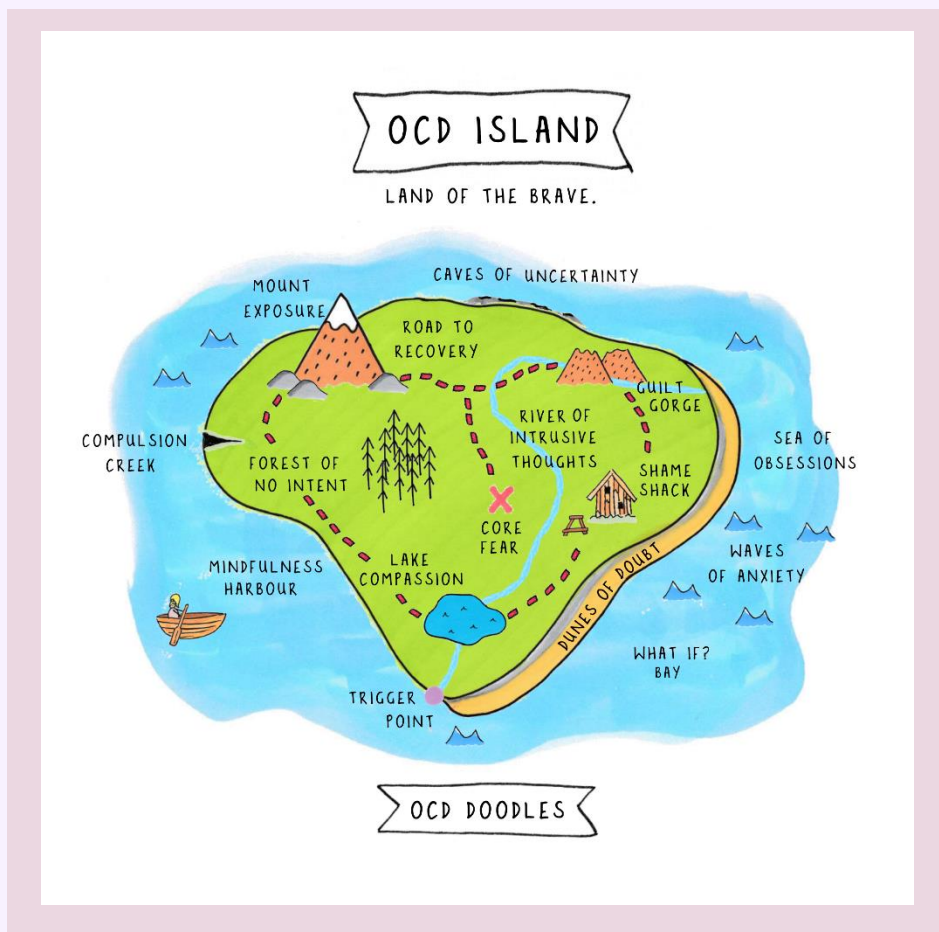


The OCD Newsletter

2022



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Updates from the last newsletter

- ⇒ The family and friends booklet is now published on the OCD Interventions page of the Cardiff and Vale health board website
- ⇒ OCD peer support group is up and running again! (keep reading for details)
- ⇒ The recovery college runs educational courses on mental health, physical health and wellbeing topics. There are also sometimes opportunities to get involved as someone with lived experience of mental health. You can find out more information here; www.cavuhb.nhs.wales/recovery-college/
- ⇒ The OCD-UK conference was the 27th and 28th of November 2021. Some of the talks are recorded, please see their website for more information; www.ocduk.org/conference/

Will - Clinical Psychologist

Hello from Will! I am a clinical psychologist working in OCD Services. I have a long interest of helping people with anxiety disorders and I am also assisting Alice with the newsletter. I am always keen to learn more about the experiences of people with OCD and hope we can use this newsletter to give people with OCD a voice on this.



