

OCD see below

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THE SECRET PROBLEM



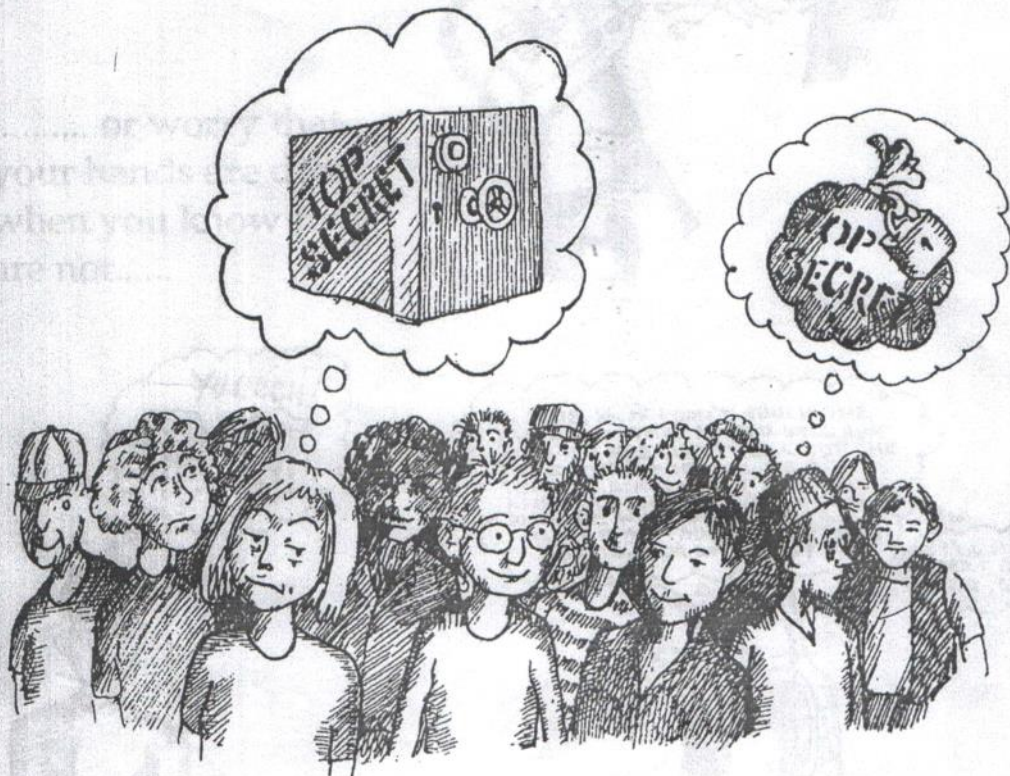
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Drawn by Neil Phillips

The secret problem

from people

Some children and teenagers have a secret problem. They think that if others knew, they would laugh or think they were weird.



This secret problem can be having some strange idea which you know is silly but keeps coming into your head. Or it could be doing really dumb things over and over again. These things often happen together.

If you have the secret problem, you may sometimes think that...

.....or have bad thoughts popping up in your head. You just can't stop them no matter how hard you try.....and they make you upset.

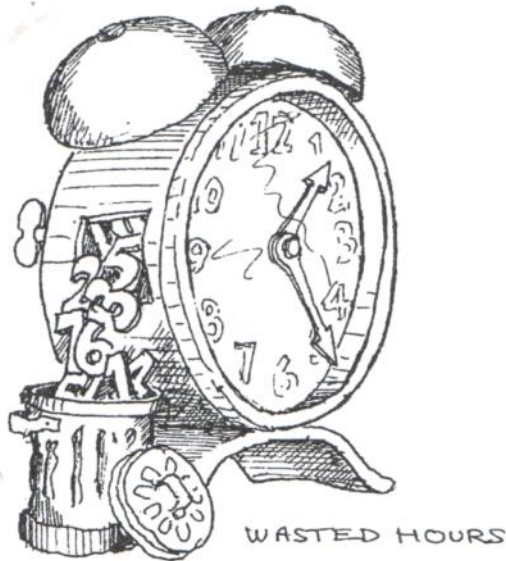


These thoughts, ideas or pictures just come for no reason at all and don't go away even though you wish they would. They are called.....

....obsessions



Children with this secret problem often do some silly things too, a bit like a bad habit that they can't stop doing.....they may wash their hands a lot, because they think they have to get rid of all germs.....



Because you can't stop doing these things it ends up wasting a lot of your time . You've got better things to do.

But there is help!

This help can save you lots of your time. It can help you control the OCD and not have the OCD control you.

People can only help you if you tell them you have this problem and they bring you to someone who knows about it. They will talk to you and your family, ask you lots of questions, explain this problem to you and let you know how they can help you. The first step is to tell these people all about those dumb things the OCD is making you think and do.

There are medicines that help. They help the brain chemicals and make the OCD weaker so you can stand up to it and not be forced into doing those dumb things.

