

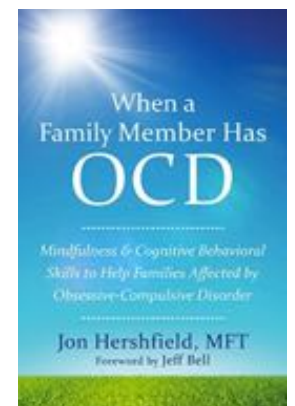
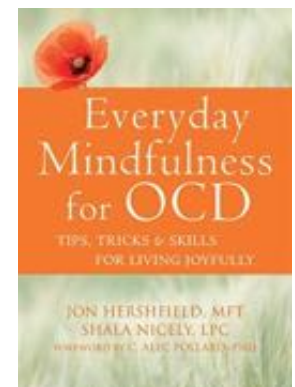
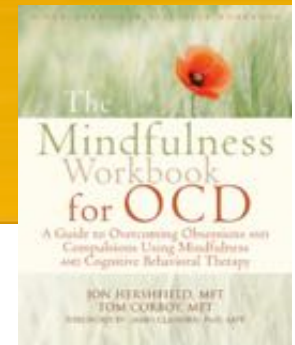


ERP Games for Living Joyfully with OCD

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IOCDF 2017

Disclosures

- Jon and Shala are co-authors of *Everyday Mindfulness for OCD: Tips, Tricks, and Skills for Living Joyfully*
- Jon is the author of *The Mindfulness Workbook for OCD* and *When a Family Member Has OCD*
- Shala is a partner in *Beyond the Doubt*





AGENDA

- **What are ERP games?**
- **The new meaning of JOY**
- **Mindfulness and self-compassion as the foundation for ERP games**
- **Let's play some ERP games!**



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What are ERP Games?

- Playful, creative, JOYful approach to exposures
 - Doing sports vs. Working out
- Based on concepts from CBT, enhanced with mindfulness and self-compassion