Alice - Assistant Psychologist

Hello, my name is Alice and I am an assistant psychologist working within OCD Services. I started my role about a year ago and really enjoy working with people who have OCD, in group and individual settings. I have put together this newsletter and I also run the peer recovery group, spoken about in this newsletter.



CBT for OCD Group

The HUB run a CBT for OCD group, led by qualified CBT therapists. This is for people with moderate OCD. There is at times, understandable anxiety around coming to a group. This could be due to not wanting to share aspects of mental health, perhaps because of worry about judgement from other group members. Generally, people find the groups a positive experience and find the peer support beneficial for recovery. I have included some quotes below from the attendees of the groups ran in January 2021.

“Very welcoming and informative. Interesting to learn about causes of OCD and how to manage it.”

“Knowing there are people who understand my issues is fantastic and it felt like we were all in it together.”

“I liked group thinking with others, giving help and ideas on what to do and how to overcome the challenges.”

“It was a small group, not intimidating, didn't feel judged, facilitator was approachable, comfortable to share. Formulations, 'comfortably, uncomfortable.'”

“Very good environment to share. Advice is useful and practical.”

“Motivation that comes from hearing of other people's progress. Compassion. Recognising my own experiences in what other people are saying. Good dynamic.”

If you feel you could have OCD and the group would be beneficial for you, please visit your GP who can refer you on to Primary Mental Health Support Services. They can assess whether the OCD pathway is appropriate for your current presentation.

OCD Peer Support Group

People who have completed the CBT for OCD Group in the previous year under the HUB are invited by letter to attend the OCD Peer Recovery Group. The Peer group is a 'post therapy' group which is designed to support people to continue to practice the tools they learned during the CBT for OCD group. The members of the group work collaboratively with the facilitators to design the sessions and take the lead on certain elements of the group; that could be anything from leading a mindfulness exercise, to writing up ideas or time keeping.

Due to restrictions, the decision was taken to move this group online over zoom. It has also changed to be bi-weekly and is still ran in the evening.

Topics included in 2021's Online OCD Peer Support Group are;

- ⇒ Introduction session
- ⇒ Refresh of CBT for OCD
- ⇒ Mindfulness
- ⇒ Problem solving
- ⇒ Self-care
- ⇒ Stigma and talking about OCD with other people
- ⇒ Worry and OCD

The OCD peer recovery group is open to people who have completed the OCD group. For the chance to be referred, please see your GP.

"The peer recovery group has been extremely helpful. It has given me new ideas (and reminded me of ideas we came up with in our previous group) and has helped me with my OCD. Chatting to other people in my situation has also helped me so much as they can relate to me." (Peer group attendee 2021)

informal
understanding
express
value
open
listen
mind
opportunity
honesty
students
confidence
positive
health
inspiration
share
pro-recovery
support
non-judgemental
motivation
talking
safe

Perinatal OCD

Perinatal OCD is when OCD develops during pregnancy, or in the first year after giving birth. Studies suggest that it affects 1% of woman in pregnancy and 2.9% of woman in the postnatal period (Fairbrother et al., 2016). A likely contributing factor, is the heightened responsibility new mothers often feel for their child. Some people have symptoms of OCD prior to pregnancy, but this then becomes heightened during this period. However, not everyone who has OCD experiences perinatal OCD, and the presentation varies drastically between woman. There are some reports showing men can also develop perinatal OCD (Royal Collage of Psychiatrists, 2018).

Common obsessions in perinatal OCD include, but are not limited to; thoughts of physically harming their baby, thoughts of sexually abusing their baby, thoughts of giving their baby a disease and fears around making the wrong decision for their baby. This can lead to a range of safety behaviours, aimed at stopping the feared outcome from happening. For example, avoiding being alone with the baby, seeking reassurance from loved ones and professionals, saying mantras to yourself, holding fists to ensure you won't hurt the baby and many, many more.

