

## **Introduction**

If you are coping with an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) then you know how intrusive and demanding OCD can be. The key to beating OCD is knowing how to interact with it. It's important to treat it like a separate entity. It has a distinct and independent existence from you.

The artwork in *The OCD Coloring Book Journal* will mentally and emotionally immerse you into the much needed practice of "talking back" to OCD. Each image reinforces a strategy that helps you put OCD in its proper place.

The *OCD Coloring Book Journal* includes a variety of playful, sometimes paradoxical scenes that incorporate therapies such as Exposure & Response Prevention (ERP) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). These therapies are widely recognized as effective treatments for OCD and are explained in *The OCD Coloring Book*.

This is a beginner's guide for people seeking help with OCD. For those familiar with the treatment of OCD, *The OCD Coloring Book Journal* can reinforce concepts previously learned and be used as a relapse prevention strategy.

### **About the Product:**

- 14 playful designs based on proven therapeutic strategies.
- Each coloring page is explained by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who specializes in the treatment of OCD.
- Each coloring page includes a journal entry to help plan, set and reach specific goals.
- Colored pages and slogans can be displayed and used as visual reminders for daily practice.
- Designed for both beginners and those already familiar with the treatment of OCD.

## **OCD KNOWS NOTHING**

OCD has no life experience. That's why it's always asking questions. It can't retain information either, so it can't learn anything. That's why it keeps asking the same questions over and over. Even after you answer its questions, just like a 2 or 3 year old, it keeps asking again and again.

This is the nature of OCD. It has no life experience. No answers. Yet, somehow it manages to boss you around. It does this by tricking you. Every day with OCD is like April Fool's Day. If you know this, you have all the power you need to Boss it Back®.

On April Fool's Day you're fully prepared for the pranks about to be pulled. You're on high alert, vowing to let no one trick you. You say "ha-ha" when somebody tries. No one gets away with it because you're ready for it. This is how you must be every single day with OCD.

If you can agree OCD knows nothing and can't retain information then there's no longer any point in trying to teach it anything. You don't have to prove it wrong or right. You certainly don't have to do what it says. Would you let a 2 or 3 year old boss you around? Of course not! And you wouldn't keep answering the same questions either.

Knowledge is power. Know that OCD is incapable of learning anything. Know that it is a trickster and that every day with OCD is April Fool's Day. Be ready for its pranks and say, "Ha-Ha you can't fool me, OCD."

# OCD KNOWS NOTHING



**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER. USE YOUR POWER.**

## *Call to Action: Don't Be Fooled By OCD*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you stop reasoning with OCD?
- Can you stop trying to prove it wrong or right?
- Can you act as though you don't care?
- Can you follow the majority of people in the world and let uncertainty exist in your life?

**WRITE OUT YOUR PLAN TO NOT BE FOOLED BY OCD. (IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REACTIVE DAY AND A PROACTIVE DAY.)**

**WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY AND CAUSE YOU TO GET FOOLED BY OCD?**

**WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

- What are you fighting for?
- What do you value more than certainty?

**KEEP TRACK OF ALL YOUR VICTORIES. WRITE THEM DOWN. GO BACK AND REVIEW THEM, ESPECIALLY ON A BAD DAY.**

**HOW WILL YOU CELEBRATE YOUR VICTORIES? YOU'RE CREATING NEW PATHWAYS IN YOUR BRAIN. REINFORCE WHAT YOU'RE DISCOVERING BY CELEBRATING.**

## *Journal Entry*

OCD doesn't have life experience or any knowledge about how to live. It's like being bossed around by a two year old that isn't even potty trained.

**WHAT DOES RECOGNIZING OCD'S LACK OF KNOWLEDGE MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU?**

**NOW THAT OCD'S LACK OF EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN REVEALED, WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOUR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCE?**

**IF EVERYDAY IS APRIL FOOL'S DAY WITH OCD, HOW CAN YOU BE BETTER PREPARED FOR ITS DAILY PRANKS?**

**ONE OF OCD'S TRICKS IS TO ASK QUESTIONS THAT ARE UNANSWERABLE. WHAT QUESTION IS OCD ASKING THAT YOU KEEP TRYING TO ANSWER?**

You've probably discovered that OCD is the doubting disease. The harder you try to get a sense of certainty, the less certainty you have. Relief is only temporary.

**HAVE YOU REALIZED THERE IS NO WAY TO FEEL CERTAIN? CAN YOU COMMIT TO GOING WITHOUT THE ANSWER TO OCD'S QUESTION? CAN YOU SHRUG AND WALK AWAY?**

**FEEL THE FEAR AND GO FOR IT**



**FEAR DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN STOP.  
MOST THINGS ARE UNPLEASANT, NOT DANGEROUS. GO FOR IT!**

## **I'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO**

It's not your choice or fault that you have OCD. But, it is your choice to feed it or starve it. If you feed it, then you're being bossed around by OCD. You're practicing avoidance and doing compulsions and mental acts such as rewinding, replaying and analyzing.

Compulsions or rituals can be stressful and lengthy. Many of them have to be restarted. Compulsions eat up time. You're late or too early getting to places. You're getting too little or too much sleep. Compulsions affect other people's time too. They're waiting for you to finish or they're taking the time to give you reassurance.

Sure, you might get temporary relief from performing a compulsion. But for how long? How many minutes or seconds before you have to do another compulsion? Meanwhile life is passing you by and your world is getting smaller.

Resist compulsive behaviors and do what you want or need to do. That's how you starve OCD. Starving it makes it weaker. Feeding it makes it stronger. If you feed it, you are choosing to make it stronger.

Do what you want to do. Live free.

## *Journal Entry*

OCD makes it very hard to know what is truly dangerous and catastrophic. The fear feels so real and yet, it's not! You can tell what's truly dangerous or catastrophic by observing other people. If they aren't worried then you don't need to be either.

And don't fall for OCD's trick: "But maybe this is intuition—maybe you are tuned in." That's one of OCD's favorite pranks to pull on you. It tries to make you think you have magical powers.

**Why would you, out of billions of people in the world, have a magical power that no one else has?**

**WHY WOULD YOU BE THE ONLY ONE IN THE WORLD WHO CAN PREVENT SOMETHING BAD FROM HAPPENING WITH A COMPULSION? AND, IF YOU HAVE THIS POWER, WHY AREN'T YOU RICH AND FAMOUS?**

**NOW THAT YOU ADMIT TO NOT HAVING A MAGICAL POWER, WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOUR LIFE?**

**IF OTHER PEOPLE DON'T HAVE TO PERFORM COMPULSIONS NEITHER DO YOU. HOW DO YOU THINK OTHER PEOPLE MANAGE THEIR FEARS AND ANXIETY WITHOUT COMPULSIONS?**

Having OCD is like having a chaperone in your head 24/7. It's constantly monitoring for danger and sending false alarms. When you perform a compulsion you're giving the "chaperone" steroids. One compulsion equals 10 milligrams of steroids. Which means it's only going to be more hyper-vigilant. OCD becomes a junkie for steroids (i.e., compulsions.)

## *Call to Action: Start Resisting Compulsions*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you try resisting compulsions? Start small.
- Can you skip a ritual or resist asking for reassurance?
- Can you go about your day even though you're anxious?
- Can you build momentum by resisting more and more compulsions?
- Can you accept the uncertainty?

### **WRITE OUT YOUR PLAN OF RESISTANCE:**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF RESISTING COMPULSIONS?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET A STRONG URGE GET IN YOUR WAY OF FREEDOM?**

- What are you fighting for?
- What do you stand to lose if you keep doing compulsions?
- What do you stand to gain if you resist?

OCD is a big force to take on all by yourself! Who is your Accountability Partner(AP)? Share your plan with someone and they'll help you keep on track!

**SAFEGUARD YOUR MOMENTS OF INSPIRATION AND WRITE DOWN ALL YOUR VICTORIES! CELEBRATE WITH YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER!**

## **FEEL THE FEAR AND GO FOR IT**

Whatever triggers your fear or discomfort, OCD says, “Stay away! Watch out! Stop! What if...” OCD is a chaperone on steroids.

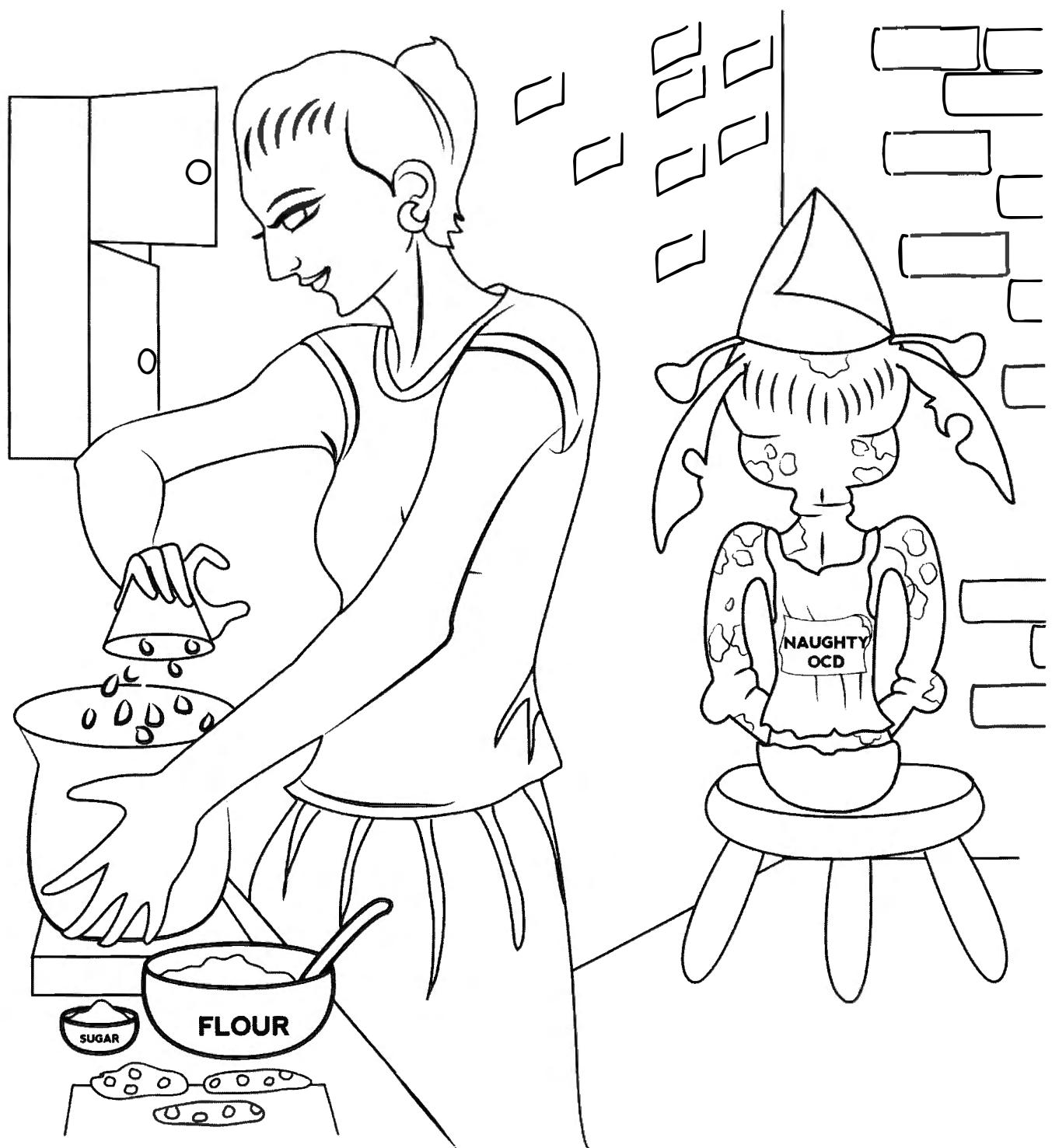
According to OCD, every trigger is dangerous. Every trigger will lead to a catastrophe. It warns: “You’ll be overwhelmed.” “It’ll be all you can think about.” “You’ll feel guilty for the rest of your life.” “This will cause irreversible damage.”

