

Client Exercise Sheet 2

The Logic Behind OCD

Finding Your Reason

In identifying some of the reasons behind your own obsessional doubt keep in mind that there are *always* reasons behind a doubt. You may or may not be very familiar with those reasons. Some people with OCD, for example, when asked why they believe what they do, come up with lots of reasons why the doubt might be true. Others will say that have no idea how their doubts come about and experience their doubts as extremely unlikely and even as nonsense. Yet, these two groups of people are not so different. Both groups feel that they must act upon their doubt even though it might be experienced as unreasonable by one person and reasonable by the other. No matter if you believe your doubts are unreasonable and extremely unlikely, there are reasons why you doubt *your* particular doubt that *you* believe in. If you did not, you would not act on the doubt. There would be no obsession.

Be Reasonable

To find the reasons behind the doubt, you only need to ask yourself the question why you think your doubt could be possible, even if only to the slightest extent. What are the reasons you think you *might* have left the door unopened? What do you do think that the papers *might* not have been placed correctly? Why do you think your hands *might* be contaminated? What is it that makes you think it is possible, even if the chances of it being true are only 0.0001%?

First, to identify the reasons behind your own doubts, write down below the two obsessional doubts that bother you the most.

1. _____

2. _____

Next, write down any justification you think of in the corresponding category (abstract facts, hearsay, personal experience, etc.). Take your time with filling in the form, and try to write down the reasons as they occur to you while you are actually having your doubts. Let the OCD speak its mind. What does the OCD tell you?

A. Abstract facts

1. _____

2. _____

B. Rules

1. _____
2. _____

C. Hearsay

1. _____
2. _____

D. Personal experience

1. _____
2. _____

E. It's possible

1. _____
2. _____

F. Other reasons

1. _____
2. _____

Example

Doubt: I could be contaminated by waves coming from mental objects.

1. Abstract facts could include 'There have been reports of nuclear factories leaking radioactivity.'
2. Rules: People in contact with metals are obliged to wear gloves.
3. Hearsay: I've heard of people suffering from metal infections.
4. Personal experience: My hands smell and feel funny after I've touched a metal object.
5. It's possible that metals give off contaminants that they haven't discovered... like with Asbestos.
6. Other reasons: hot metal glows when it's warm; heat rises and could give off toxins.

Now, put yourself in the mind of another person with OCD, and try to come up with reasons behind the following obsessional doubts:

1. I might go suddenly crazy and hit another person.

2. There might be broken glass in the meal I prepared for my children.

A. Abstract facts

1. _____
2. _____

B. Rules

1. _____
2. _____

C. Hearsay

1. _____
2. _____

D. Personal experience

1. _____
2. _____

E. It's Possible

1. _____
2. _____

F. Other reasons

1. _____
2. _____

Try to compare the reasons you have come up with those of your own doubts. Are they any different, and if so, how are they different? Write down below anything you have what you have learned, wish to comment on, or that you have questions about.

Client Training Card 2

The Logic Behind OCD

Learning Points (Front)

- Obsessional doubts do not come out of the blue.
- There is 'logic' behind obsessional doubts.
- Doubts arrive due to prior reasoning.

Daily Exercise (Back)

At least four times a day, try to identify the doubt that motivated you to carry out compulsions or made you feel anxious, and rephrase the doubt in the form of statement of what could be or might be. Next, identify the reasoning you have applied to justify the doubt or statement. If you are not immediately aware of any thoughts before the doubt occurred then ask yourself, why does the doubt seem real? Or use the categories of abstract facts, hearsay, general rules, personal experience or mere possibility to help you identify the justification behind the doubt. Remember to slow down your thinking so you dwell on the validity of each component of your thought and how one presumption leads on to another.



Cartoon 5. Just to be sure.