But you need special training to fight OCD - this special training is called.....

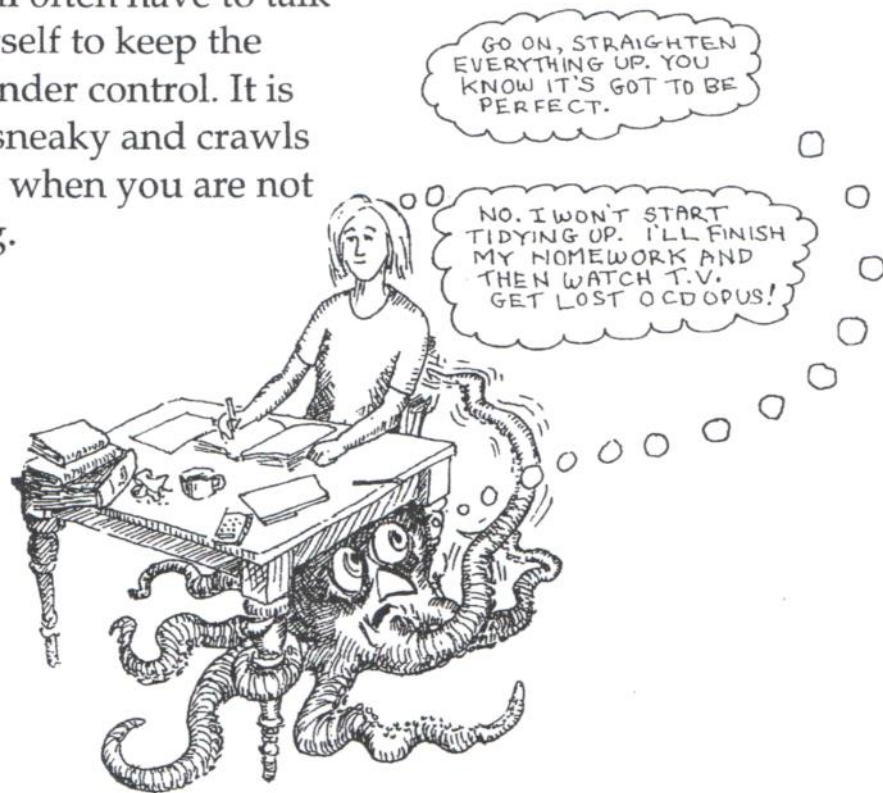
Behaviour Therapy.

The more you train the easier it is to fight the OCD so that it ends up not worrying you at all or only a little. It is like training for a long distance running race. The first training run is pretty hard but it ends up getting easier the more you train.



Yet training is hard work. In running you get tired and sore. In OCD training you often feel worried or bad inside. But don't give up; as you train more the worry and bad feelings inside get less and less and you end up beating the OCD.

You will often have to talk to yourself to keep the OCD under control. It is pretty sneaky and crawls back in when you are not looking.



If it creeps up on you or you find it hard to control, you need to remind yourself that what you may be thinking or doing is silly and due to OCD. You don't have to do it. If you find it hard to stop it may help to do something which is not OCD, a normal or fun thing, and come back and see whether you really need to do the OCD things. Often, after a time, you realise that the OCD things don't need to be done.

Your Mum or Dad need advice too, on how to help you. They need to know not to do the OCD things for you. They need to remind you to talk sensibly to yourself if the OCD creeps back in. They need to not get cross with OCD things but help you fight the OCD.



They got cross before because they thought you were doing these things on purpose and didn't understand that the OCD was making you do them. Often you would get mad back and this could make the OCD stronger.

When the behaviour therapy and the medicine make you stronger you are able to ignore the OCD. Often you can then stop the medicine and the OCD stays under control.

Sometimes the OCD may creep back in and you may need to keep taking the medicine for longer to keep the OCD under control.

The help you get makes you able to control the OCD. The more you can fight the OCD the more you can do the fun things you missed out on before.

IT'S NO GOOD HANGING AROUND HERE ANYMORE. THE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY AND THAT MEDICINE HAVE RUINED ALL MY FUN! I'M LEAVING!



The end

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Approximately one or two percent of children and teenagers will suffer from this disorder. It is a hidden disorder, a problem where few of those who have it will admit to symptoms, preferring to suffer in silence. It can cause misunderstanding and disruption for a child and for the child's family. Much of the suffering is due to lack of knowledge and delay in obtaining help.

In "THE SECRET PROBLEM", Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is explained in clear and simple language. Cartoons are used to help children, teenagers and their parents understand the problem and its treatment.

The book identifies OCD as a biological problem and clearly describes how the individual and the family are not to blame for its onset. Instead it describes how a child and family can fight the problem and bring the symptoms under control.

It is clearly established that, with modern treatments now available, the outlook for sufferers and their families is much brighter.



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