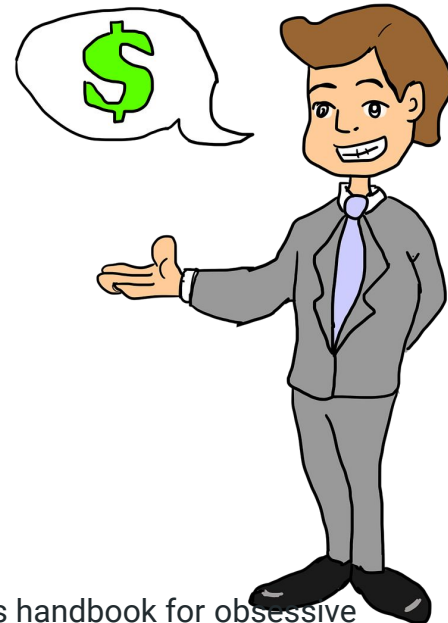
The background features a white background with several colorful circles and dashed lines. In the top left, there is a large teal circle with a white center, a smaller teal circle, and a dashed teal circle. In the top right, there is a large lime green circle, a smaller green circle, and a dashed green circle. In the bottom left, there is a large green circle with a white center, a smaller yellow circle, and a dashed yellow circle. In the bottom right, there is a large yellow circle, a smaller orange circle, and a dashed orange circle. A large dashed blue circle is also present, partially enclosing the text.

Tricks and Cheats of the OCD Con Artist


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

OCD is a con artist that tries to make you doubt reality!

It uses tricks and cheats to make your obsessions appear like they are based in reality...but they're only taking you further from reality!




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

The background features several overlapping circles in various colors: orange, yellow, pink, green, and teal. Some circles are solid, while others are dashed. A large, faint dashed circle frames the central text.

These tricks and cheats make our obsessional story **FALSE and IRRELEVANT**

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

The background features several decorative elements: a large orange ring in the top left, a pink dot below it, a green dashed circle in the bottom left, a teal dot below that, a large blue bubble in the bottom left, a large blue bubble in the top center, a large blue bubble in the top right, a green dashed circle in the middle right, a yellow dot above it, a large blue bubble in the middle right, a large blue bubble in the bottom right, and a teal dashed circle in the bottom right.

**By being aware of
these tricks and
cheats, we can
keep from getting
absorbed into the
OCD bubble.**

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

A decorative graphic featuring a large, light blue dashed circle that frames the text. Inside and around this circle are various smaller circles in different colors: teal, yellow, green, orange, and pink. Some are solid, some are hollow, and some have dashed outlines. A large, solid pink circle is the central focus, with a smaller yellow circle to its upper left and a green hollow circle to its lower right. The text is centered within the dashed circle.

We are not challenging

the content of these
thoughts.



We are challenging

their relevance to the
here and now.

TRICKS & CHEATS OF THE OCD CON ARTIST

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

Mismatching

OCD presents information that happened to someone else, in an attempt to give credibility to your doubt.

Example: My neighbor once left his garage door open and he was robbed. So I could easily leave mine open.

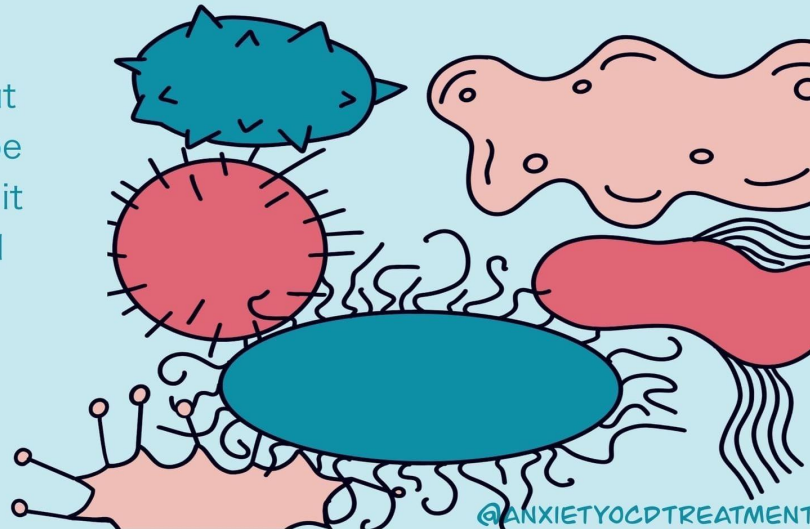


Out-of Context Facts

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

OCD may present “facts” (which may or may not be true), but have nothing to do with the reality in the here and now.

Example: But germs can be airborne, so it is possible I am dirty.