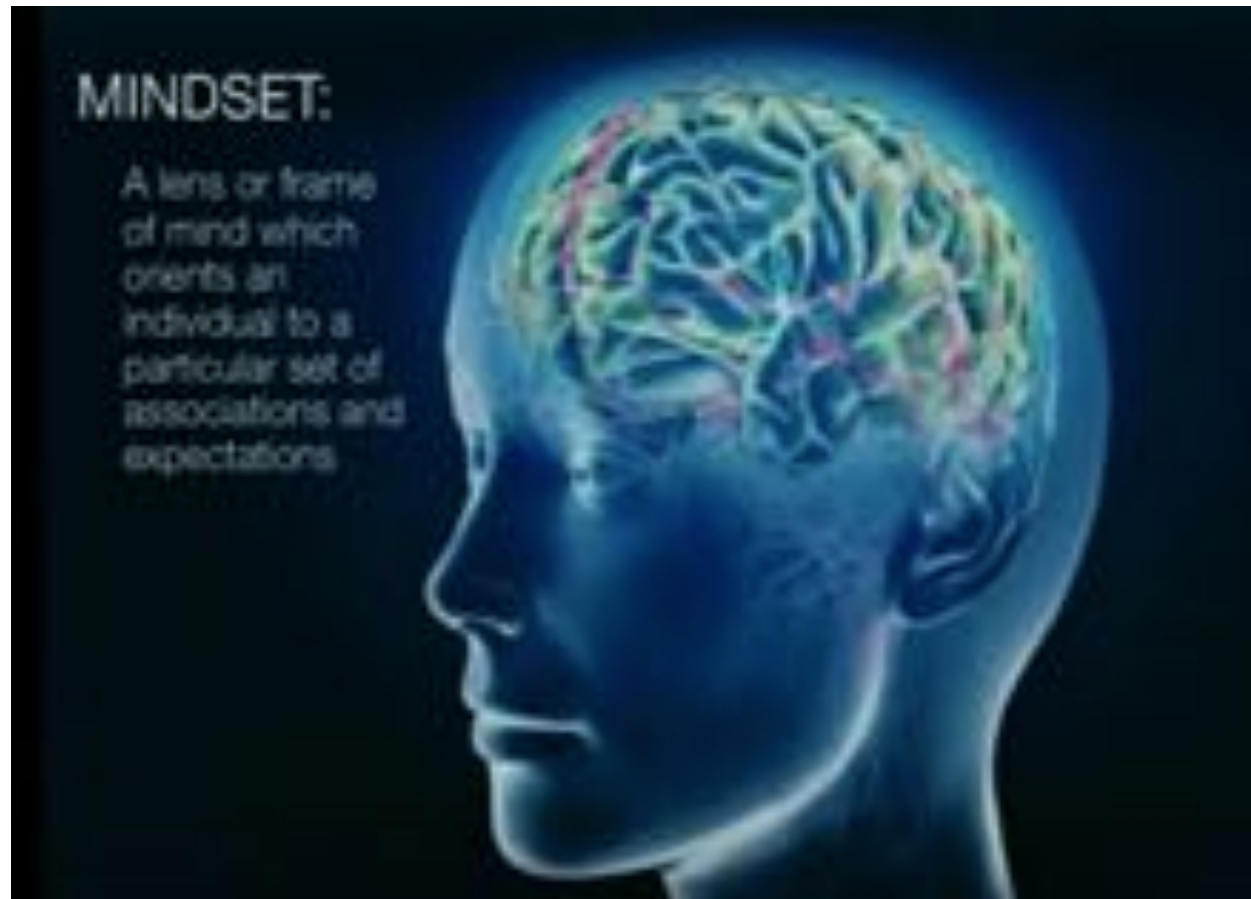




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It all starts with mindset





Mindset matters and JOY is a mindset!

Attitude
Changes
Everything

The new meaning of JOY

- **J: Jump In!**
- **O: Opt for Greater Good**
- **Y: Yield to Uncertainty**





J: Jump In!