If you’re listening to OCD, then you’re the one giving it steroids. On steroids it’s only going to be more hyper-vigilant. The thoughts will accelerate. The urges will intensify. However, if you feel the fear and go for it, OCD actually decelerates. The thoughts slow down and the urges become less intense.

When you feel the fear and go for it, at first OCD will yell for you to stop. That’s because OCD can’t distinguish between danger and discomfort. Most of your triggers are unpleasant. Not dangerous. But, it’s all the same to OCD.

If you let fear stop you, what will your life be like? Fear doesn’t mean stop. If other people can go, so can you. Take the risk and go for it.

**I'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO**



**DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO NOT WHAT OCD WANTS YOU TO DO.  
LIVE FREE!**

## *Journal Entry*

The goal is not to stop the OCD thoughts. The goal is to learn how to live with them. Everybody gets weird thoughts. It's how you react to them that can create the disorder. It's not your choice to think what you're thinking. But, how you react to those thoughts is your choice.

### **WHAT DOES RECOGNIZING THAT EVERYBODY HAS WEIRD THOUGHTS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU?**

It's not natural or possible to get rid of thoughts. If you try to get rid of thoughts, you'll have to try and push them out by either avoiding triggers or performing compulsions. You might manage to push away a thought for a short amount of time. But, it won't be long before you have to perform another compulsion. Compulsions end up being a waste of time. Avoiding triggers makes your world very small.

### **WHAT WOULD YOU RATHER BE DOING, OR WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BE DOING INSTEAD OF COMPULSIONS OR AVOIDING?**

### **WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOUR LIFE, IF YOU STARVE OCD AND RESIST COMPULSIONS?**

### **HOW DO COMPULSIONS AFFECT THE QUALITY OF YOUR LIFE? WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IF YOU KEEP FEEDING OCD AND PERFORMING COMPULSIONS?**

Perhaps you've overcome physical compulsions. Do you have hidden compulsions? Do you perform mental rituals? Be sure to identify the ways you analyze, overthink, rewind, replay.

## *Call to Action: Stop Feeding OCD*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- What thoughts are you willing to have while you resist compulsions?
- What feelings are you willing to have while you face a fear?
- Would you rather take a (supposed) risk, than live like this?

### **WRITE OUT YOUR PLAN TO BE MORE WILLING TO ACCEPT THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS:**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF ACCEPTING THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

- Why are you going to be willing to have weird thoughts?
- Why won't you try to get rid of the anxiety?
- Is what might get in the way even real?

### **KEEP POSITIVE AND REMIND YOURSELF OF WHAT REALLY MATTERS. WRITE DOWN YOUR BLESSINGS AND WHY YOU HAVE A REASON TO FIGHT SO HARD.**

### **INSTEAD OF GETTING TANGLED UP IN COMPULSIONS, WRITE DOWN YOUR VICTORIES AND TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU DID INSTEAD.**

## ***I CHOOSE WHAT TO FOCUS ON***

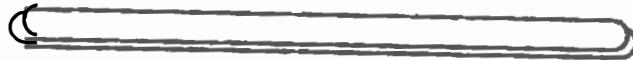
One of the reasons mindfulness training is recommended in the treatment of OCD is because it develops the skill to focus on what matters. OCD is quite a chatterbox and without this skill, your attention will automatically go to OCD.

There are a number of ways to master the skill of focusing. Practice 10-20 minutes per day any one of these or a combination:

- Download meditation apps such as Calm, Headspace or Holosync
- Learn to juggle
- Coloring this book or any other coloring book can be helpful
- Select an object and notice everything about it. When your mind wanders say, “Ooops my mind just wandered.” Then refer back to the [object.]
- Eat with all five senses. Think about how the food was grown and harvested
- Learn to play an instrument

You have the power to choose what to focus on. Do you want to focus on all the OCD thoughts? You don't have to. But, first you must develop the ability to shift your focus to what really matters in life.

# I CHOOSE WHAT TO FOCUS ON



OCD CAN BE QUITE THE CHATTERBOX.  
BUT, YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHOOSE WHAT TO FOCUS ON. CHOOSE!

## *Journal Entry*

If you've been performing compulsions for awhile then you're kind of on automatic pilot. As long as you don't get interrupted you can get through them fairly well. They might be time-consuming but you just do it and get it over with. Sometimes you tell yourself you aren't going to do it, and then boom! All of a sudden you catch yourself in the middle of a compulsion.

It's going to take effort and focused attention to come off automatic pilot.

**IF YOU COULD LEARN HOW TO FOCUS ON WHAT TRULY MATTERS, WHAT WOULD BECOME POSSIBLE FOR YOU? HOW MIGHT THINGS CHANGE?**

**WHEN YOU PRACTICE SOMETHING EVERYDAY WHAT DO YOU DISCOVER ABOUT THE EFFECT OF REPETITIVE BEHAVIORS?**

Once upon a time your compulsions weren't so easy. Even now you can get pretty tangled up in getting a compulsion "just right." But, you're committed to doing them because not doing them takes you out of your comfort zone.

**IF RESISTING COMPULSIONS MAKES YOU UNCOMFORTABLE, WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT DOING SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT USED TO DOING?**

**IF YOU WERE ASKED TO PRACTICE A BRAND NEW HEALTHY HABIT, BUT IT WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT TIME COMMITMENT AND TAKE A LOT OF EFFORT, WOULD YOU TRY IT? THE PAY OFF WOULDN'T HAPPEN RIGHT AWAY. WOULD YOU DO IT ANYWAY?**

## *Call to Action: Start Mindfulness Training*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you listen to a meditation app like Calm or HeadSpace?
- Can you practice juggling for 10-15 minutes each day?
- How about using this coloring book or others to practice focusing on the task at hand?
- For 10 minutes, can you notice 5 sounds, 4 colors/shapes, 3 sensations, 2 smells and 1 taste

### **WHEN WILL YOU PRACTICE 10 MINUTES OF MINDFULNESS AND HOW WILL YOU DO IT?**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF PRACTICING THIS HEALTHY NEW HABIT?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

**KEEP TRACK OF YOUR EFFORT. USE MOTIVATIONAL TOOLS LIKE APPS THAT TRACK AND EVEN REWARD YOUR PROGRESS. CHECK OUT APPS LIKE, HABITBULL OR HABIT STREAKS.**

As you practice mindfulness you will slowly begin to find it easier to shift your focus to what truly matters in your life.

## **COME ALONG WITH ME, OCD**

OCD is portable. It goes wherever you go. It's a chaperone on steroids, always looking for danger. All it takes is for OCD to ask, "What if" or "What does this say about you?" or "What if you can't get this off your mind?" And boom, down the rabbit hole you go.

Thinking about triggers can occur without even being near one. Maybe you're not doing a compulsion at the moment, but thinking about doing the compulsion is happening right now.