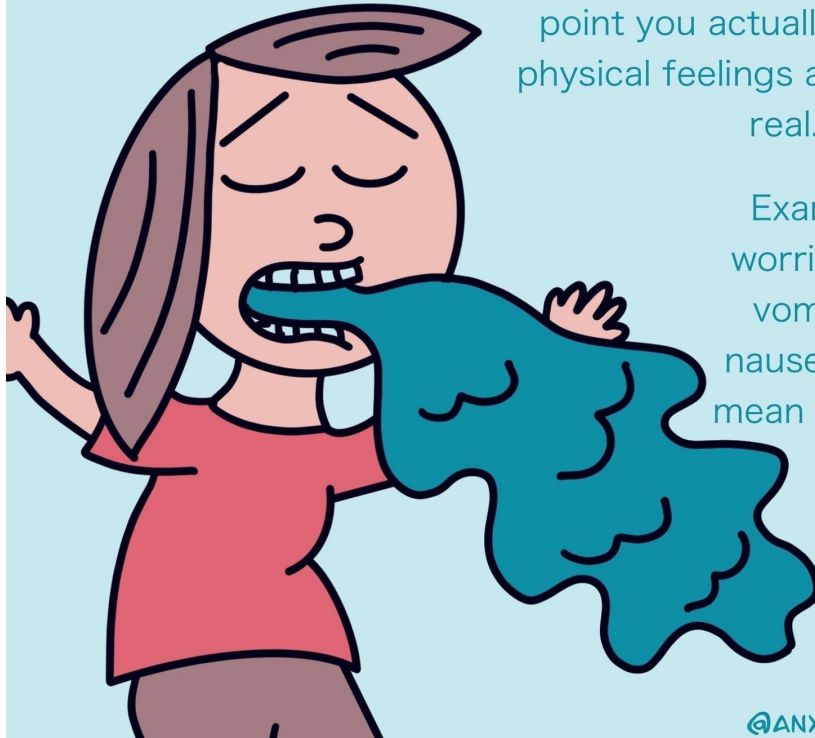


Living the Fear

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

OCD can simulate reality to the point you actually experience physical feelings as if they were real.

Example: I was so worried that I would vomit. Now I feel nauseous. Does this mean I really am sick?



Going Deep

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

OCD may attempt to go beyond reality, deeper and deeper. However it only steers you further from reality.

Example: What if my water is contaminated? I bet I could send the water to a laboratory and they would definitely find something that I can't see.

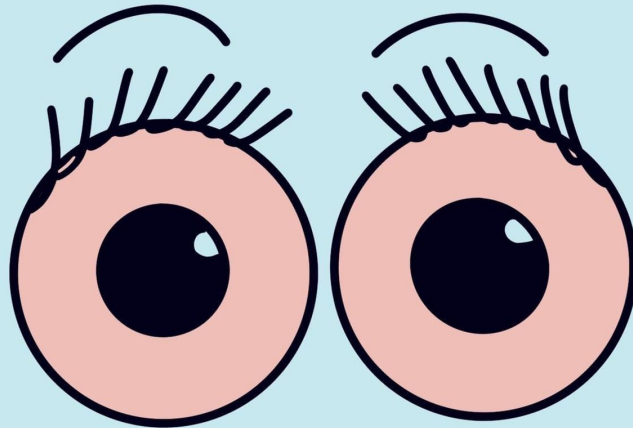


Distrust of the Senses or Self

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

Just as the name says, OCD can make you distrust, or second guess, your own senses or yourself.

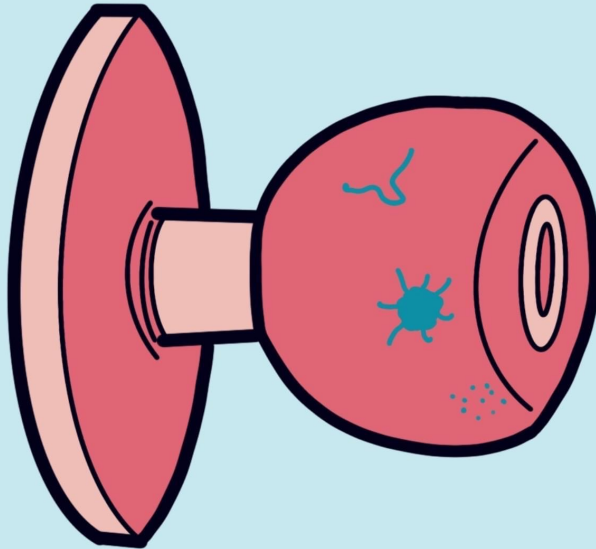
Example: Did I really see that? Maybe I wasn't looking hard enough? Maybe I blinked for a moment?



Reverse Reasoning

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

Typical reasoning starts with an observation in reality, then leads to a conclusion about that observation. Reverse reasoning begins with an idea or "fact," and then creates a conclusion.



