

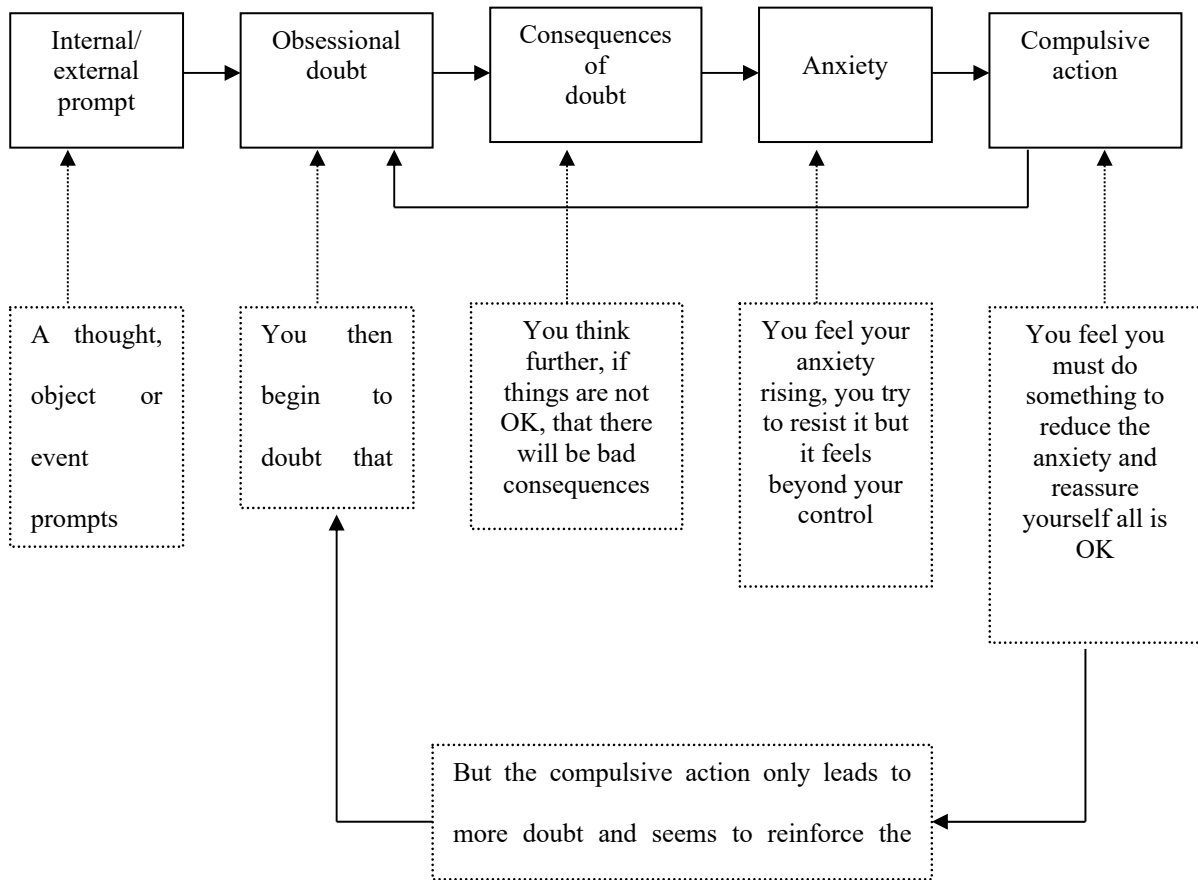
**OVERVIEW OF INFERENCE BASED COGNITIVE THERAPY
FOR OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER**