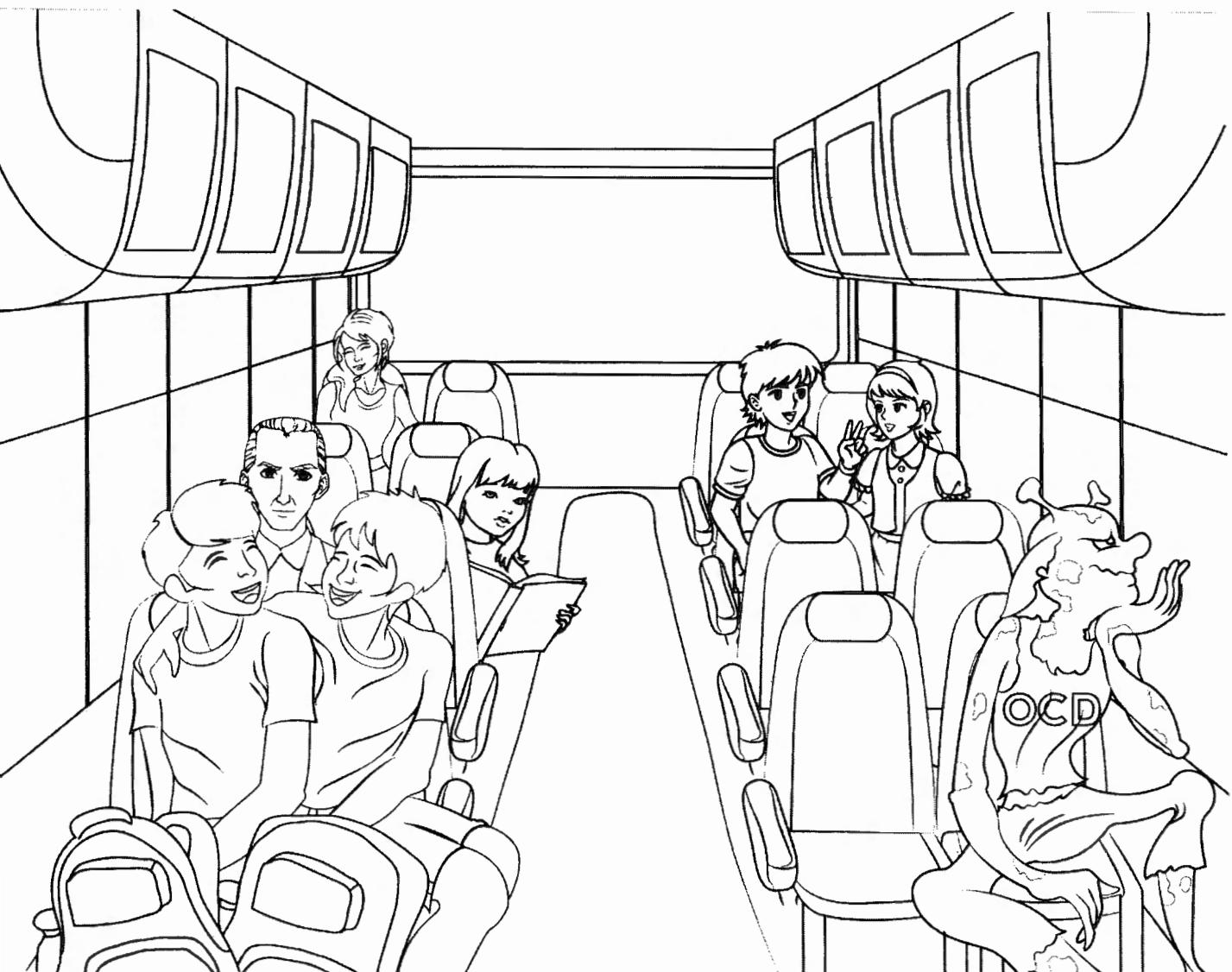
**What's the best way to handle the chatterbox?**

- Hope and pray that OCD doesn't show up
- Check your thoughts to see if there's any OCD currently happening
- Scan the environment looking for triggers so that you can avoid them
- Just get some compulsions over with so you don't have it on your mind

You're right, none of the above.

It's so much more powerful to invite OCD to go wherever you go. It's going with you anyway. Why not show it you're in charge. Just invite it. That signals to OCD you don't care. And when OCD senses you don't care, it goes off duty.

**COME ALONG WITH ME, OCD**



**OCD GOES WHEREVER YOU GO, WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.  
WHY NOT JUST INVITE IT!**

## *Journal Entry*

OCD is a trickster. It lies to you all the time. Your biggest defense is to go on the offense. Instead of waiting around, you make the first move. Like a game of chess, be 3 steps ahead of OCD.

The way you stay ahead of the game is to lie to OCD. Go on the offense with a lie like this one: Act like you don't care when OCD is chattering in your head all day long. This has nothing to do with FEELING like you don't care. It's ACTING like you don't care.

Instead of dreading OCD, invite it. Trick it into believing its questions and comments don't bother you. Don't respond to its threats, just shrug as if you don't care.

**IF YOU TRICK OCD INTO THINKING YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN, WHAT DOES THIS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU?**

**WHEN YOU BECOME MORE PROACTIVE AND GO ON THE OFFENSE, WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOUR ABILITY TO STRATEGIZE AND OUTSMART OCD?**

**THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DON'T OUTSMART OCD.**

- Do you live your life in hiding? Avoiding triggers?
- Do you constantly monitor your thoughts and analyze them?
- Are you stuck trying to answer the same question over and over?
- Do you get tricked into magical thinking and compulsions?

You are much smarter than OCD. It has no strategic ability. It has the mind of a reptile. It attacks like a snake for no good reason. Freezes like a chameleon. Hides like a turtle. There's no logic or strategic thinking behind what a reptile does. It's very simple-minded. Everything is dangerous to a reptile.

Whereas your brain is so much more complicated and beautiful than a reptile. You have the ability to strategize and plan an unexpected attack. It's not about changing your actual feelings. It's about your acting abilities. It's time to win an Oscar.

*Call to Action: Invite OCD to Be Present. Act Like You Don't Care.*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you pick a person, place or thing to visit and invite OCD thoughts to join you.
- When a thought occurs, can you say, "Good! There's my thought! I want it!"
- When the anxiety surfaces, can you say, "Good! There's my anxiety! I want this!"

**ACCEPTING OCD THOUGHTS IS THE ROADMAP TOWARD THE LIFE YOU WANT.  
FOCUS ON THE BIG PICTURE AND MAKE A PLAN TO INVITE OCD TO JOIN YOU:**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF WINNING AN OSCAR AWARD?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

**WHILE BALANCING DAY TO DAY TASKS, YOU'RE ALSO INVITING OCD TO TAG ALONG. KEEP A TALLY OF HOW OFTEN YOU SAY, "GOOD THERE'S MY THOUGHTS. I WANT THEM." OR "GOOD THERE'S MY ANXIETY. I WANT THIS!"**

A good way to keep a tally is to use a counter. (Referees use these to keep score.) You can also easily keep track by writing a tally mark on your hand or wrist. Everyday be determined to increase the count total.

**RECORD YOUR TALLY COUNT HERE FOR AT LEAST 15 DAYS:**

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## **WHATEVER HAPPENS, HAPPENS**

↖\_(⊙)\_↗ This is the amazing remedy for OCD. It's not a cure but it is the way to counteract OCD. If you can shrug at OCD and say, "whatever" you're on your way to freeing your mind.

At first this is very difficult. Your feelings might not match the shrug. You're shrugging as if you don't care but you feel on fire—ready to explode. Keep shrugging. Fake it 'til you become it. OCD doesn't care about your feelings as much as it cares about your words and actions.

Remember the Cherokee tale of two wolves? There's a good wolf and a bad wolf. Which one wins? The one you feed. If OCD says go back, you go forward. If OCD says stop, you keep going. But, wow, if you add a shrug and a "whatever" that will really gives it some oomph.

If you don't shrug, and instead check to make sure everything is all right, you've just blown your chance at confidence. Checking only makes you become more unsure of yourself. You might get temporary relief but in the long run, that doesn't free your mind.

The more you tolerate doubt and shrug at uncertainty, the more confident you become. Shrugging makes you become more trusting. Resist checking. Tolerate the anxiety. It's not dangerous. It's just unpleasant. You can handle it. Endure the doubt. ↖\_(⊙)\_↗

# WHATEVER HAPPENS, HAPPENS



YOU WILL NEVER BECOME CONFIDENT BY CHECKING. DON'T CHECK. WALK AWAY.

## *Journal Entry*

Are you a checker? Do you rely less and less on your memory? What kind of checking do you do? Do you Google? Do you seek reassurance from others or even yourself? Do you conduct numerous visual checks or rewind and replay something in your mind?

If you're checking, you're shredding every ounce of confidence you ever had. You won't be able to trust yourself until you stop checking. If you check it out...you're checking out. OCD will rob you of life.

When you seek certainty, you're feeding OCD. It gets stronger and you get weaker. I know you don't want anything bad to happen. I know you hate feeling anxious. But, you have to trick OCD into thinking you don't really mind at all. "Whatever happens, happens." This isn't how you truly feel. It's a trick!

**WHEN OCD THREATENS YOU WITH SOMETHING BAD POSSIBLY HAPPENING,  
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU SHRUGGED AND SAID, "MAYBE. MAYBE NOT.  
TIME WILL TELL."**

**WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOURSELF IF YOU BEGAN TO TOLERATE  
ANXIETY?**

**IF YOU DO THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT OCD TELLS YOU TO DO, WHAT WILL YOU  
DISCOVER ABOUT YOUR DEFIANCE?**

**WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE IF YOU FREE YOUR BEHAVIOR OF COMPULSIONS?  
WHAT COULD LIFE BE LIKE?**

## *Call to Action: Get Honest about Compulsions*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Do you agree that compulsions offer no true protection?
- Do you agree that anxiety is only temporarily reduced by a compulsion?
- Do you agree that compulsions give only a false sense of security?
- Do you agree that if compulsions really worked, you'd be rich and famous?

### **BASED ON THESE AGREEMENTS, DO YOU HAVE A RATIONAL REASON TO CONTINUE TO PERFORM COMPULSIONS?**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF DISCONTINUING COMPULSIONS?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY OF LIVING THE LIFE YOU WANT TO LIVE?**

- What do you have to lose if you live by OCD's rules and not your own?
- Why do you think you should fight for your life?
- Why do you want your freedom?

**THE URGE TO PERFORM RITUALS AND MENTAL ACTS WILL BE STRONGER THAN EVER. TALK WITH YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER (AP) AND ASK HIM OR HER FOR SOME EXTRA INSPIRATION THIS WEEK! RECORD WHAT YOUR AP DOES OR SAYS THAT HELPS YOU TO BE DETERMINED.**

**SAFEGUARD YOUR MOMENTS OF INSPIRATION AND WRITE DOWN ALL YOUR VICTORIES! CELEBRATE WITH YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER!**

## Additional Notes

## **YOU CRACK ME UP, OCD**

The reason OCD gets away with so much is because people take it so seriously. Everybody gets weird thoughts. But not everybody chuckles and says, “Wow, that was weird.” What does weird mean? Is weird good or bad? Neither!

Something even better than calling your OCD thoughts weird or different is to actually laugh at the weird thoughts. I call my weird thoughts, “Dorpey Joes.” It’s funny sounding right? It’s signaling to my brain I don’t take these thoughts seriously. Laughing at OCD deflates it. It lets out all the air.

Even if it’s hard to laugh at the thoughts, fake it. If you smile or even better laugh, your brain will register that maybe everything is okay. Of course OCD will test you and say, “Why are you laughing at such a horrible thought? Does this mean you are a horrible person?”

OCD is nothing but a liar. Fight fire with fire and lie right back. Act like the weird thoughts are funny, no matter how you really feel. Lie until your pants are on fire. Let go and laugh for 60 seconds, and when OCD questions why you’re laughing, laugh harder.

Since laughter is one of the most powerful weapons against OCD, Google “Laughter Yoga University.”