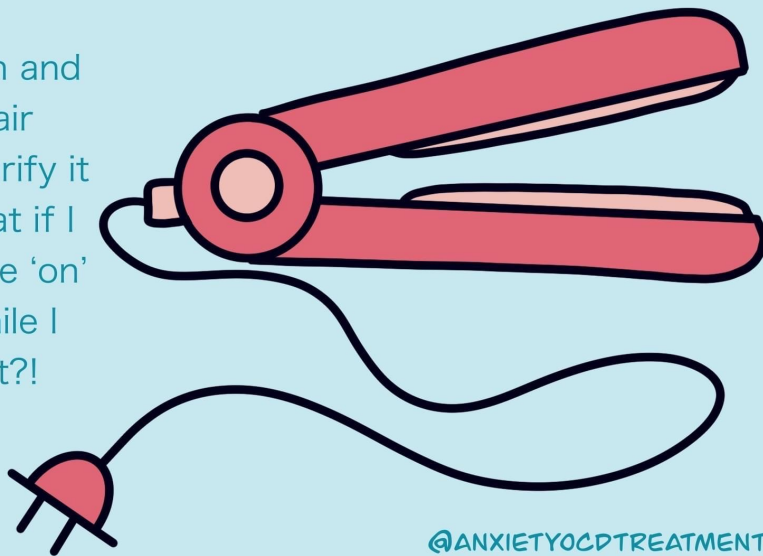
Example: People touch this doorknob all the time. Therefore it must be dirty.

Double Jeopardy

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

OCD convinces you to obey it, which then creates new doubt because something bad might happen due to obeying it.

Example: I gave in and checked my hair straightener to verify it was 'off.' But what if I accidentally hit the 'on' button again while I was checking it?!



Testing It Out

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

OCD may convince you to test out the behavior, and then try to use this as evidence for your doubt.



Example: I doubt my sexual orientation, so I look at other women to test for arousal. Well my doubt must be true because I was looking at other women!

“But maybe this time...”

But maybe this time it's different!

But maybe this time it will actually happen!

But maybe this time I'm actually in danger.

All of these “maybes” are still not relevant in the present moment.

Example: But maybe this time I actually will get sick by touching the door knob.

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

“But maybe later...”

But maybe later something bad will happen. OCD may threaten future consequences. There is still no evidence in the present moment though.

Example: But maybe later my house will burn down if I don't move the light switch just right.

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

Example 1

I'm Gay

What if I'm gay and I don't know it? It is possible. There is no way of knowing one's sexuality with certainty. I have kissed a couple girls 20 years ago; I was drunk and trying to impress a boyfriend at the time, but maybe I truly wanted and liked it. I have known a few women that were married to men, only to realize later that they were gay. And I have heard even more stories than that, I just don't know them personally. It causes so much anxiety, it could happen to me just like them.

Example 1

I'm Gay

What if I'm gay and I don't know it? It is possible. There is no way of knowing one's sexuality with certainty (out-of-context fact). I have kissed a couple girls 20 years ago (out-of-context fact); I was drunk and trying to impress a boyfriend at the time, but maybe I truly wanted and liked it (distrust of self and senses). I have known a few women that were married to men, only to realize later that they were gay (mismatching). And I have heard even more stories than that, I just don't know them personally (mismatching). It causes so much anxiety, it could happen to me just like them.

Example 2

Dirty Trash Can Air

I believe the air above the trashcan is dirty and will contaminate me or other items above it. I can physically see that the trashcan is dirty and there is disgusting, rotting food inside the trashcan. I can smell that the items in the trashcan are going bad. And I know that germs can be airborne, so even if I do not physically touch the garbage, I could still be contaminated. I have a visceral reaction whenever I am directly above a trashcan opening. And I know other people that have the same fear.

Example 2

Dirty trash can air

I believe the air above the trashcan is dirty and will contaminate me or other items above it (maybe later). I can physically see that the trashcan is dirty, there is disgusting, rotting food inside the trashcan, and I can smell that the items in the trashcan are going bad (out-of-context facts, reverse reasoning). And I know that germs can be airborne (out-of-context facts), so even if I do not physically touch the garbage, I could still be contaminated (distrust of the senses). I have a visceral reaction whenever I am directly above a trashcan opening (living the fear). And I know other people that have the same fear (mismatching). When myself or any item, like my plate or silverware, are above a trashcan, they are now contaminated (going deep). I can't see it, but the germs could still be there (distrust of the senses). They can be airborne (out-of-context facts).

Identify
the tricks
and
cheats

1

Notice that they
make our
obsessional story
FALSE and
IRRELEVANT

3

Engage in reality
sensing.
Review your alternate
story.

5

Notice that the
tricks and cheats
pull us further
from reality.

2

PAUSE

4

Move away from the
obsessional story and
act on the knowledge
from your senses.

6

Comments...Questions...Contact



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