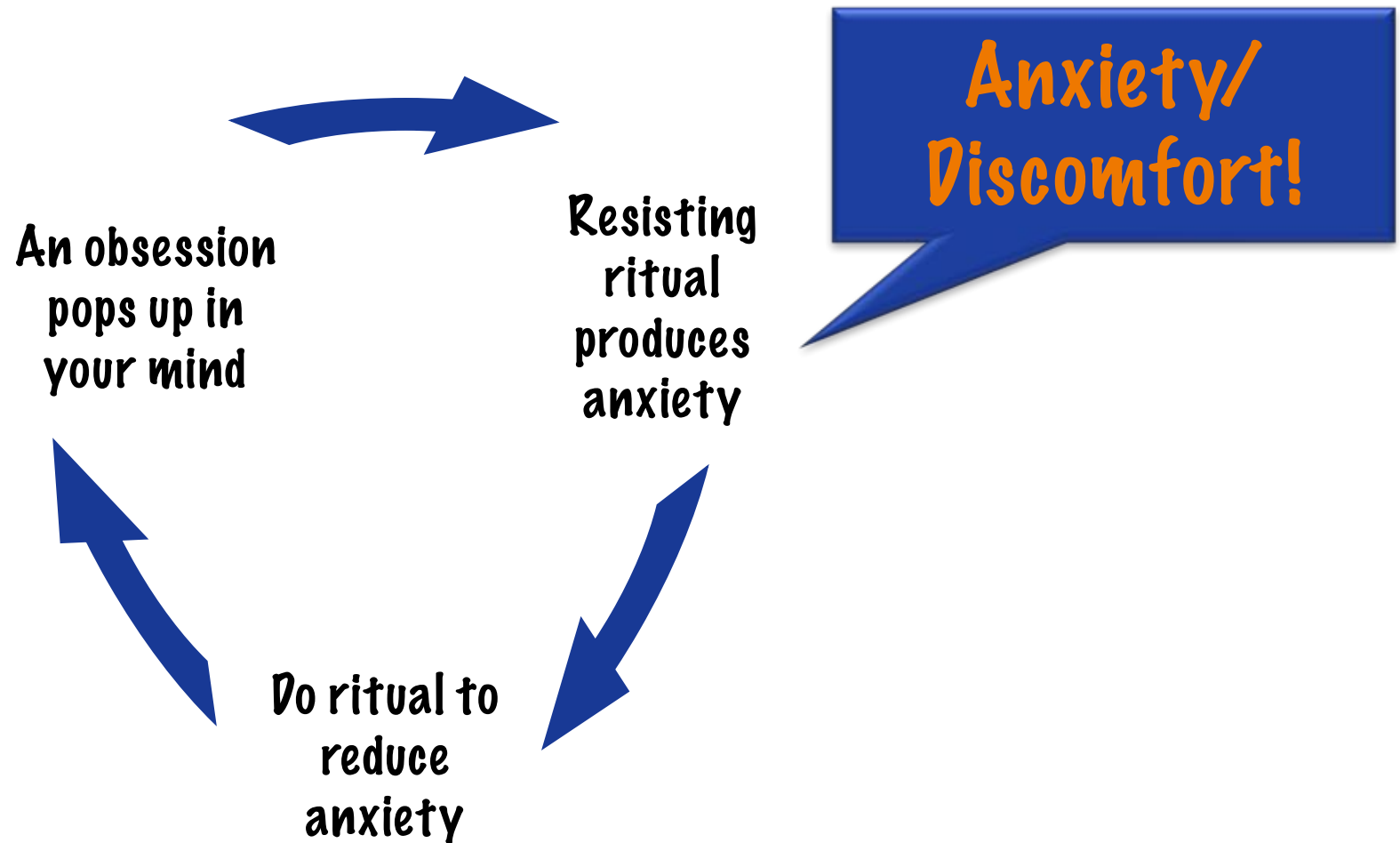


Approach ERP and anxiety with a “bring it on, baby!” attitude.

OCD's Reason to Do Rituals



Why People Really Do Rituals



What happens with OCD



**You rev up
your
amygdala
even more**

**An obsession
pops up**

**You feel
anxious/
uncomfortable**

**You interpret anxiety/discomfort
negatively:**

- I can't handle feeling like this
- If I don't get rid of this feeling, it will ruin my day!
- Because I'm feeling like this, my OCD content must be important (emotional reasoning)

The paradox of Jump In!