**YOU CRACK ME UP, OCD**



**HUMOR IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON YOU HAVE AGAINST OCD. LAUGH!**

## *Journal Entry*

When you laugh you're sending your brain a message that something is funny and not being taken seriously. Your brain computes a lack of danger when you laugh. This is how you get back at OCD the trickster. You laugh. You trick OCD into thinking that the weird thought you just had is funny. OCD will get confused. It will try to suggest you're a bad person for not taking the thought seriously. Just keep laughing.

Everybody gets weird scary thoughts. Without OCD, a person says "oh that was weird" and moves on. With OCD, a person is likely to get trapped into evaluating and analyzing the thought. They wonder if there's any credence or intention behind the thought. They become overwhelmed with questions and uncertainty and alas, down the rabbit hole they go. Had they laughed from the beginning, the outcome would be different.

**WHAT DOES IT MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU, IF NONE OF YOUR OCD THOUGHTS ARE MEANT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY?**

**IF YOU DO NOTHING BUT LAUGH AT OCD THOUGHTS, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'LL DISCOVER?**

The laugh needs to come from your belly. Your body needs to feel the vibration.

**PRACTICE BELLY LAUGHING AT SOMETHING NEUTRAL. YOUTUBE "FUNNY VIDEOS THAT MAKE YOU LAUGH SO HARD YOU CRY." TRY TO FIND A VIDEO THAT DOESN'T TRIGGER YOUR OCD. THE GOAL IS TO OVER EXAGGERATE YOUR LAUGH.**

You might be feeling anxious and/or depressed. Commit to doing this exercise anyway. No matter how you're feeling, laugh so hard your body wobbles. Play up. Go overboard. Keep it up for as long as you can.

## **WRITE DOWN ANYTHING POSITIVE YOU NOTICED FROM THIS EXERCISE.**

### *Call to Action: Laugh at OCD*

#### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you practice laughing hard at something neutral—non OCD-related.
- Can you practice laughing on command with no prop? Just laugh for no reason.
- Can you write down an OCD trigger word or thought and laugh at it really hard?
- Can you keep laughing for 30-60 seconds?

#### **THE WAY TO BUILD A SKILL IS THROUGH REPETITION. HOW OFTEN CAN YOU PRACTICE LAUGHING AT OCD?**

#### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF LAUGHING AT OCD?**

- ACTUAL EVIDENCE or FEAR? (False Evidence Appearing Real.)
- A feeling of depression or anxiety? (Thoughts aren't true and feelings aren't facts.)

#### **WHY WON'T YOU LET A FEAR OR A FEELING GET IN YOUR WAY OF LAUGHING AT OCD?**

- Why is it more important to try something new than continue feeling defeated?
- Why do you want to stop living such a serious worrisome life?

**YOU ARE THE KEEPER OF YOUR HAPPINESS. WHEN DID YOU “BOSS IT BACK” AND LAUGH AT OCD?**

## Additional Notes

## *I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU, OCD*

OCD is actually desperately wanting you to take charge. It doesn't like being on duty 24/7. It's exhausting and the work is pointless and unrewarding. It's poking at you night and day so that you finally say, "ENOUGH is ENOUGH!"

Have someone poke you in the arm repeatedly and see how long you'll put up with it. How long before you say, "I've had enough of this!" What do you look like when you say it? What is your tone of voice. Do you sound like you mean it or are you begging, "Please stop."

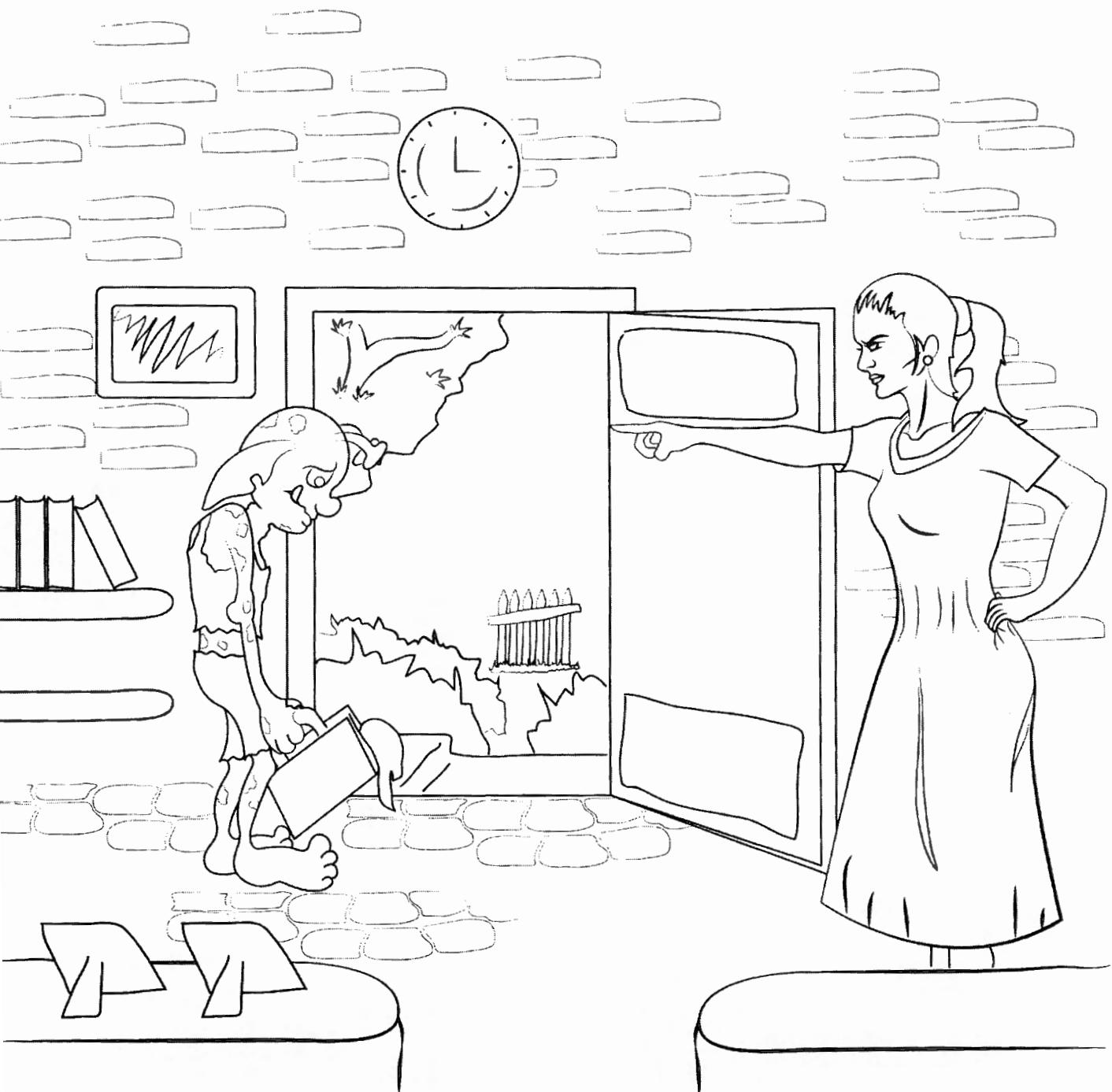
Find your Super Pose. Chin up. Hands on your hips. Whatever your most powerful stance is, go into it and say, "I've had it with you OCD. Enough is enough. I'm taking charge." Don't imagine doing this. Do it! Literally Super Pose and show your grit.

What does it mean to be gritty?

<u>G</u> =Guts	The guts to feel the fear.
<u>R</u> =Rise Up	It's not the fall that matters. It's the getting up that counts!
<u>I</u> =Initiative	Initiate opportunities to be the boss and take charge.
<u>T</u> =Tenacity	If at first you don't succeed try, try again—be tenacious.

Or how about, Good Riddance I'm Taking Off. I've had enough, OCD!

**I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU OCD**



**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. TAKE CHARGE!**

## *Journal Entry*

Eventually, you'll get to the point where you RISE UP and say you're sick and tired of OCD. This is when you've had enough and want to make changes. What you're doing isn't working and you're ready to reclaim your life.

Picture what RISING UP looks and sounds like. Imagine how your tone of voice will sound stern and definitive. When you stand up and say, "Enough is enough, your chin will be held high and your hands will be on your hips or pumped into a fist.

There is a second word inside of EMOTION. Do you see it? It's motion. Motion creates eMotion. If your head is low and your shoulders are forward you'll create depression. On the contrary, a Super Pose (head high and shoulders pushed back) creates a sense of power.

**NO MATTER HOW SAD OR ANXIOUS YOU'RE FEELING, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'LL DISCOVER IF YOU STRIKE A SUPER POSE?**

**IF YOU SUPER POSE AND TELL OCD ENOUGH IS ENOUGH WHAT WILL BECOME POSSIBLE? HOW MIGHT THINGS CHANGE?**

OCD will try to trick you into believing you must feel a certain way before an action can be taken. It's actually the reverse! Motion creates eMotion. Have you ever said, "I can't get motivated. I'm too depressed. I'm tired." Strike a Super Pose and you'll notice a change in energy. Pump your fists and you'll notice a strength you didn't know was there.

Strike a Super Pose and you'll get the guts to rise up against OCD. Sit in a slump and you'll keep feeling defeated. Super Posing is your superpower!

**WHICH DO YOU THINK REPRESENTS MORE POWER: MOTIVATION (A FEELING) OR DETERMINATION (A MINDSET)?**

## *Call to Action: Super Pose*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- When you're happy, can you intensify the feeling a bit more by striking a Super Pose?
- Before facing a trigger, can you Super Pose to communicate a determined mindset?
- After Rising Up and facing OCD can you go into a Super Pose to amplify the victory.
- When you are in a slump, can you Super Pose your way out of it?

**WHEN ARE THE TIMES YOU MOST NEED TO SUPER POSE? COMMIT TO SUPER POSING DURING THESE TIMES NO MATTER HOW YOU ARE FEELING.**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF SUPER POSING?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET THESE LIES GET IN YOUR WAY OF SUPER POSING?**

Warning: OCD will tell you to keep your victories on the down low. OCD will sound an alarm. "What if you can't do it again? What if the other shoe drops? Why are you making a big deal out of nothing?"

It's going to try and stop you from memorializing your victory with a Super Pose.

### **WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?**

## **PRACTICE MAKES PROGRESS**

You get good at whatever you practice. If you practice doing compulsions, you'll get good at it. If you practice resisting compulsions, guess what? Right! You'll get good at resisting!

