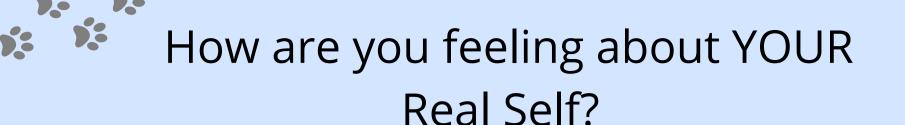
How are you feeling, Bo?

Amazing! I realize now that I can trust myself! I'm not going to be a careless sheep! I'm very trustworthy! I think Bo has learned what it takes to believe in the REAL self instead of the Vulnerable Self!

Congrats, Bo!







If you totally believe in your Real Self, that's great!

If you don't YET, keep looking out for how you live your life day tot day. Look for evidence from your feelings and from others that helps you learn who you really are.



Module Twelve

Relapse Prevention







If you have made it to this module, then you are doing GREAT!

It means that you have really worked on noticing your obsessional doubts and have learned that they come from your imagination.

You've also learned that you can deal with those doubts by trusting your Real Self, your senses, and your common sense.

Now your job is to maintain your progress - that means, your job is to keep going. If you do, OCD won't be a big deal in your life anymore.

And if there are times when OCD's voice gets louder again, you will know what to do!

Here are some things that might cause that to happen:





Forgetting or choosing not to exercise your skills!

Remember to use the skills you have learned here every time an obsessional doubt grabs hold of your attention.

If you don't practice your skills, then OCD will gain strength again. But if you keeping using them, it will much easier to keep OCD away.



"I'm too tired to deal with OCD"



Sometimes it SEEMS easier to give into the OCD. But we know when we do that, it comes right



back again.



Even if you are tired, use your skills to handle the obsessional doubts. It will keep OCD from getting big again. And having OCD be big in your life is SUPER tiring!



OCD tends to pop up when we have fun things going on.

You: "I'm so excited about my birthday!" OCD: "But maybe none of your friends like you and won't come to the party."

Make sure you have your skills ready to go when exciting times are going on!

Stressful Times OCD pops up a lot during stressful times too.

You: "I have a big school project due, and I don't have a good idea for it."

OCD: "Maybe your teacher is going to yell at you in front of the whole class and no one will ever like you again.

Remember your REAL self. Having obsessional doubt will only cause more stress. Use your skills to ground yourself back into reality. You've been dealing with OCD for awhile now. It can sort of be like a habit. So, watch out for OCD's tricks.

Try to identify the ways that you've dealt with obsessional doubts that you don't need to have anymore.

Here are some examples of things to look for:

Continuing to watch out for the "bad stuff" that MIGHT happen.



Checking to see if the OCD is still there.

Keeping OCD around "just in case"

Avoiding stuff that might trigger obsessional doubt (you don't need to void because you know how to handle it now.

Asking other people for reassurance "to be sure".

Repeating rituals quickly or "just once or twice"

Making rituals shorter, but not getting rid of them all the way.









What are situations where you think it is more likely that you will relapse (listen to OCD again)?

Run through the Doubt Sequences you think might happen. Is it normal doubt or obsessional doubt?

Practice pausing on the bridge. What senses can you trust to get you back to the Land of Here and Now? Keep your Vulnerable Self theme in mind. Those are the situations where OCD will try to pull you in.

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If your Vulnerable Self is someone who might be careless, then you might guess that OCD could try to pull you in if you have to take care of a pet or a younger cousin or you are supposed to lock the door or do something else you think is important.

Three questions to ask to help identify OCD doubt:

(1) Is it about my Vulnerable Self theme?(2) Is it an obsessional doubt or a normal doubt?(3) Do I experience that old OCD feeling?

If the answer to all three is **C** then it's an OCD doubt that needs to be dismissed.

If OCD does manage to trick you again:

Don't panic!



You aren't failing!

Look at it as an opportunity to practice your skills and make them stronger!





What to do if you realize OCD tricks you:

Find the obsessional doubt that pulled you into the OCD bubble.

Notice what was going on with you at the time: Were you tired, stressed, excited?

Identify why you think OCD was able to trick you this time around.

How do you prevent OCD from tricking you in this situation again?

Be aware of the trigger



Practice dealing with the trigger and trusting your senses.

Imagine dealing with the trigger without OCD and moving past it in a non-OCD way.



Are there any other similar situations you need to consider?

How confident do you feel now in dealing with this slip on a scale of 0-10?

If the confidence is less than an practice some more.



Things to do now:



Keep finding things you like to do so you can fill up the void that not listening to OCD can bring. This will also help build up your REAL self!

Catch the OCD as fast as you can if is shows up again. It will disappear faster if you do!

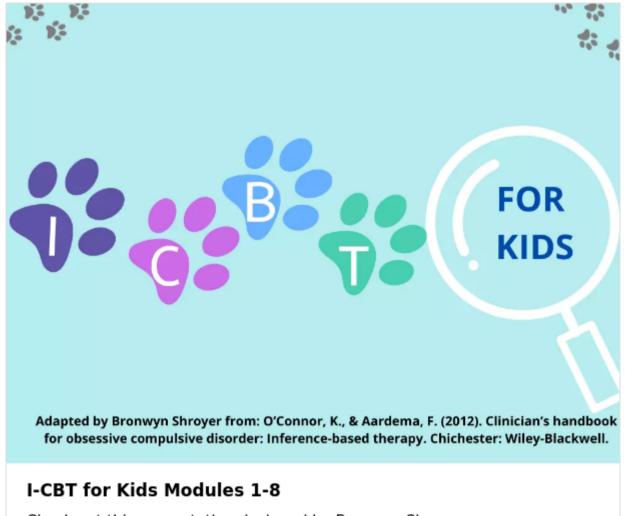
Keep trusting your senses, your common sense and the REAL you! If you handled your OCD while in treatment, you can handle it outside of treatment too!

Build your life around your REAL Self - not your OCD self.

Be proud of yourself! You deserve good things! And living a life trusting yourself instead of OCD is a **very** good thing!!



Link to Modules 1-9



Check out this presentation designed by Bronwyn Shroyer.

Canva Canva