

Whose house is this anyway!?
What to do when OCD takes over
your home

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Behavior Therapy Center of Greater Washington
Disruptive Behavior Management Program

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Who this workshop is for

- (1) Parents/guardians of OCD sufferer in which other behaviors interfere w/ recovery
- (2) Mental health clinicians, when standard individual therapy with limited parent involvement is inadequate
- (3) Any parents/guardians, loved one of an OCD sufferer (common OCD traps ubiquitous)

Overview

- Review of OCD
- Disruptive behaviors and childhood OCD
- Essential behavioral principles and concepts that parents need to know
- Reducing accommodations and riding out extinction bursts
- Parent Workshop: self assessment and getting on the right path to recovery

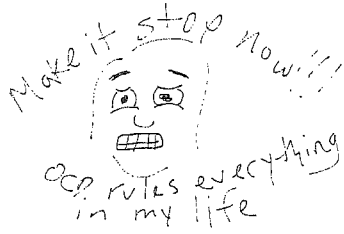
Behavior 101: Emotion Acquisition

How would you feel if you saw or thought about...?

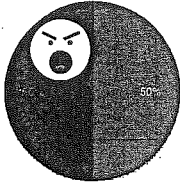
What Would You Do If...

1. You couldn't stop thinking about one or more of these disturbing, confusing stimuli (i.e., your thoughts were "stuck on repeat"?)
2. It felt as though almost everything in your life were somehow connected to one or more of the categories to which the stimuli belong?

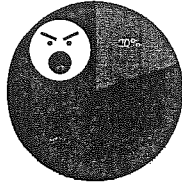
**You'd Want to Do Everything in
Your Power to Make It Stop, Too!!!!**



Comorbidity of Disruptive Behaviors



OCD
Storch, et al, 2010



Tourette's
Scahill, et al, 2006

Sudden & Severe Onset OCD (PANS/PANDAS)

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Emotional Lability | Severe Temper Outbursts |
| Irritability | Noncompliance |
| Aggression | Coercive, controlling behaviors |

Foundation:
What you need to know

Essentials for OCD with disruptive behaviors

- All behaviors are functional
- Negative reinforcement (OCD's "Miracle Grow")
- Parent-Child Coercive Cycles
- Family accommodation and how it can be harmful





Functional View of Behavior

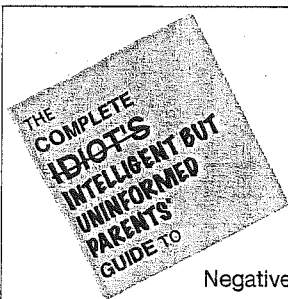
Behaviors purposeful, not accidental/
random

Behaviors are functional: people engage
in behavior in order to **obtain a desired
consequence** or to **avoid an undesirable
consequence***

*biological cause(s) may drive behaviors
in the first place

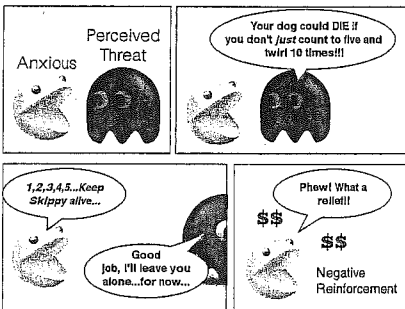
Functional View of Behaviors

1. Avoidance of aversive activity or
feeling state (anxiety, fear,
disgust, discomfort)  Negative
Reinforcement
2. Escape from aversive activity or
feeling state (anxiety, fear,
disgust, discomfort)  Negative
Reinforcement
3. To gain attention from significant
others  Positive
Reinforcement
4. Pursuit of tangible things/activity  Positive
Reinforcement



Negative Reinforcement

Negative reinforcement: OCD's life blood



*What would you do next time you
felt distress?*

Family Accommodation

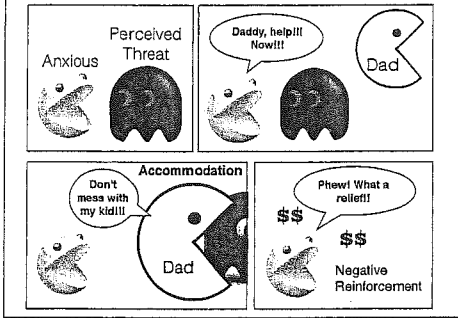
- Participation in avoidance and rituals
- Changing family's routine around OCD symptoms
- Assisting sufferer in escape/avoidance behaviors
- Family's attempts to reduce sufferer's distress, functional impairment or time spent on rituals **paradoxically** serve to strengthen OCD symptoms and interfere with CBT treatment