Make sure you identify your compulsions. Mental acts are the hardest to identify. Trying to get certainty by rewinding and replaying, analyzing your thoughts and feelings, mentally going through a ritual—those can all be compulsions. Once you've identified them, RESIST!

Even engaging in a dialogue with OCD can be a compulsion. The only thing you need to say to OCD is “Whatever. Who cares. So what.” Just agree with it and you’re on your way to freedom. But, don’t engage in a back and forth discussion with OCD. RESIST!

Reassurance-seeking is another compulsion that feeds OCD. Reassurance-seeking is like alcohol to an alcoholic. It gives temporary relief but more and more of it is needed. If you’re asking for reassurance, or reassuring yourself, you are feeding OCD. RESIST!

The more you resist the easier it gets. Practice saying NO to OCD. You’ll be set free.

## PRACTICE MAKES PROGRESS



PRACTICE RESISTING COMPULSIONS AND YOU'LL GET GOOD AT IT.  
FEEL A COMPULSION? JUST DON'T DO IT!

## *Journal Entry*

Sometimes an individual will say that an exposure exercise was too traumatic. It's the only exposure they've ever done. And the last one they say they'll do. This is a case of someone who went too fast and hard. Someone who needs to practice the small stuff first.

It's important to start small and gradually build momentum through repetition. Start slow and repeat the exercise over and over until it becomes boring. Then move up the hierarchy to something more difficult.

Don't try to be perfect about it. Perfection comes from a place of fear. Fear of making a mistake. Fear of not doing it "just right." Fear that you won't get better because it wasn't done properly.

**WHAT WOULD BECOME POSSIBLE IF YOU PRACTICED FACING YOUR FEARS ON A CONSISTENT BASIS?**

**HAVE YOU DISCOVERED YOU'RE BETTER AT WHAT YOU PRACTICE THE MOST?**

Practice makes progress, not perfect. Whatever you practice you'll get good at it. If you practice compulsions, you'll get good at them. If you practice defying OCD, you'll get good at it.

**ARE YOU GOOD AT FACING FEARS OR AVOIDING? WHICH DO YOU PRACTICE THE MOST?**

Have you identified all of the ways you feed OCD? Compulsions aren't the only way to feed OCD. Avoiding triggers and seeking reassurance make OCD very strong. Before you can say NO to OCD you've got to know all the ways you've been saying YES to OCD.

## **LIST:**

- Your compulsions, including mental acts or rituals.
- All the ways you seek reassurance.
- All the people, places and things you avoid.

## *Call to Action: Practice Something New*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you practice something new for at least 10 minutes everyday?
- Why not practice a musical instrument, juggling or meditation activity, which have the added benefit of improving your concentration and focus?
- Will you be determined to practice even if you lack motivation?

### **WHAT WILL YOU COMMIT TO DO FOR 10 MINUTES EVERYDAY?**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF PRACTICING EVERYDAY?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

### **WHAT DO YOU COMMIT TO DOING IF YOU GET OFF TRACK AND SKIP A FEW DAYS?**

**KEEP TRACK OF WHAT YOU'RE PRACTICING.**

- Use the HabitBull app or some other way to track your progress.
  - To make it more interesting, rate your level of motivation everyday that you practice.
  - Notice if your motivation increases over time.

**ESPECIALLY CELEBRATE THE DAYS YOU PRACTICED WHEN YOU HAD NO MOTIVATION.**

## Additional Notes

## **LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY**

The belief that there is such a thing as certainty is a lie. And, OCD the liar is very good at convincing you that you are more special than anybody else. That you, out of all the people in the world, can achieve certainty. It's a feat no one else has ever achieved. But, OCD says, "You can do it!"

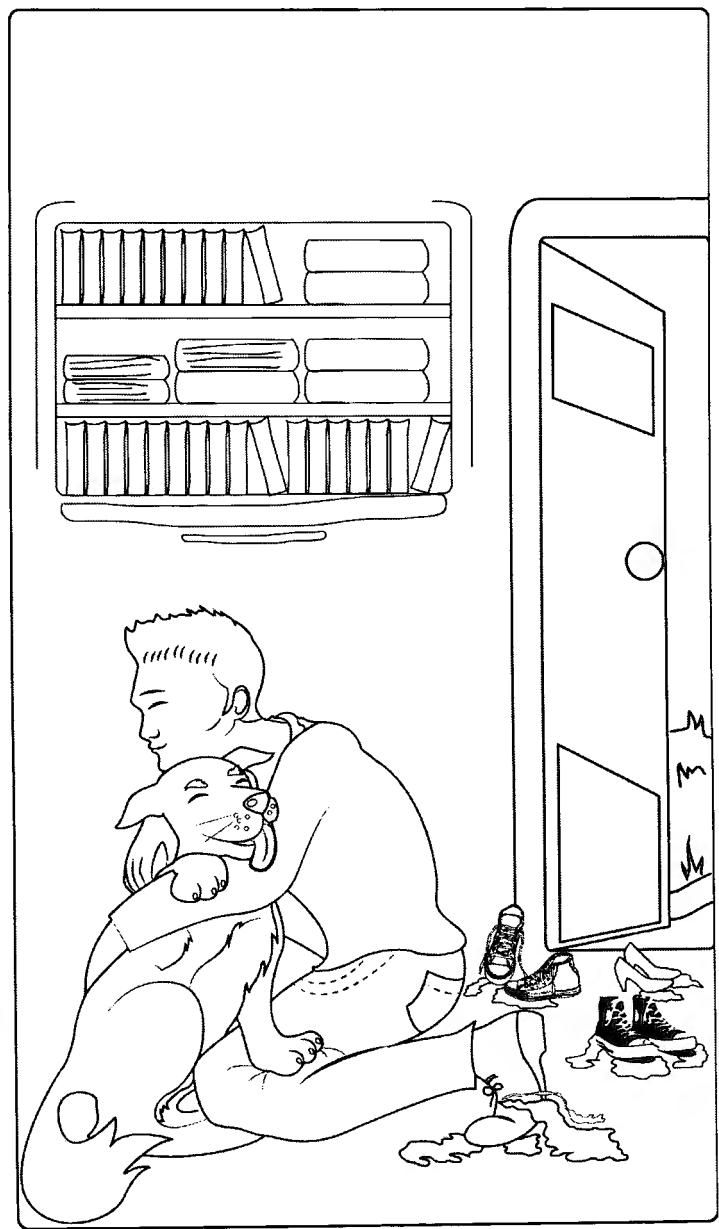
It's actually very natural to have doubt. When you think about it, how can there be anything but? Yet, OCD the trickster, has you believing you are the one person in the entire world who shouldn't have to live with doubt. You are unique, but not nearly as special as OCD tells you.

No one on this earth has certainty. Everybody must live without it. You can't do enough to get certainty. No matter what compulsion you perform, you will still have doubt.

Maybe a compulsion tricks you into feeling certainty for the moment, but it won't last because it's not natural to live with certainty. It's impossible to achieve. And if OCD has its way, it will get you to spend a lifetime trying to achieve the impossible.

If you accept living with uncertainty, like the rest of the world, you'll be set free. You won't have to waste another moment trying to get something you can never have. Accept uncertainty and be free.

## LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY



**WE CAN NEVER DO ENOUGH TO HAVE CERTAINTY. ACCEPT IT!**

## *Journal Entry*

You get a weird thought. Everybody gets them. But, OCD will ask a lot of questions about that thought. OCD inspires you to figure out if the thought signals something bad lies ahead. Maybe it's not dangerous but it's gross or just not "right."

If it's up to OCD, until you feel certain that all is right in your world or everybody is safe...you can't rest. You'll analyze, Google, seek reassurance, double-triple check, excessively wash, avoid, jump, skip, hop...You'll do whatever it takes to get answers and feel certain.

But, even if you manage to get certainty...it's temporary and the doubt returns.

It's not rational to think that obtaining certainty is possible. Thoughts, feelings and sensations are impermanent. They are passing, fleeting...here today, gone tomorrow. Everything in life is impermanent. Even a rock is undergoing change. It's not logical to expect to have certainty in such an impermanent world.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE REASON THAT OUT OF 7.5 BILLION PEOPLE, YOU ARE THE ONLY PERSON IN THE WORLD WHO CAN OBTAIN CERTAINTY?**

**WHAT WOULD BECOME POSSIBLE FOR YOU IF YOU ACKNOWLEDGED THAT CERTAINTY CAN NEVER BE OBTAINED?**

**WHAT WOULD YOU DISCOVER ABOUT LIVING WITH OCD IF YOU DIDN'T NEED TO SEEK CERTAINTY ANYMORE?**

**WOULD YOU RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE ENGAGE IN YOUR COMPULSIONS? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

## *Call to Action: Evaluate the Effectiveness of Compulsions*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- In order to collect data, can you keep track of your compulsions for 72 hours?
- Can you measure the time in between compulsions? For example, washed hands at 1:00pm. Wiped hands on pants at 1:15pm. Visually checked hands at 1:23pm. Retraced steps at 1:45pm.
- Can you rate your anxiety, before, during and after a compulsion?
- Can you keep track of how often you resist an urge to perform a compulsion?

### **DURING WHAT PART OF THE WEEK WILL YOU COLLECT DATA FOR 72 HOURS ABOUT YOUR COMPULSIONS?**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF COLLECTING DATA FOR 72 HOURS?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

### **DID YOU CONDUCT FEWER OR MORE COMPULSIONS DURING THE 72 HOUR OBSERVATION PERIOD? WHY DO YOU THINK THIS HAPPENED?**

### **ONCE YOU HAVE COLLECTED DATA FOR 72 HOURS, WRITE DOWN YOUR ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS ABOUT WHETHER YOU OBTAINED CERTAINTY OR JUST TEMPORARY RELIEF?**

## **I'M PERFECTLY IMPERFECT**

OCD makes you think you're special. It convinces you that you can be something no one else can be. There is no perfect person walking this earth today. No such person exists. And yet, OCD tells you that YOU can be perfect—that you should be perfect.

