

## The Stories We Tell Ourselves

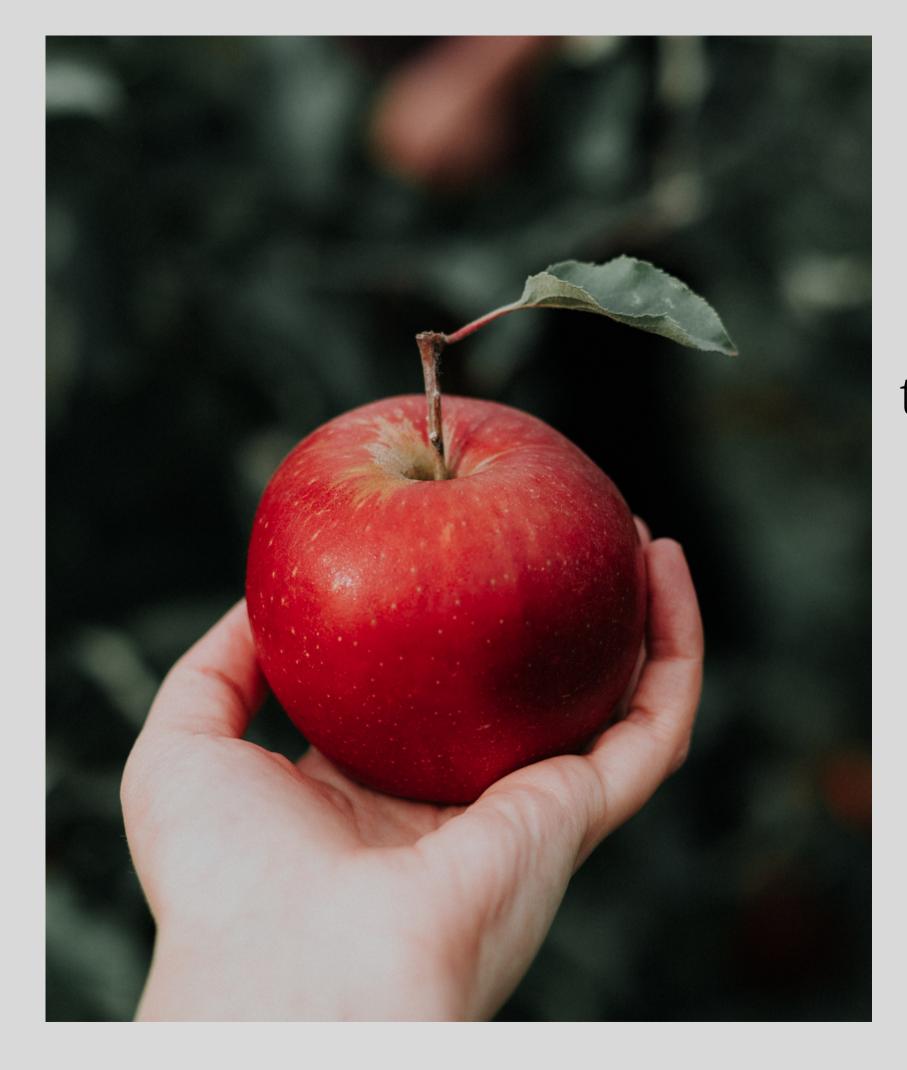
Obsessional Story
Vs
Alternative Story

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

Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.



Would you eat this Apple?



This apple was picked 15 minutes ago after a rainstorm. The person who picked it, brought it inside, washed their hands, then washed the apple in clean water, and put it on a clean towel.

They are now offering the apple to you.

Would you eat this apple?



This apple has been sitting on a counter in a kitchen that has a cockroach infestation. It has been wiped down with a dry paper towel that someone found balled up on the counter. The person bringing it to you has been taking care of a sick child all day and hasn't had time to wash their hands.

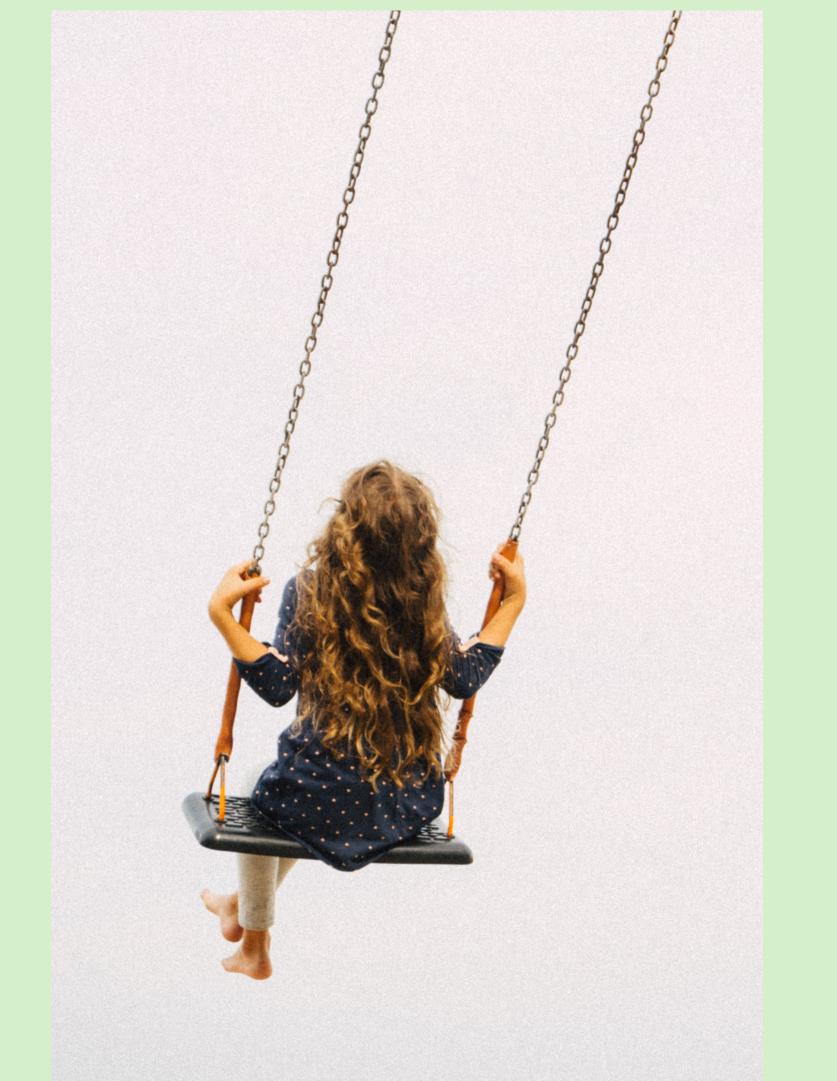
Would you eat this apple?