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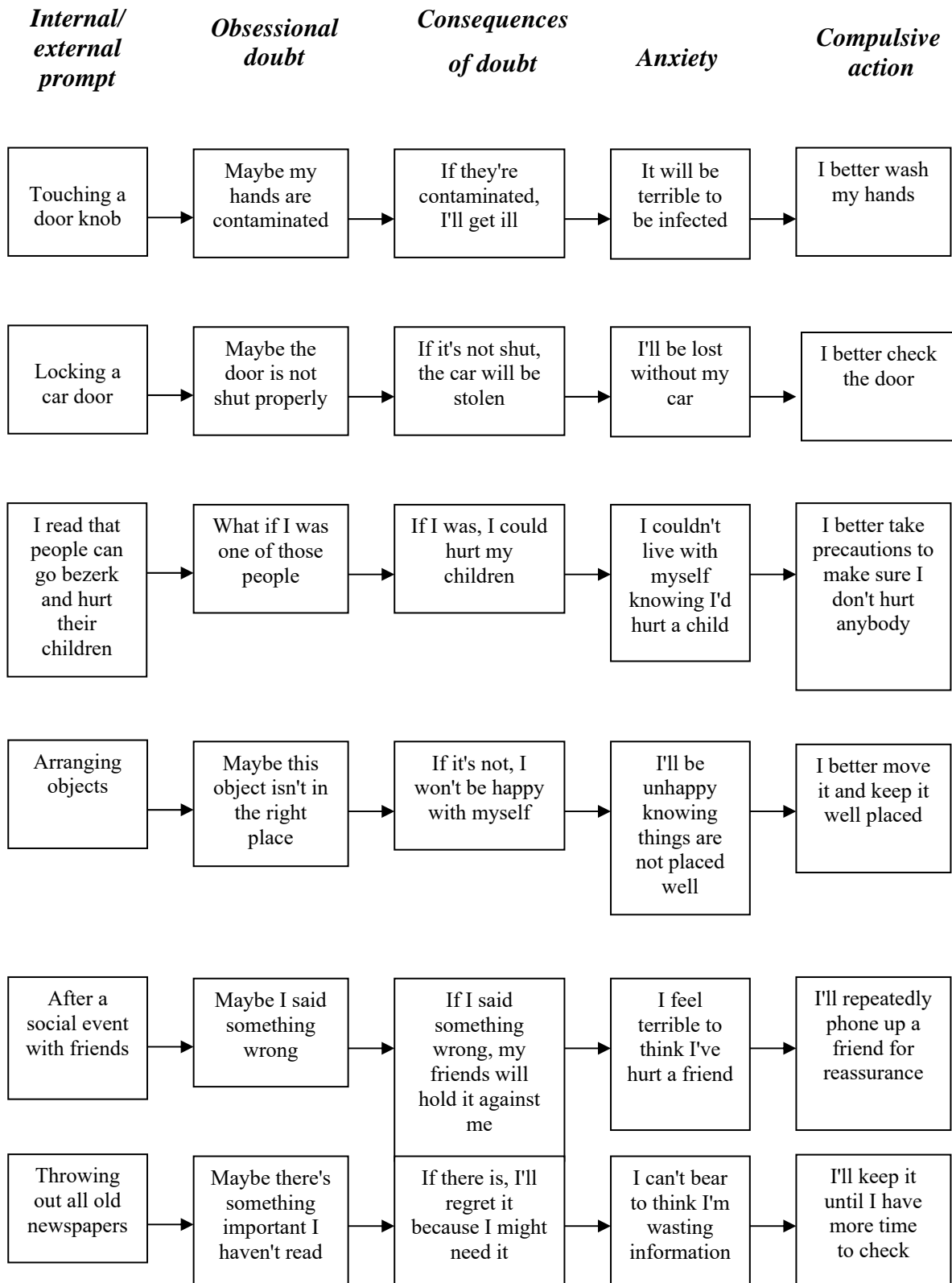
Overview of How Your OCD Works and How We Will Treat It

Obsessive-compulsive disorder as the name implies has two components : obsession and compulsion. The obsession drives the compulsion. Let's see exactly how obsessions lead to compulsions.

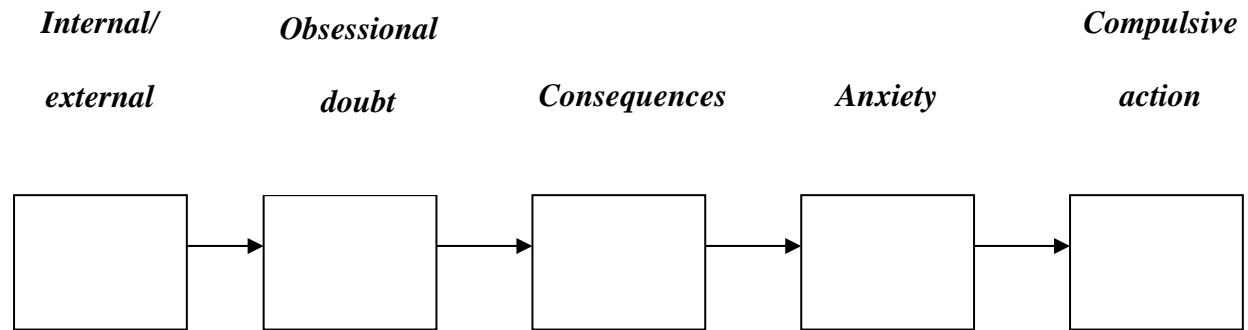
The OCD sequence is as follows :



EXAMPLES :



Now fill in the sequence of your obsession.