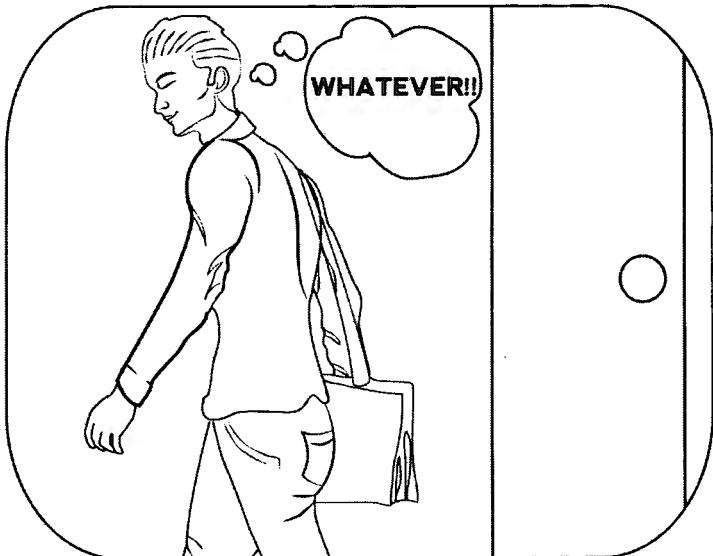
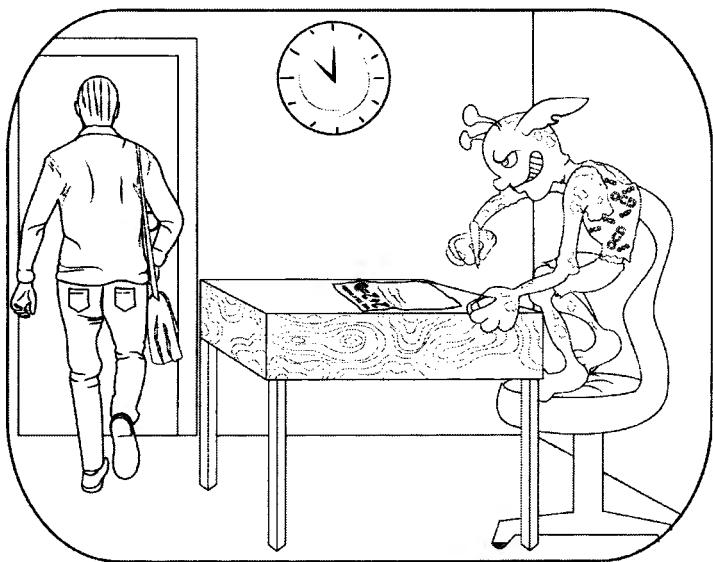
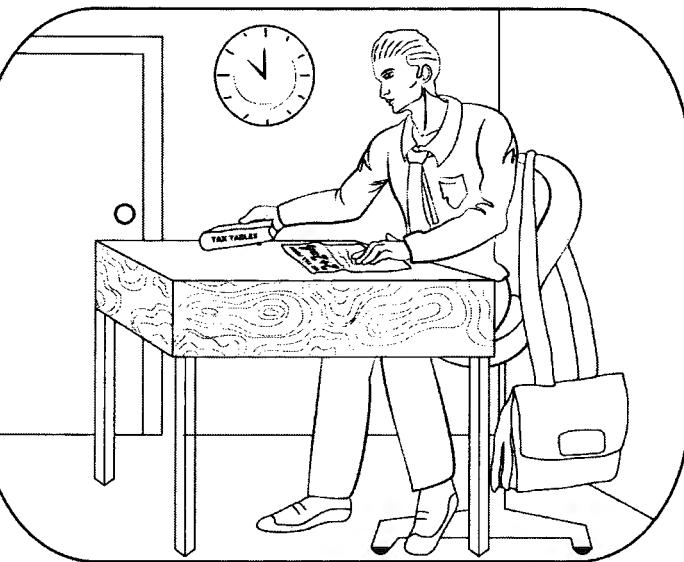
In an attempt to be perfect you spend far more hours on a task than necessary. You double, triple check your work. You look at yourself and find an inadequacy and think it must be rectified. Even though everybody is imperfect and inadequate—you have higher, unobtainable standards for yourself.

You hate to make mistakes and worry what people think of you. You want people's approval and try hard to get it. You strive for perfection—not excellence. It's not possible to achieve perfection, but OCD has you determined to get it.

When you agree, "I'm perfectly imperfect." When you agree to the truth, the pressure is off. You give OCD the message, "I don't care." There will be an internal conflict about whether or not you care, but fake it 'til you become it. Make mistakes on purpose.

Be willing to make mistakes. Accept the risk. Say, "WHATEVER!"

# I'M PERFECTLY IMPERFECT



**PERFECTION ISN'T POSSIBLE. ACCEPT THE RISK! SAY "WHATEVER"**

## *Journal Entry*

If you have OCD then chances are very high that you strive not just for excellence, but for perfection. If OCD wrote a book it would be called, “How to Trick People.” One of its chapters would be: How to Make People Think They Can and Should Be Perfect.

To be perfect means to be unblemished and flawless—free from any defect. It means to be exactly right and to never make mistakes. No one has ever arrived at perfection. It’s impossible. It’s not even necessary. It stunts personal growth. But, OCD has convinced you to go on a quest for perfection anyway.

What does your quest for perfection look like? Do you reread and rewrite? Do you double-triple check? Do you procrastinate? Do you spend hours on a task until it feels “just right?” Do you hate working on teams and do everything yourself? Do you beat yourself up when you make a mistake?

### **LIST YOUR PERFECTIONISTIC TENDENCIES:**

**IF YOU MADE A COMMITMENT TO FAIL 100% OF THE TIME AT BEING PERFECT, WHAT WOULD THIS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU? HOW MIGHT THINGS CHANGE FOR THE BETTER?**

There's something very interesting about why OCD makes you chase perfection.

OCD isn't tricking you to chase perfection so that you'll feel exemplary at what you do.

If it was up to OCD, you'd never have enough confidence or self-esteem to feel good about anything you do. When's the last time you accepted a compliment without putting yourself down? No, it's not making you chase perfection to be excellent and outstanding.

No, there's something much more absolute about perfection that entices you. It's the oldest trick in OCD's book. OCD gets you to seek perfection so that you can obtain...(drumroll please...) certainty! Seeking perfection is just a disguise. You're really seeking certainty in your perfectionistic ways.

**WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER IF YOU RECOGNIZED THAT STRIVING FOR PERFECTION IS JUST ANOTHER TRAP FOR FINDING CERTAINTY? HOW MIGHT IT HELP YOU TO BETTER MANAGE OCD?**

*Call to Action: Fail at Perfection As Much As Possible*

**WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you mess up a few things on purpose?
- Can you resist checking your work for mistakes?
- Instead of procrastinating, can you complete a task early—before a deadline?
- If you see a mistake, can you resist fixing it?
- Instead of saying, I FAILED can you say, I LEARNED?
- Can you laugh at yourself when you make a mistake?

**WHAT WILL YOU COMMIT TO DOING IN ORDER TO FAIL AT PERFECTION:**

**WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF FAILING AT PERFECTION?**

## **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

- What are your hopes and dreams?
- How does seeking perfection hold you back?
- How will a growth or learning mindset move you forward?

In order to fail at perfection, you've got to be willing to accept uncertainty. This means accepting the risk that something will go wrong. An unwillingness to fail isn't a fear of being substandard. It's a fear of uncertainty. Something might possibly go wrong.

**RECORD THE TIMES YOU HAVE THE FEELING THAT SOMETHING ISN'T PERFECT YET, YOU WALK AWAY ACCEPTING THE UNCERTAINTY: "MAYBE. WHATEVER HAPPENS HAPPENS. I'D RATHER TAKE THE RISK THAN LIVE LIKE THIS."**

## **ACT AS IF YOU'RE NOT AFRAID**

Your feelings are the problem not the solution. Don't wait to feel motivated or ready to take on OCD. If you wait for feelings to drive your behavior, you might not get very far.

Determination is a mindset, not an emotion.

You are anxious. That doesn't mean you can't move forward. If you wait until you're no longer afraid, you could be waiting a long, long time. Anxiety is in your blood. You've got to move forward despite the anxiety.

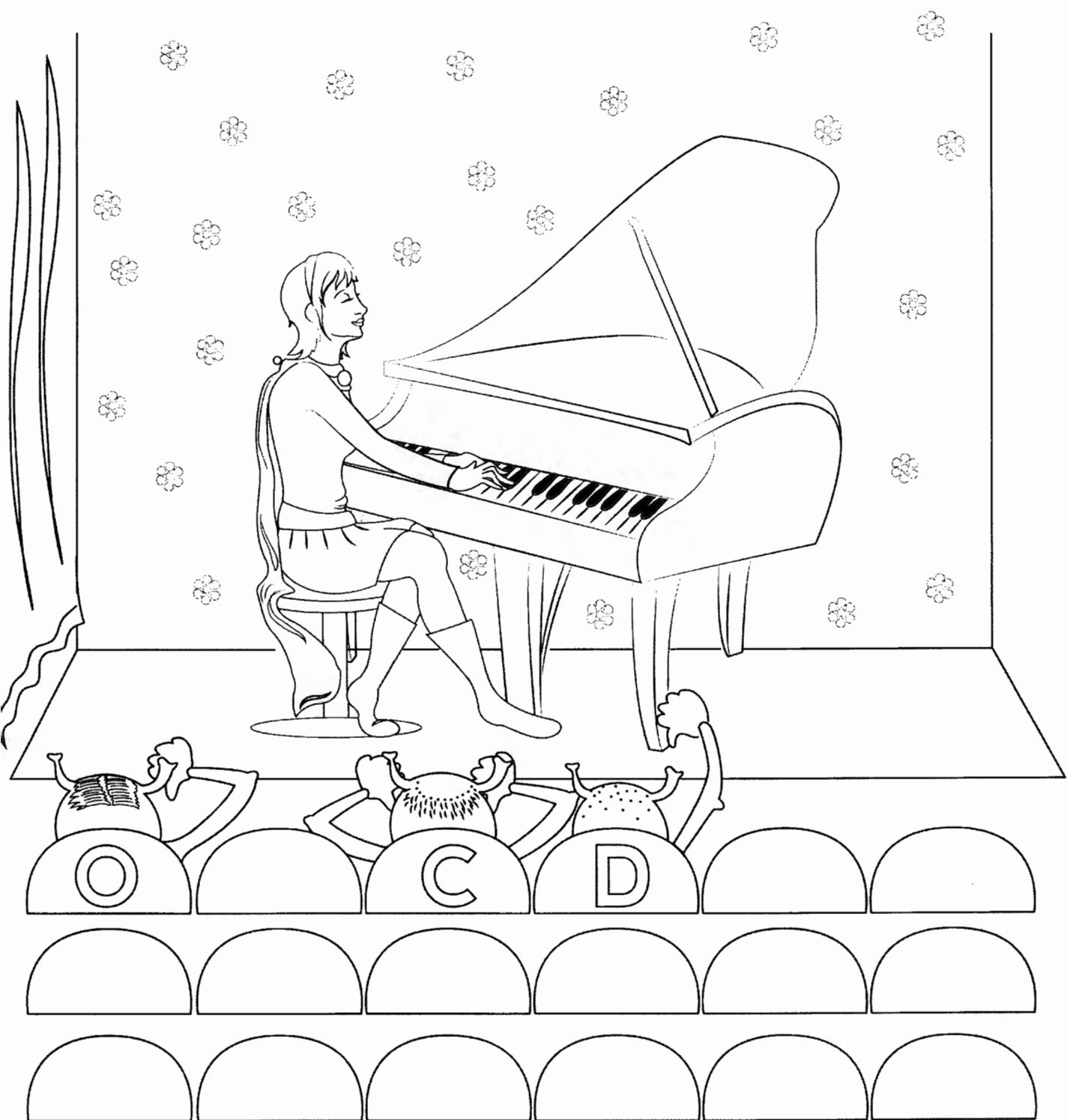
The more you move forward the more confident you become and yes, the less anxious you will be.

