CHAPTER 1  Understanding OCD

1. An Overview of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder 15
   Carol A. Turkington, Helen M. Davidson, and Jacqueline L. Longe
   Obsessive-compulsive disorder is an anxiety disorder characterized by chronic worry and unwanted repetitive thoughts, sometimes resulting in irrational, nonpleasurable rituals such as excessive counting or hand washing.

2. OCD Can Be Debilitating 23
   Jeremy Katz
   Considered by some to be the most torturous of all anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder also presents the highest percentage of cases ranked as serious.

3. The Neuroscience Behind OCD 33
   Wayne Goodman
   A person’s religious or early family life may explain how obsessive-compulsive disorder manifests itself in that particular person, but the physical state of a person’s brain is what actually causes the OCD.
4. The Classification of OCD

*International College of Obsessive Compulsive Spectrum Disorders*

Mental health professionals are hoping that reclassifying obsessive-compulsive disorder as a disease separate from other anxiety disorders will lead to more appropriate treatment and better outcomes in OCD sufferers.

5. Advances in the Treatment of OCD

*Society for Neuroscience*

New medications and combinations of medications and certain types of psychological therapy, along with implants that send electrical pulses to specific parts of the brain, offer new hope for people with obsessive-compulsive disorder.

**CHAPTER 2**

**Issues and Controversies Concerning OCD**

1. Some Cases of OCD Are Triggered by Strep Throat Infections

*National Institute of Mental Health, Pediatric Developmental Neuroscience Branch*

Scientists theorize that antibodies triggered by strep throat infections attack the part of the brain that is responsible for movement and behavior, resulting in new cases of obsessive-compulsive disorder in children.

2. OCD Is Rarely, If Ever, Triggered by Strep Throat Infections

*Walter A. Brown*

A statistical correlation between strep throat and obsessive-compulsive disorder in children does not prove that strep throat causes OCD. For example, children may be vulnerable to both due to impaired immune systems.
3. Having Obsessive Bad Thoughts Is a Form of OCD

*Steve Kissing*

Experiencing obsessive bad thoughts, or pure obsessional OCD, is a form of obsessive-compulsive disorder in which people obsess on bad thoughts, but never act on them.

4. Everyone with OCD Has Both Obsessions and Compulsions

*Bradley C. Riemann*

Diagnostic manuals indicate that to be classified as having obsessive-compulsive disorder, a person must have either compulsions or obsessions, not necessarily both; however, many leading practitioners disagree.

5. Hoarding Is a Form of OCD

*Janice Gaston*

Hoarding is a form of obsessive-compulsive disorder in which people keep items with little or no value, obsessing that something bad will happen if they get rid of the items or that they might need the items someday.

6. Hoarding Is Different from OCD

*William Hathaway*

Some researchers believe that hoarding is fundamentally different from obsessive-compulsive disorder and should be classified separately. Successful treatments for OCD, such as talk therapy and antidepressants, do not work with hoarders; furthermore, the brains of hoarders respond differently than the brains of other OCD patients when asked to throw items away.

7. Psychedelic Mushrooms May Effectively Treat OCD

*Eric Swedlund*

In a small scientific study, the active agent in psychedelic mushrooms completely removed obsessive-compulsive disorder symptoms for nine patients for anywhere from four hours to several days.
8. Deep Brain Stimulation Effectively Treats OCD

PR Newswire

The first surgically implanted medical device has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder. The removable device is implanted into the brain to send electrical pulses to precise areas that regulate mood and behavior.

CHAPTER 3

The Personal Side of OCD

1. A Teen Boy Battles OCD

*Jared Douglas Kant*

A middle school student is overwhelmed by his severe obsessive-compulsive disorder in the locker room during gym class.

2. A Teen Girl Struggles with Scrupulosity

*Jennifer Traig*

A teen girl’s obsessive-compulsive disorder manifests itself as scrupulosity, a hyperreligious form of OCD.

3. A Teen Overcomes OCD with Exposure and Response Prevention Therapy

*Fred Penzel*

A teen is consumed by his obsessive (and mistaken) worry that he is gay. Through exposure and response prevention therapy with a skilled psychologist, he is able to confront his fears and eliminate them.

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