Maternal OCD is a charity dedicated to raising awareness and providing resources about perinatal OCD, for mothers and professionals. It was founded by two women with lived experiences of Perinatal OCD. It gives training courses to professionals (e.g. midwives) about perinatal OCD. For more information, please visit their website on; www.maternalocd.org/



YOU ARE A TERRIBLE MOTHER FOR RESTING. CHECK THE WINDOWS ARE SHUT, CHECK THE GRASS FOR NEEDLES. DO YOU KNOW THERE ISN'T A SEXUAL PREDATOR IN THE FAMILY? CAN YOU TRUST THAT PERSON TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD'S FOOD? SECOND HAND ITEMS ARE CONTAMINATED AND WILL HARM YOUR BABY.

WHAT FUTURE DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE IN THIS WORLD?

WHAT IF YOU SNAP AND HARM YOUR CHILD? WHAT IF YOUR BABY DOESN'T LOVE YOU?

WHAT IF YOU SUFFOCATE YOUR BABY WHILST BREASTFEEDING? WHAT IF YOU GET LOCKED UP?

WHAT IF YOUR CHILD DISAPPEARS AND YOU DON'T KNOW YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE? DON'T TAKE THOSE MEDS, THEY'LL POISON YOUR BABY.

IF YOU DARE TO HAVE ANY TIME TO YOURSELF, YOUR CHILD WILL DIE. ARE YOU SURE THAT DECISION WILL KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE?

THAT PERSON OR ITEM MIGHT CONTAMINATE YOUR CHILD. ENJOYING BREASTFEEDING MIGHT MEAN YOU'RE A PEDIOPHILE. YOUR CHILD MUST HAVE THE MOST EXPENSIVE ITEMS, OTHERWISE YOU ARE A FAILURE.



THE CRUEL VOICE OF PERINATAL OCD

OCD DOODLES

Picture used with permission from @OCDDoodles (Laura)

OCD action are another charity that provides support for people with OCD, including perinatal OCD. They are currently running lots of support groups, including one specifically for people with Perinatal OCD. You can find out more information here; <https://ocdaction.org.uk/i-need-support/ocd-action-skype-phone-zoom-support-groups/>



Busting myths about OCD

Myth - OCD is all about cleaning

False! While contamination fears are common in OCD, there are many different types of presentations that can develop in OCD.

Myth - 'we can all be a little OCD'

False! OCD stands for 'obsessive compulsive disorder', if we read that myth back using the full title, it does not make sense. OCD is a debilitating disorder with a prevalence of around 1.2% respectively.

Myth - Only adults can have OCD

False! Around 1 in every 200 children have OCD. Children from age 4/5 can develop OCD.

Myth - Stress causes OCD

False! Although stress can worsen the symptoms of OCD, there is not a unique causal factor of OCD, and contributing causes likely varies between individuals.

Myth - OCD is a 'woman's' disease

False! Although diagnosis rates are higher for woman, OCD effects both men and woman. Additionally, there may be a slight gender bias of accessing support, meaning within males it could be underdiagnosed.

Myth - OCD is a type of personality trait

False! - Although some personality traits, such as perfectionism, may put people at higher risk of having OCD, OCD is not a type of personality.

Myth - OCD is not treatable

False! - OCD can be a debilitating condition, but finding the right therapeutic and/or pharmacological intervention can help you to reclaim your life.

Struggling with OCD?

If you or someone close to you is experiencing symptoms of OCD, you can access help through your GP, charities (e.g. OCD-UK or OCD Action) or self-help books to find the right support to help you recover.

Useful websites

www.ocduk.org

www.ocdaction.org.uk www.mind.org.uk

www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/ocd-pathway

www.topuk.org/

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

Special thanks to Laura who created OCD Doodles (on Instagram @ocddoodles) and gave me permission to use two of her drawings.

Coming soon...

The next newsletter will be aimed to be sent out within the first half of the new year!

Thanks for reading, from the OCD team