It's your reaction to anxiety that's causing the problem. Welcome the anxiety the same way you do on a rollercoaster ride or when watching a horror film or your favorite team playing in a championship game. Anxiety is a natural part of life.

OCD is lying to you. It tells you that you shouldn't do anything if you're afraid. Your goal must be to do what you want or need to do, even though you're anxious. Act like you're fine and accept the anxiety as an unpleasant nuisance.

Fake it 'til you become it.

## **ACT AS IF YOU'RE NOT AFRAID**



**NO MATTER HOW AFRAID YOU FEEL, ACT LIKE YOU'RE FINE.  
FAKE IT 'TIL YOU BECOME IT!**

## *Journal Entry*

You don't have to feel determined to be determined. Determination is a mind-set not an emotion. If you're determined, there is no discussion or further decision-making needed. Your mind is made up and no matter how you feel about it—you're doing it.

You might not feel like doing it. You don't have an ounce of motivation. But, you're doing it because you're determined. No ifs, ands, or buts...it's happening. No second thoughts. No excuses. The anxiety is there but you're doing it anyway.

When you're determined it actually uses less energy to take an action. You don't have to toil with an idea or have angst over making up your mind. It's a done deal. All your energy can go towards taking the action.

**IF YOU REALIZED YOU CAN DO ANYTHING WHEN YOU'RE DETERMINED, WHAT WOULD THIS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU?**

You're determined and afraid at the same time. But, you're going to act as if you're not afraid. No one will know your knees are knocking and your heart is racing. Anxiety doesn't mean stop. Even though you can't be certain what will happen, you're determined to stick to the plan.

**WHAT WOULD YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOURSELF IF YOU REALIZED YOU CAN DO ANYTHING EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE ANXIOUS?**

**WHEN YOU MAKE A PLAN TO DO SOMETHING, BUT THE ANXIETY SHOWS UP, WHAT WILL MOST LIKELY HAPPEN IF YOU STOP AND START THINKING IT OVER?**

## **WHEN YOU MAKE A PLAN BUT THE ANXIETY SHOWS UP, WHAT WILL MOST LIKELY HAPPEN IF YOU ACT LIKE YOU DON'T CARE THAT YOU'RE ANXIOUS?**

### ***Call to Action: Do "It" Anyway***

#### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you stop discussing and toiling over something and just do it?
- Can you act as if you're motivated, even though you're not?
- Can you move your body even though you're in a funk?
- Can you do something that feels uncomfortable?
- Can you have a yuck hour? (Do something for an hour that you absolutely don't want to do. It doesn't have to be something you're afraid of. Just something for an hour you don't feel like doing.)
- Can you put yourself into a position where you're likely to get inspired? (Listen to TED Talks or music that pumps you up.)

#### **WHAT WILL YOU COMMIT TO DOING TO BUILD UP YOUR TOLERANCE TO ANXIETY?**

#### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF “FEELING THE FEAR AND DOING IT ANYWAY?”**

#### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN THE WAY?**

- What will you get out of acting like you don't care about anxiety?
- What's more important to you than avoiding fear?
- Do you have a reward planned for your victory?
- What will be the benefits if you follow through?

**FEED YOUR MIND REGULARLY WITH “POSSIBILITY” STATEMENTS. WRITE DOWN STATEMENTS LIKE THESE AND CHECK THEM OFF WHEN YOU USE THEM:**

“I haven’t done it...YET.”

“I can’t do it.” Change it to, “Maybe I can.”

“I don’t feel like it. OK I’m going to do it anyway.”

“True, I’m not motivated. But, I’m not going to wait around to get motivated!”

“Anything worth accomplishing is difficult to achieve.”

## *I ACCEPT OCD*

There is no cure for OCD. It's inconclusive what causes it. There is no magic pill. We have years of research ahead of us. In the meantime, how will you respond to OCD? The choice is to resist obsessions or accept them.

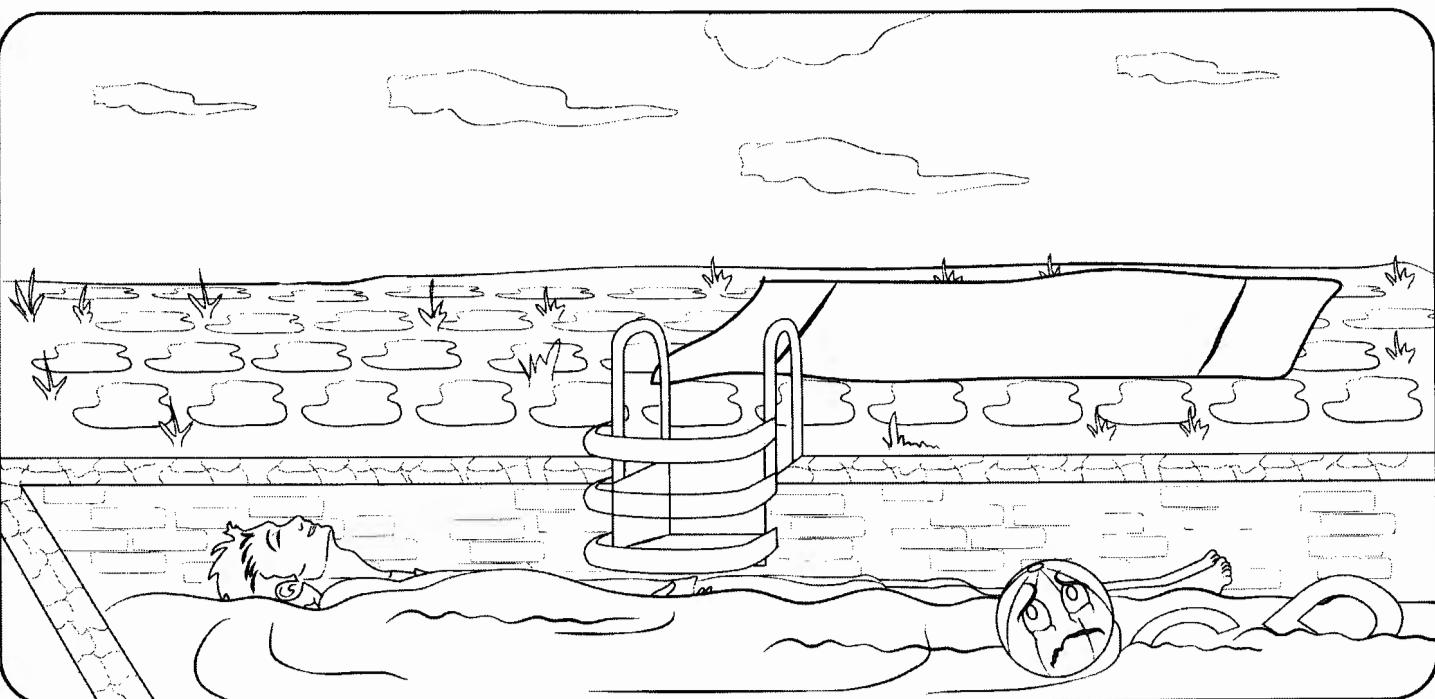
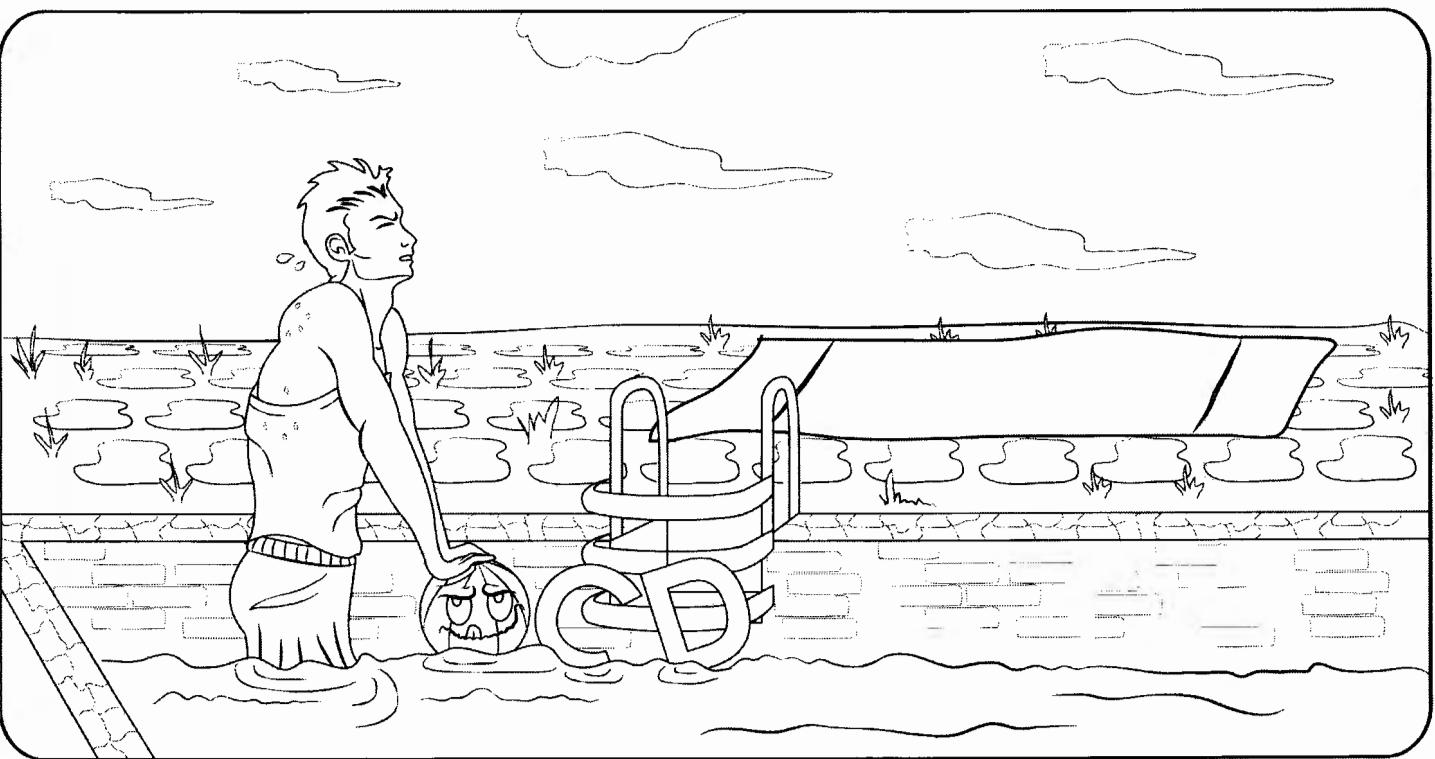
The treatment of OCD is to resist compulsions and ACCEPT obsessions. No matter how scary, real or uncomfortable the thought is—do nothing to get rid of the thought. If you resist the thought it will persist.

