

Disclaimer

This guide is intended to support individuals experiencing fear or anxiety related to OCD. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you're having difficulty or have concerns about your health, please consult a healthcare professional.

The information in this guide is based on lived experience and personal healing, not medical expertise. Always prioritize your well-being and reach out to a doctor or therapist for guidance if needed.

OCD Checkbox Method: This method is about recognizing that OCD recovery involves multiple steps, and it's important to track your progress by checking off each step as you go. Recovery from OCD is a combination of various techniques and approaches, and following each one methodically ensures that you don't miss any crucial part of the process. By staying organized and consistent with this checklist, you can work through the different aspects of OCD recovery more effectively.

OCD Recovery Checklist: 12-Steps to tick off, OCD is a journey that involves understanding, confronting, and gradually overcoming the challenges of the condition. Below is a check list. Make sure you are covering all areas daily to recovery.

Step 1: Learn About OCD

- [✓] Understand what OCD is, its themes, and the symptoms it causes. This knowledge reduces fear and empowers you to take control.
- [✓] Research OCD and common themes (e.g. contamination, symmetry, harm, real event, ROCD).
- [✓] Learn about compulsions and how they relate to OCD.

Step 2: Recognize Your Symptoms, Take pen to paper, record every thought, every urge, compulsion and triggers. This is very effective, not only do you take some of the burden away, of carrying the thoughts and feeling around. You can start to see patterns. Seeing it in black and white will help you rationalise and work through it.

- [✓] Awareness is key. Recognize what you are experiencing to address it more effectively.
 - [✓] Write down the symptoms you're experiencing.
 - [✓] Identify the compulsions and intrusive thoughts.
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Step 3: Acceptance is a crucial part of recovery; many people acknowledge that they have OCD but continue to live in fear hanging on to doubt. You must fully accept that what your experiencing is 100 percent OCD

[✓] Learn to speak to your OCD and have more certainty, stop leaving room for doubt and 'what ifs' You're simply playing the '**what if**' game daily, and it's time to stop and focus on **what is!**

[✓] Acceptance is the foundation of recovery. Recognize that OCD symptoms don't define you and that they are part of the condition.

[✓] Accept Your OCD Fully, without acceptance you can't begin to recover.

[✓] Stop fearing intrusive thoughts embrace them as a symptom not facts.

Step 4: OCD, Anxiety and tension go hand in hand, half of the battle is just learning how to relax, this is easier said than done but part of recovery is letting go.

[✓] Physical relaxation and movement can help reduce tension and anxiety.

[✓] Practice daily meditation or mindfulness. Engage in physical activity, even if it's something simple like jumping or dancing.

[✓] So dancing, sometimes the last thing we want to do is listen to music or get up and dance when we are feeling anxious. Music and movement are therapy, it can instantly change the state of the body and mind.

Step 5: Don't Dwell, Keep Moving, dwelling on intrusive thoughts won't change the way you feel about them, and it certainly won't help you 'figure them out' let them be and keep moving, eventually along with all the other steps, your body will learn to let go.

[✓] Avoid rumination. Keep moving, whether physically or mentally, to break the cycle of obsession.

[✓] Refocus when anxiety or OCD-related thoughts arise. Acknowledge it. Let the thoughts and urges be. But accept them as your symptom of OCD

[✓] Engage in activities that keep you busy, but don't push the thoughts away, the more we do that the stronger they become.

[✓] Practice saying hello OCD, I see you, thank you for showing up, but its ok I am going to carry on with my day. (Read the Blog post on how OCD is a strange form of protection).

Step 6: Become Rational About Your Thoughts. You must always approach OCD with logic. We know ourselves how silly a thought can be, but we also know how real it can feel, and I plan to write a blog post on why they feel so real, so look out for that. In the meantime, recognise that what we think is not factual.

[✓] **Important**, tell yourself you can think whatever you like, bad thoughts don't make you bad.

[✓] Challenge irrational thoughts, by asking yourself rational questions.

[✓] Question "Why me?" why out of everyone, do you need to be on guard 24/7? accept that your thoughts do not predict, and you don't hold the power to look into the future.

[✓] Recognize that you are no more in danger than others. You can be cautious but not to the point of obsession and fixation.

Step 7: Recognize Your Worth, People with OCD are kind empathic people.

[✓] Remind yourself of your positive qualities and the good you do, stop focusing on the bad

[✓] When self-doubt arises, reflect on your strengths.

[✓] Compare your actions to the true evil in the world, reminding yourself that you are not that.

Step 8: Gather Your Tools, throw everything you have at it, and you must keep at it, always, keep pushing through even when it feels hopeless.

[✓] Equip yourself with tools and resources that help you manage OCD.

[✓] Identify your personal tools, such as grounding techniques or calming routines.

[✓] Keep these tools accessible for when you need them most.

Step 9: Create a Safe Word, Intrusive thoughts can be powerful, it's time to fight back.

[✓] create a Safe word

[✓] A safe word is a quick, calming reminder that helps you detach from the intensity of OCD symptoms.

[✓] Choose a word that reminds you to step back and recognize the symptoms for what they are: OCD or anxiety. This word can be as random as you like, say it a thousand times a day if you must.

[✓] Use it when you feel overwhelmed or triggered. This word will become, with practice vital in your recovery

Step 10: Exposure, Face Your Fears Daily, exposure is so important, it's something you must do, if your miserable with your OCD it's time to say, let's take the risk, even though there really isn't one.

[✓] Gradual exposure to feared situations is essential in reducing the power of OCD.

[✓] Expose yourself daily to situations or thoughts you typically avoid.

[✓] Start small and build up, feel the power of exposure, as you gather evidence you will see how the fear diminishes over time.

Step 11: Write Down Your Evidence, where is your evidence? people with OCD rarely have any evidence, usually only their own thoughts, and thoughts as we know aren't facts.

[✓] Keep an Evidence Log

[✓] Writing down OCD's claims and questioning their validity helps you recognize its false narratives.

[✓] Write what OCD is telling you and analyse the evidence.

[✓] Ask yourself, "How many years has passed without anything bad happening?"

Step 12: Embrace Your Strengths, remind yourself of the positive aspects of OCD, how it makes you more aware, caring, kind and empathic.

[✓] People with OCD are often more aware, empathetic, and kind. Embrace these qualities as strengths.

[✓] Recognize that your self-awareness and empathy are powerful tools.

[✓] Understand that your sensitivity is a strength, not a weakness, and it's why you worry so much.

[✓] Make it your mission, to focus on why you are good!

Summary:

The 12 steps outlined here are designed to gradually guide you through the process of understanding, managing, and overcoming OCD. By learning about the condition, recognizing your symptoms, and building awareness, you can start taking control. Using tools like relaxation techniques, exposure, and rational thinking, you'll be able to manage the symptoms and reclaim your life. The key to success is **acceptance, consistent practice, and self-compassion**.

This guide is a simplified guide to help you get going, look out for a more in-depth guide in the future.

Best Wishes

Kate ☺