Estimate- 60-97% of families w/ OCD sufferer

Most common: providing reassurance, participating in rituals

Wu et al., 2015

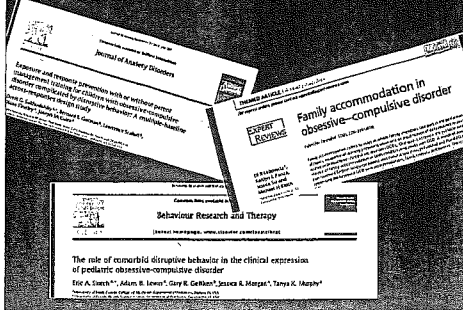
Family Accommodation



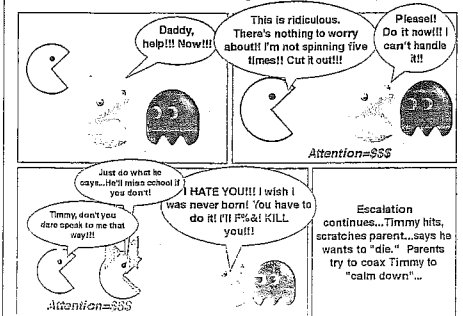
Family Accommodation

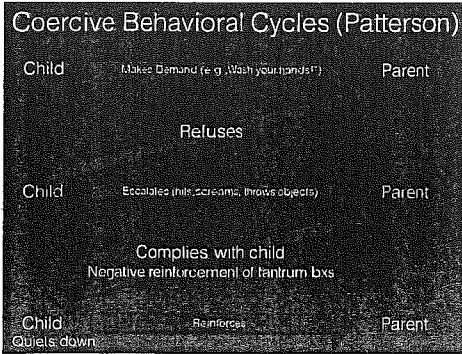
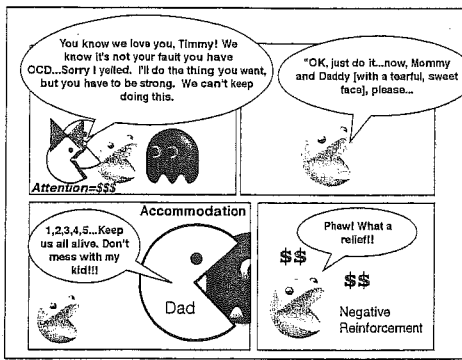


Growing Evidence for Strong Parent Component



Coercive interactions: it gets more complicated...





How do we get back to a healthy family?

- ### Active Ingredients in Treating the OCD Sufferer
- Medication, if needed
 - **Exposure and Response Prevention**

- ### What parents can do: Create an "OCD-Free" environment at home
- Don't be the "OCD Police"
 - Refrain from providing reassurance
 - Refuse to engage in the behaviors your child's OCD demands that others complete (e.g., washing/sanitizing)

What parents can do:
Create an "OCD-Free" environment at home

- Remove unintentional rewards for behaviors intended to escape or avoid anxiety or discomfort
 - Attention, reassurance, special treatment, getting out of chores, accommodating rituals
- Reward brave behavior
 - Encourage your child to approach, rather than avoid, anxiety-inducing situation
 - Encourage children to confront OCD-related negative emotions when they do behavioral homework and reward accordingly

What parents can do:
Create an "OCD-Free" environment at home

- Model brave behavior
 - Your kids learn from you about how to manage anxiety
- Manage own anxiety and frustration, act calmly
- Tolerate your distress as they tolerate their distress
- When needed, parents need to participate in OCD homework

Identify OCD-Related Behavior and Positive Alternatives

| OCD Related Behavior | Positive Alternative |
|---|---|
| Changing clothes multiple times in the morning to get the "right outfit" | Wearing the first outfit that you put on in the morning |
| Refusing to eat sandwich without reassurance that it hasn't been contaminated | Eating 5 bites of sandwich |
| Washing hands for 10 minutes after restroom | Washing hands for 20 seconds after restroom |
| Turning light switch on and off multiple times | Turning light switch off once |
| Erasing and re-writing words multiple times when doing homework | Completing a page of homework without erasing |

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Reassurance-seeking Behaviors

- Reassurance-seeking: A common ritual in which the sufferer questions/makes statements for the purpose of reducing anxiety and/or discomfort.
- Examples:
 - Are my hands clean?
 - Are you OK?
 - Are we safe?
 - Was that a sin?
 - Does God love me?
 - Was it OK that I saw (something sexual) on that website
 - I didn't want to think about hitting dad
 - I love mom, I don't want anything to happen to her.

How to Respond to Reassurance-Seeking Questions

Respond by saying:

- "Maybe, perhaps, I'm not sure"
- "I can't answer that question."
- "I have been instructed not to answer that question."
- Ignore

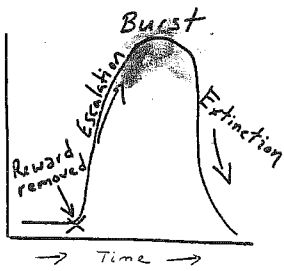
Active Ignoring

- Removing the unintentional rewards for your child's anxious behavior
- Attention from parents is incredibly reinforcing to most kids... even negative attention!
- Called active ignoring because it is not easy!
 - Things sometimes feel like they get worse before they get better
 - Anxious behavior eventually reduces or "extinguishes"

Extinction Bursts

When a typical reward does not occur, we intensify our behavior to try to get the desired outcome

Weathering the Storms



Take Home Message

- Reduce accommodation and unintentional reinforcement of your child's OCD
- Ignore anxious and other problem behaviors, attend to brave behaviors. Pause, don't engage.
- Weather extinction bursts. They are called "extinction bursts" because the behavior eventually extinguishes if reinforcement is withheld!
- REWARD positive alternatives to OCD compulsions. Encourage "I can cope" model. REWARD approach rather than avoidance!

Parent Workshop
[See Following Worksheets]

Whose house is this anyway?
Parent Worksheet (to complete during and after workshop)

(1) How do you accommodate? Review this list of questions and ask yourself if any of these apply to family members of the OCD sufferer.

What demands or "rules" related to OCD do you comply with?

How do you and your family behave differently because of your child's OCD?

What compulsions do you help your child perform (including reassurance)?

Any subsidizing of the compulsions (buying cleaning supplies, toilet paper, etc?)

Do you wait or permit child to undergo compulsions that slow down everyone else?

(2) Write week-by-week list of gradual de-accommodation plan

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

(3) Identify and write three ways that you will change your behaviors in response to your child's behaviors and the expected responses.