**You aren't
adding fuel to
the amygdala
fire!**

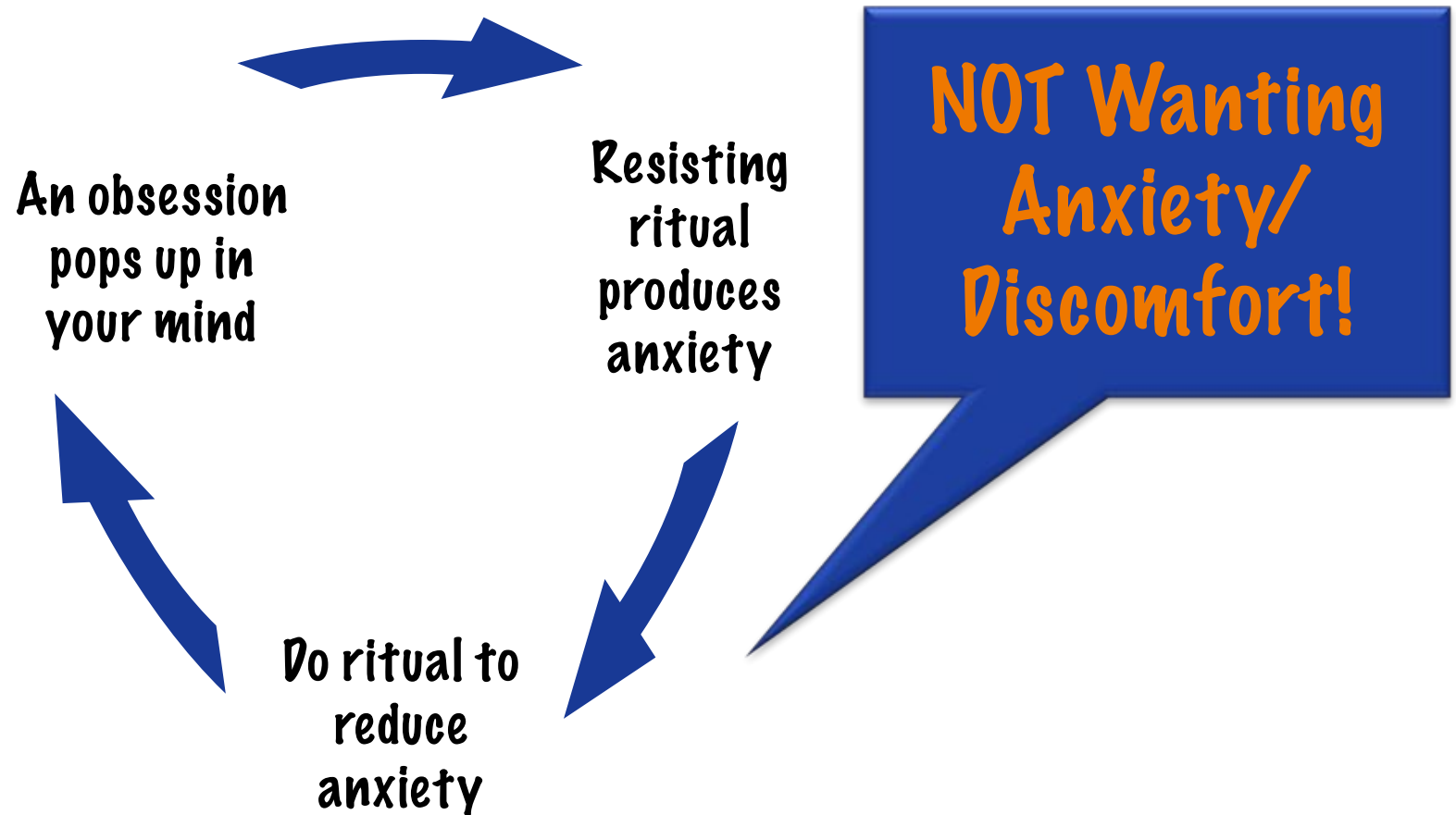
**An obsession
pops up**

**You feel
anxious/
uncomfortable**

**You interpret anxiety/discomfort
DIFFERENTLY:**

- **I can handle feeling like this**
- **It's just a feeling, it's not going to kill me**

Remember why we really do rituals...



The Secret Weapon: Jump In!



You aren't
adding fuel to
the amygdala
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An obsession
pops up

You feel
anxious/
uncomfortable

You interpret anxiety/discomfort
DIFFERENTLY:

- I can handle feeling like this
- It's just a feeling, it's not going to kill me
- It's here, so why not want my discomfort?

Jump In!: The Essence of Mindfulness



O: Opt for Greater Good

Focus on WHY you are doing ERP: What's your purpose? How can you be of service to others?



(Bell, 2010)



Identifying Greater Good

- Identify various roles in your life
 - Self
 - Family
 - Work
 - Community
- Consider your values
 - Life Values Inventory www.lifevaluesinventory.org/
 - The Foundation for a Better Life www.values.com/teaching-values
- Headstone test

(Strecher, 2016)



Y: Yield to Uncertainty



People with OCD are already quite skilled at managing uncertainty...about the stuff OCD doesn't care about.

Certainty is an illusion



The new meaning of JOY

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What is ERP?



A focus on discomfort in the present moment, without compulsions pulling you into the past or future

What is mindfulness?

