

IOCDF Conference Boston 2015

Here is some of the information I received at the conference.

Various handouts from booths/vendors:

1. New app called Live OCD free - www.liveocdfree.com – Personal pocket therapist.
2. The Hoarding Project Tacoma, WA www.thehoardingproject.org
3. Free self help website for OCD ocdchallenge.org
4. www.ocdnj.org New Jersey OCD chapter – quarterly meetings annual conference.
5. Web Journal for ERP www.therapy.com – personal journal for people to practice ERP
6. Willow Wonders at little Creek Press – Children’s picture book for OCD
7. www.peaceofmind.com (non-profit to improve quality of life for OCD sufferers and caregivers) and www.ocdchallenge.org (online self help)
8. www.ocdmassachusetts.org – Has extensive lecture series and their lectures are also on youtube.
9. Bradleyhospital.org in Rhode Island has an OCD program
10. For PANDAS and PANS - www.moleculera.com - This lab runs blood tests.
11. OCD program in NY at www.mountsinaiocd.org
12. Volunteer for research at www.researchmatch.org
13. A therapist there recommended Reid Wilson’s books on parenting kids with anxiety to me.

Notes from Sessions I attended:

OCD Proofing your Relationships: Love your partner not their OCD

They need to know we love them.

Encourage them, reward small successes.

Challenge their negative self talk. Do not talk bad about someone I love.

We cannot make them get better.

Use humor – You are right you need to wash again that doorknob will cause ebola or brain cancer.

Do not tell them how to get fixed. Tell them how you feel.

Blame the OCD not your partner.

Whose House is it anyway? – What to do when your child’s OCD takes over your home (handout included)

The presenters had developed a disruptive behavior program. I did not realize there is PANS and PANDAS. They talked about kids having tantrums because they have no power and how important the parent role is with OCD. Power struggles reinforce OCD. Parent Training is essential, they should learn ERP. Reward the right behaviors.

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Key note speaker Clint and Joanie Malarchuk – They were great. Clint was a goalie for a Hockey team and after a serious injury where his neck was cut open, his OCD spiraled until he was suicidal. This was an incredible story of his journey. He also wrote a book.

The Crazy Game: How I Survived in the Crease and Beyond

What determines the content of obsessions – the changing nature of OCD. (handout included)

This was about the history of OCD and how cultural changes are affecting it. For example how young kids are programmed about germs in school. The classic pattern of OCD is it stays in 1 area or fades and new things come up. OCD is a bully! Need to become an expert on managing anxiety. ERP is better than meds. They gave an example of how people become obsessed with Facebook.

The downside of enabling – This was a great session. They started off with a Bob Newhardt video (Stop it) which was very funny.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ow0lr63y4Mw>

They stressed how important it is to keep a sense of humor. They used the example of training a child not to sleep in your bed. Parents need to set limits. OCD is the best manipulator in the world. They need to make themselves ok, not up to anyone else. They had a former marine tell his story with overcoming OCD. Then they had a woman speak who had a 27 yr old son who would not bathe, change his clothes, rarely left the house. He would not lay down as his feet could not stop touching the floor. His feet are horribly swollen. He makes the mother put his food and glass that she serves him in an exact spot or he makes her move it. They used this as an example of how far enabling can go.

We are all in this together family treatment for OCD (handout included)

Discussion on how it impacts the entire family.

Pursuit of imperfection (handout included)

Discussed Academic issues.

How to do exposures for complex OCD

Obsessions are not always based on fear. It could be I do not feel right or fell uncertain. It involves waiting out the feared consequence versus can I live with this anxiety or feeling. If I re-arrange the pictures, how long do you feel bad - 10 minutes? Emotional contamination is a fear of places, people, and objects. A woman associated the numbers of her dead brother's birth and death months as unlucky and would not do anything during those months. Misophonia – sounds bother them, such as chewing, TV.

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Overcoming unacceptable thoughts – preparing for ERP for teens

This session had a lot of kids in it – not too many teens. A lot of parents attended. They did an exercise where everyone in the room had to focus on a minion that the therapist brought. We were only supposed to think about the minion for two minutes and count the times we thought about something else instead. The results showed that no one kept focused on the minion the entire time. It meant everyone has random thoughts all the time. One little girl with OCD described how an OCD mind works quite well. She said OCD people have a net that catches the thoughts and will not let them go! One of the therapist was from McLean in Boston and he had OCD himself in his teens.