What can you resist? What must you resist? Compulsions. Rituals. Mental acts. Conversing with OCD. Reassurance-seeking. Avoiding triggers. None of this will free your mind. But, if you let the obsessions be, you're on a path to freedom.

Agree with the thoughts or at least be willing to say, "maybe." Respond to the obsessions with a shrug, "WHATEVER." If you're saying, "That's easier said than done" then you're not being honest about the current state of your life. How you're living right now isn't easy!

Let the obsessions be. Do nothing to resist them. This is how you free your mind...Free your life.

I ACCEPT OCD.



FREE YOUR MIND. FREE YOUR LIFE. LET IT BE.

## *Journal Entry*

Until there is a cure OCD is here to stay. An unwanted, intrusive thought can last for days, months or years. However, a wanted, welcomed thought is not likely to haunt you. Like OCD, you must be a trickster too. You must convince OCD you absolutely accept the thoughts. Want them. Welcome them. If you do, the trick is on OCD.

### **WHAT WOULD IT MAKE POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO TRICK OCD?**

If you accept the thoughts then OCD will back off. "Oh good. She heard me. I don't have to warn her anymore." And the occurrence of the thought decreases. Now that OCD knows you're listening it can go off duty. "You've go this." If you don't accept the thoughts then OCD will keep warning you.

OCD thinks it's on to something important. Until you acknowledge it—it won't let up. Your acknowledgement of the thought doesn't mean falling for it hook, line and sinker! It just means saying, "OK, maybe. Whatever. Thanks. I'll deal with it if it happens. Thanks for the warning."

Accepting the thoughts basically means to some level agreeing with the thoughts. Even the horrific ones. The more you resist a thought, the more it will persist. So the only way out of this mess is in. "Good. There's my thought. Thanks. I appreciate what you're doing OCD." And now it's the right time to resist. Not the thought. The compulsion.

### **WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'D DISCOVER ABOUT OCD IF YOU STOPPED WRESTLING WITH IT?**

Treat the thought like a strangely wrapped gift. It doesn't feel like a gift. It doesn't sound or look like one. Thank OCD as if it is a gift. Don't push it away. Otherwise it's the gift that just keeps giving.

## *Call to Action: Let OCD Be Part of You, Not All of You*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you accept the thoughts, but not the compulsions?
- Can you ask, "What does the diagnosis of OCD make possible for me?"
- Can you not only accept the thoughts, but bring them on?
- Can you invite OCD to go wherever you go?
- Can you stop dreading OCD and see it as a strangely wrapped gift?

The above strategies involve MENTAL KUNG FU. To defy OCD, your approach needs to be paradoxical.

### **HOW WILL YOU DEVELOP MENTAL KUNG FU? WHAT PARADOXICAL STRATEGIES WILL YOU COMMIT TO USING?**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF BEING PARADOXICAL?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY?**

It's paradoxical and counterintuitive to not run when everything in your body is telling you to run. Your brain is sounding false alarms. You can't afford to respond to even one of them. Each one feels so real it's hard to know when to run and when to stay.

Follow the majority. Are other people running away? Are other people performing safety behaviors and mental rituals? No! Then you don't need to either.

**KEEP A RECORD OF ALL THE TIMES YOU FOLLOWED THE MAJORITY EVEN THOUGH OCD WAS TELLING YOU NOT TO:**

## Additional Notes

## **LET GO OR BE DRAGGED**

There's something very controlling and rigid about OCD. It tells you a story about how you can control what happens in your life. OCD lies and says, "if you avoid this trigger or perform this compulsion, you'll have complete control over what happens."

If it were true that we could control what happens by performing a compulsion, then why isn't the military instructed on how to do compulsions? Why don't doctors throw out medicine and just give out compulsions to perform? Why don't we end poverty and world hunger with compulsions? Why don't parents teach their children to do compulsions to ward off anything bad happening?

OCD is trying to manage your anxiety by telling you a story. Within that story are a lot of things for you to try and control (i.e., compulsions.) OCD promises if you control these things your anxiety will go away. How's that working out?

Everybody has anxiety and discomfort. This effort to rid yourself of anxiety is a waste of time.

No one can control what happens. Not even you! The only thing you can control is how you react to what happens. If you keep trying to control what happens you'll be dragged.

Let go or be dragged.

**LET GO OR BE DRAGGED.**



**THERE IS NO WAY TO CONTROL WHAT HAPPENS. DON'T BE DRAGGED.**

## *Journal Entry*

The reason you can be trapped, captured and dragged around by OCD is that you won't let go. Let go of what? Your attachment to guarantees and certainty. To knowing...

- Let go of your need to know.
- Let go of wishing to be somebody else.
- Let go of wanting answers.
- Let go of changing the past or controlling what happens.
- Let go of wishing the anxiety would disappear.

**IT IS WHAT IT IS. WHATEVER HAPPENS, HAPPENS. IF YOU COMMITTED TO LETTING GO WHAT WOULD BECOME POSSIBLE FOR YOU?**

OCD is a liar. It tells you that if you perform compulsions you can control what happens. You can have certainty about anything with a well-performed compulsion. This is a lie. And you know it in your heart!

**IF YOU ADMIT THAT COMPULSIONS DO NOT CONTROL ANYTHING AT ALL, WHAT MIGHT YOU DISCOVER ABOUT LIFE WHEN YOU STOP PERFORMING COMPULSIONS?**

There are many types of OCD. Contamination fears. Existentialistic obsessions. Relationship doubts. Fear of harm or bad things happening. "Just right" OCD. Gay obsessions. Doubts about faith or scruples. Fear of death and dying. The list is endless. Whatever you're attached to, OCD will be hyper vigilant about.

OCD latches onto whatever is sacred and precious to you. It's overly protective of your attachments. You've got to trick OCD into thinking you're not THAT attached. How? By shrugging and saying, "If that happens, so be it. I'll deal with it, if and only when, it happens."

## **HOW DO YOU THINK YOU CAN OUTPLAY, OUTSMART, AND OUTLAST OCD?**

*Call to Action: Let Go*

### **WHAT WILL BE YOUR STRATEGY?**

- Can you live only in the moment? (Stay out of thoughts about yesterday and tomorrow.)
- Can you shift your focus from your worries and instead focus on helping a needy world?
- Can you notice none of what you're worried about is occurring at this moment?
- Can you transfer responsibility to where it actually belongs? (People with OCD have an inflated sense of responsibility.)

### **WHAT WILL YOU COMMIT TO DOING IN ORDER TO LET GO?**

### **WHAT MIGHT GET IN YOUR WAY OF LETTING GO?**

### **WHY WON'T YOU LET IT GET IN YOUR WAY OF LETTING GO?**

### **WRITE DOWN THE WISHES YOU OFTEN MAKE CONCERNING OCD:**

**NOW GO BACK TO YOUR WISHES AND CROSS EACH ONE OUT. NEXT TO YOUR CROSSED OUT WISHES, WRITE YOUR ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT. SUCH AS:**

- It is what it is.
- Whatever happens, happens.
- I'll deal with that, if and only when, it happens.
- That will be unpleasant, but not dangerous.
- I can handle it. It'll be tough but, I can get through it like I've done before.

## ***ABOUT THE AUTHOR***

Tammy LaBrake, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker(LCSW) and founder of a private practice in New York called, Boss It Back® which is dedicated to the treatment of OCD.

As an unorthodox thinker, she values cutting edge developments. Knowing how important mindful exercises are in the treatment of OCD, Tammy created this coloring book to help people stay focused on the strategies that are most effective.

With years of experience, coupled with training by the best in the field, Tammy is known as a regional expert in the treatment of OCD. She is a member of the International OCD Foundation and is a graduate of the Foundation's Behavior Training Therapy Institute.

To learn more about defying OCD visit Tammy's website at [ocdstrategies.com](http://ocdstrategies.com) and read her weekly blog at [blog.bossitback.com](http://blog.bossitback.com).

To enhance the coloring experience and to help implement each strategy, visit [ocdstrategies.com](http://ocdstrategies.com) for the supplemental add-on: "The Companion Course to the OCD Coloring Book Journal."

GO FOR IT  
USE YOUR POWER  
LIVE FREE  
CHOOSE  
INVITE IT

WALK AWAY

LAUGH

TAKE CHARGE

JUST DON'T DO IT

WHATEVER

**ACCEPT IT**  
**LET GO OR BE**  
**DRAGGED**  
**LET IT BE**  
**FAKE IT 'TILL YOU**  
**BECOME IT**