Non-judgmental awareness of the present moment

A photograph of a green leaf with a single water droplet falling from its tip into a pool of water. The impact of the droplet creates a series of concentric ripples that spread outwards. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural setting.



ERP = Mindfulness



Example: Meditation to sound



What is self-compassion?

A desire to relieve our own suffering



Three elements of self-compassion

Mindfulness



Common Humanity

Self-Kindness



(Neff, 2011)

Self-kindness in depth

- Notice what's right
- Give yourself permission
- Invite yourself to do something helpful and kind





Example self-compassion coping statement

- I'm feeling really guilty right now for not doing my ERP.
- I bet most people with OCD find ERP pretty hard, don't always do their homework and then feel guilty.
- I'm going to be kind to myself, congratulating myself on remembering to use self-compassion and giving myself permission not to do ERP perfectly. I'm going to go ahead and do an ERP exercise right now, knowing that will help me, and then read a little of my favorite book as a reward.





Can be shortened to:

I'm feeling really guilty right now. I bet most people with OCD feel guilty about homework now and then. I'm going to give myself a break and treat myself like I would a best friend.



Self-Compassion Exercises

- *Recognize What an Achievement It Is to Overcome OCD*
- *Write Yourself a Permission Slip. "I give myself permission to..."*
 - *Be messy*
 - *Make mistakes*
 - *Do something new and do it imperfectly!*
- *Use Your Self-Compassion Coping Statements*



As we start the games, keep in mind:

- Mindfulness (non-judgmental awareness of the present moment) = ERP
- Self-compassion is much more motivating than beating yourself up, even though it doesn't seem like it would be!





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How is an ERP game different than plain 'ole ERP?

- Approached with JOY (although we recommend this for ALL ERP)
- Playful and involves a sense of humor
- Requires creativity
- Designed for spontaneity



The May or May Not Game

What if I offended someone?



I may or may not have offended someone.





The Four Questions Game

1. What changes am I going to make from this point forward?
2. What feared outcome is the OCD using to threaten me—this is, what might happen if I make this change?
3. What is likely to happen if I continue to obey my OCD and don't make any changes?
4. What is my purpose and Greater Good (remembering JOY) such that I am willing to make these changes and defy my OCD?



The Trigger "Scavenger Hunt" Game



The Trigger "Scavenger Hunt" Game



The Trigger "Scavenger Hunt" Game



Shoulders Back

“I may or may not be a murderer in waiting, but I’m going to throw my shoulders back and act as though I’m on top of the world”





The Headlines Game

AREA WOMAN IDENTIFIED AS WORST PERSON EVER: Failure to Check Locks Results in Entire House Being Stolen (Including All the People in It, Who Are Still Missing) .





Make it funny!

LOCAL MAN ACQUIRES VIRUS THAT
WIPES OUT EASTERN SEABOARD:
Should Have Taken Second Coffee
Cozy from the Stack.





Make it outrageous!

ASYMMETRICAL TABLE SETTING
ALTERS POLARITY OF THE EARTH:
Billions of People Sent Orbiting
Into Space Because Bob is Too
Lazy to Move His Fork.



Throw Open the Gates!



Now's a great time for self-compassion!

I'm feeling really guilty and weird right now. I bet most people in this room are feeling like this! I'm going to give myself a break and congratulate myself for doing a rockin' great ERP!



That's For Other People





Do Things Halfway

- Buy only some of the items on your grocery list
- Leave out details in a story you are recounting
- Fast-forward through 5 minutes of your binge-watching show
- Clean everything in the bathroom except for the sink
- Say only part of a prayer
- Exercise for 29 minutes



Questions?



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- You can download these slides at shalanicely.com/iocdf2017





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- *Self-Compassion: Stop Beating Yourself Up and Leave Insecurity Behind* by Kristin Neff (2011).
- *When in Doubt, Make Belief: An OCD-Inspired Approach to Living with Uncertainty* by Jeff Bell (2009).