THE DOUBT

So, OCD begins with your doubt. It is the doubt that leads you into the OCD sequence. If you did not experience the doubt, you would stay firmly grounded in the reality, in the here and now. You would not get anxious and you would not feel forced to do the compulsion.

Notice everything in the OCD sequence follows from the initial doubt. All the consequences and anxiety, plus the need to do the ritual. You may sometimes feel a little better when you have done the ritual, but of course giving in to the obsession reinforces the credibility of the initial doubt.

The first point you will learn in the program is that OCD doubt is that it is not the same as normal doubt.

In normal questioning, you instinctively look for an answer from reality using your senses.
Ex. Was that bang the window closing? Is the coffee still warm?

The doubts are easily resolved by seeking evidence in the here and now, you look at the window, you feel the coffee cup. Also you accept this sense information as final.

But in OCD doubt, the opposite is the case and the questioning leads you away from reality and your senses into OCD land where doubt only leads to more doubt not to a resolution.

So now you might say why does the OCD doubt lead to more doubt, and not to a resolution since I perform my ritual precisely in order to reduce the doubt and feel more certain. But of course you never feel certain about the doubt even if you do the ritual several times, why so?.

The reason is that the OCD doubt is based on a subjective story which has no basis in reality. Usually what happens is that just as your senses are telling you everything is OK in jumps the doubting story with..... yes but maybe.....

In the program you will learn to distinguish between real sense information and stories, which can sometimes be difficult. Doubting stories usually begin with a "yes but maybe....."

Examples of doubting stories:

* *Sense information :*

The door looks firmly closed..... but..... maybe.....

Story :

.....There is dust inside the lock which I can't see which makes it not shut properly and I remember reading about a person who thought the door was locked but then got robbed, so I better go back and check because.....

Obsessional doubt :

.....Maybe the door isn't shut, even if I know I closed it.

* *Sense information :*

My hands look perfectly clean..... but..... maybe.....

Story :

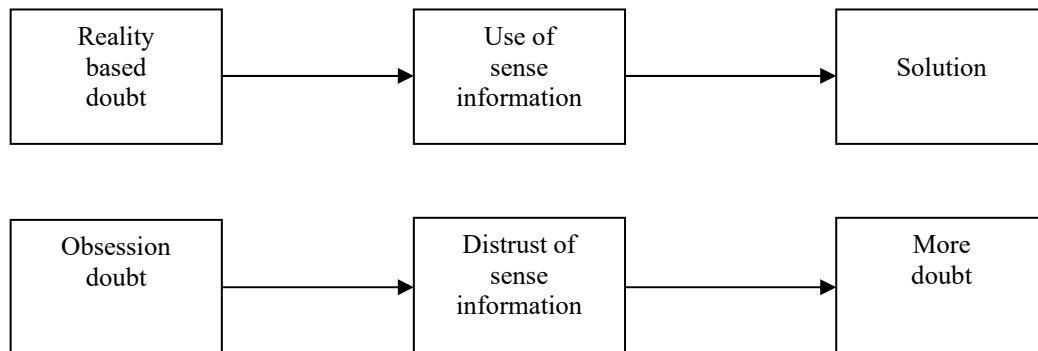
.....There were invisible germs on the pole I touched and the invisible germs might have jumped onto my skin because microbes exist and the microbes might be capable of burrowing into my skin.

Obsessional doubt :

.....So maybe my hands are really contaminated even if I see nothing.

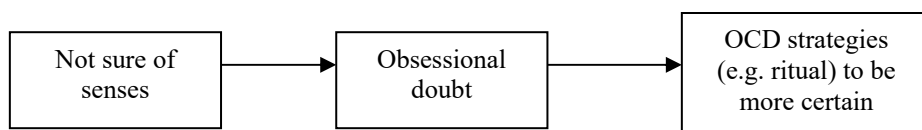
The story leads you up to believe that maybe there is something wrong in reality and that therefore you should act in reality to overcome it. But the doubt is only a story. So when you give in to the story, you are only encouraging more doubt. Which is why the more you perform the ritual the deeper you go into OCD, the less you are in touch with reality and so the more you doubt. Ironically in going into OCD land, you sometimes feel you are getting deeper into reality, but it's exactly the opposite, the more you go into OCD the further away you go from reality.