Stories Matter.

They have the power to make us feel differently about the same situation or object.

Your turn to practice.

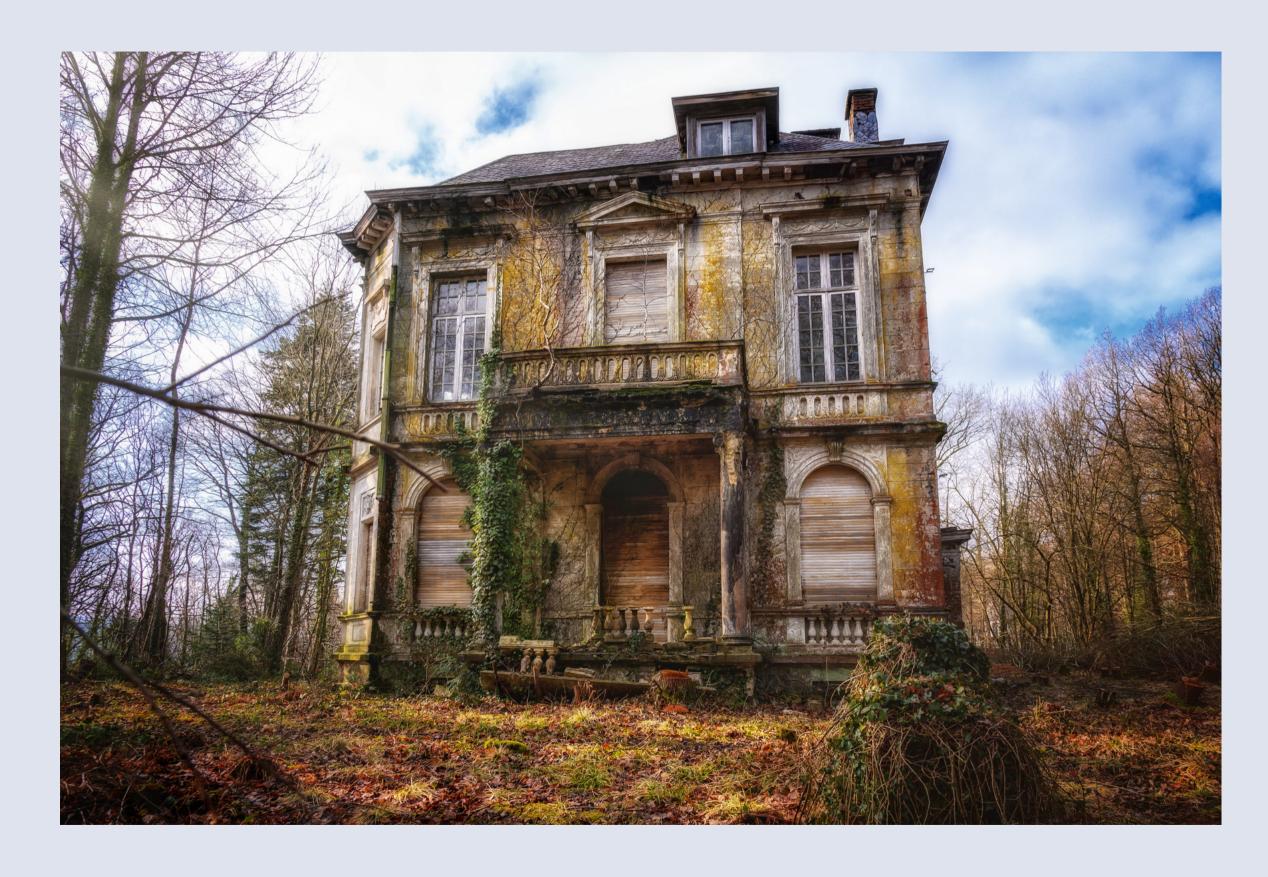
Tell a positive story about this picture:





Same picture, but now tell a negative story. Tell a scary story about this house.





Now tell a story full of hope.

Tell a story about this scene





Now, what's a different story you can tell about the same scene?

What is this

person's

experience in this

scene?



Now give an alternative version





Tell a story that would make you feel safe using this fork

Tell a story that would make you refuse to use this fork





"The stories we tell ourselves have an important effect on our experience, what we believe in, and how real these beliefs feel to us.

In the same manner, obsessional ideas also come about and appear real to us through the stories we tell ourselves."