The sequences are as follows :

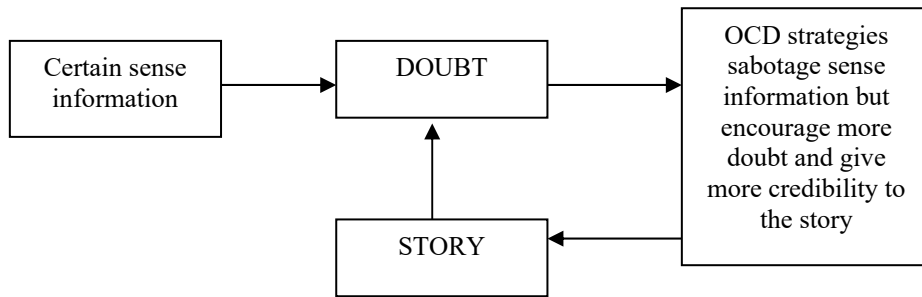


You might argue that it is exactly because you are unsure of your senses that you doubt. But our research shows it is exactly the opposite. You will learn in the program that it is only when you are certain according to your senses, that the obsessional doubt then takes over, and tells you not to be sure of your sense information. It trumps the senses and creates doubt on the basis of a good story, not on the basis of sense information.

How it seems :



How it is :



Now as we have said, you are obviously convinced that your OCD story, even though it is triggered inside your head, has a basis. If not, you would not give it credibility and you would not get anxious about it and act on it. For example, you are not afraid that a bear will attack you now. Because you do not believe there is a bear here, so you are not afraid. Your degree of belief in the story influences your level of anxiety. If you didn't believe in the story, you would not be anxious. So we need to show you how the story is really baseless and constructed on faulty logic.

In fact, the OCD is a bit like a magician leading you to believe things which are not real. Except with magicians you suspect this, but with OCD you are unsuspecting.

Please write down your story behind your obsession. It will begin with :

Maybe..... _____

In the program we will look one by one at the reasoning errors in the OCD story which lead you to believe the obsessional story is possible, when actually it is baseless, in the context in which it arrives.

In the program we compare the way you reason in OCD situations with the way you reason in other comparable situations. You will see that the big difference is the way you ground your reasoning in the senses in the here and now in non-OCD situations. You don't run off with stories which import facts from elsewhere as though they are happening now. **YOU TRUST YOUR SENSES.**

In the program, we compare in detail how you deal with danger in non-OCD situations (example: crossing the road) and how this differs from OCD coping with danger because you are using your senses. So OCD takes you away from reality. You lose touch with the here and now and enter a "bubble".

But you may say.....

.....DOING THE RITUAL MAKES ME FEEL BETTER

You feel better because you have given in to the OCD. It's like giving in to someone shouting orders at you. Initially you feel less stressed. But one thing should be clear, doing the action does not make you more secure, **IT MAKES YOU LESS SECURE.** Also giving in does not make you less stressed, **IT MAKES YOU MORE STRESSED OUT.**

OCD makes you more stressed because you are constantly putting in more effort than necessary and doing irrelevant actions to make yourself feel secure. But effectively, you are working overtime for nothing and worse, all your effort is sabotaging your security, and at the end of all this, you are more anxious than when you started. That's why people often end up avoiding OCD situations. It all seems so stressful. Anticipating, preparing, all that extra attention, muscle tension, you're worn out after OCD, and yet you think OCD makes you less stressed? OCD is some salesman!!

Extra efforts I do in OCD situations :

You only feel better because you have given in to a screaming bully and if you do as the bully says s/he stops screaming for a short while, but of course in the long-run you reinforce the bully.

How can OCD makes you more secure when OCD takes you away from reality? Remember you go in to the OCD spiral on the basis of a subjective doubt which is generated by a story. The more you go into OCD, the more you generate doubt, since this is the only outcome. OCD peddles doubt so it cannot give you anything else. You think you will find a solution in continuing the questioning, but mostly you just doubt more. Sometimes a rule will let you out of the spiral. Example: I've done this five times or I've put a lot of effort so it must be done. But you are NEVER more certain of real information than when you started the doubt, you are always LESS certain. The reason is because you were certain before the OCD doubt came along, but the OCD made you doubt your sense of certainty with its story. So now you are not focused on reality at all but on a story. So actually OCD is exposing you to more danger whilst you are absorbed in its story. We have met people who have ignored real dangers and been hurt because they were too absorbed in their OCD spiral.

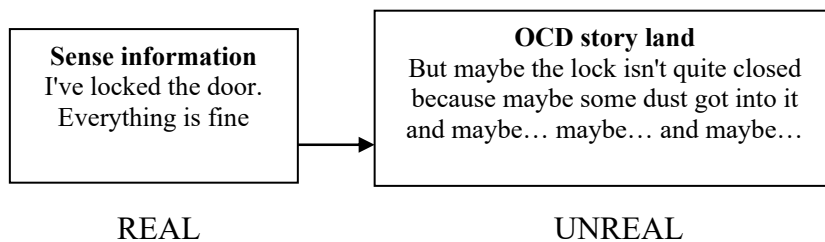
BUT EVEN IF MY DOUBT IS NOT BASED IN REALITY, IT STILL COULD BE CORRECT

We have said that OCD is an imaginary story, now we add another claim that the OCD doubt is ALWAYS WRONG.

Now that sounds a brazen claim, after all you might say, OK it may be imaginary but even imaginary ideas can come true, or just be true by coincidence. However, in the case of OCD, we

know it is always WRONG again by logic because of the way the OCD story is constructed. The doubting takes you away from the here and now by making you believe a story that has nothing to do with the current context. It tells you to ignore your senses. So it is against reality from the word GO, that's why it's wrong.

Your senses have already told you that all is correct. In fact, your senses have given you CERTAIN information as they always do on the current state of affairs. The OCD then goes against this certainty by creating an imaginary story. But since the original sense information was correct, it came from your senses and is real, then the OCD must always be unreal.



The doubt of course jumps in so quickly you don't realize that you were certain before it arrived. This is why in the program we get you to slow down, break up the sequence and create distance between your senses and the doubt.

The proof that the OCD story is false is that never once, in our experience, has an OCD 'maybe' turned out true...

How often has your OCD been correct?

What proof have you ever had that your OCD story is correct?

OCD SABOTAGE

However, not only is the OCD always wrong, it's worse even, since it sabotages the very action it is supposed to make secure.

First of all people with OCD are often so caught up in the OCD bubble they are not aware of what is going on around them. They may not hear their baby cry. They may not notice a car looming up. They may not realize they are being pick pocketed.

But OCD actions can also directly sabotage the aim of being secure. For example, testing a door several times per day will make it loose. Asking people if you said the right thing because you are afraid to upset them will eventually make them upset. Staring at a locker to make sure it is closed properly so you won't be robbed will draw the attention of thieves. Scrubbing hands to remove invisible infections will eventually destroy protective skin.

List some examples of how your OCD sabotages your security.

SO WHY DO I HAVE MY OCD?

You are probably asking why you have one subtype of OCD and not another. Please fill in your subtype here : _____ . As you know there are other subtypes which you do not experience. The answer is simply that you have a theme of vulnerability which makes you more likely to respond to some prompts than others with an imaginary story. This is something

you have learned usually in childhood. To discover your theme, we start again with logic. If you are afraid that "maybe" you have made an error, then clearly you consider yourself the type of person who could make an error. At the same time a strong part of your image is that you do not wish to be seen as someone who could make an error. As we shall see in the program this negative self-conception, like the doubt it drives, is also baseless. But of course you treat it as a real possibility – you have to guard against it – and because it itself is imaginary, so it further incites the imagination. So what is your theme? To discover your theme: (1) take the content of your doubt, it always begins with a maybe; (2) if you have this 'maybe' it means you consider yourself the kind of person to whom this maybe could happen. So your self-referent theme is :

I am the kind of person who could

maybe..... _____

So we now have a complete picture of how your doubt is produced (by the story) and maintained (by you acting as if the story was true) (see Pg 12).

The end-point of therapy is that you are able to carry out actions using just your senses. No stories and no extra efforts or strategies. So in other words, our end-point is your case is : to be able to : _____

without doing : _____

In order to get to this point, we need to go through several steps in the program.

Firstly, you learn to recognize the doubt for what it is, an obsessional doubt not to be taken seriously.

Next, we teach you to distance yourself from the doubt by pausing when it comes along and reflecting on where it comes from.

The third step, gaining the ability to distance yourself from the power of the OCD story by recognizing the reasoning errors which convince you it is possible, and recounting an alternative more reality-based story. This new story also helps the fourth step which is to confront your vulnerability theme and see that there is no evidence for you not to have confidence in yourself. Gaining confidence is an important part of the program.

Finally, you learn through practice using only your senses, feeling confident in your senses and not putting in any extra effort than you do in normal non-OCD actions. We apply these strategies one by one to your obsessions arranged in order of difficulty so we start with the easier and progress to the more difficult.

The program lasts about 20 weeks, and this is enough time to cover all the steps at your own pace. Although the treatment follows a pattern, it is always individually tailored to your needs. So in conclusion, our program emphasizes :

(1) OCD begins with :

Doubt



(2) That the doubt leads to :

Distrust of the senses



(3) Instead of senses you believe in a :

Story



(4) The story is always based on :

Faulty reasoning



(5) At base you are vulnerable
to the story because you have :

Low self-confidence
and vulnerable self-
theme

In the program, we address all aspects of this model step by step in order to eliminate the doubt and restore confidence in your self and senses.