Coping with OCD

What is OCD?

OCD is an anxiety-related condition where person has obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviour. In order to try to prevent these obsessions coming true and to relieve feelings of anxiety, the person involved feels compelled to carry out a repetitive behaviour or mental act. Many people with OCD fall into a similar pattern of thought - obsession or fear provokes feelings of anxiety and distress which then leads to compulsive actions or behaviour, which provide temporary relief from anxiety, but obsession and fear can return, creating a vicious circle of behaviour.

There are many different types of OCD, some of the more common forms include:

Checking:

Where a person has a compulsion to check things multiple times, sometimes hundreds of times. For instance, checking the front door is locked or the water taps are off. It can result in a person not wanting to leave the house because the checking can take such a long time.

Contamination:

A compulsive need to clean or wash for fear of being contaminated by germs. Physically the skin can become damaged. After using a public toilet, for instance, it can take some OCD sufferers a four-hour shower to feel clean again.

Intrusive thoughts:

Also sometimes referred to as Pure O. It is where a person will have mental or internal compulsions and obsessions, such as thoughts about hurting loved ones for example.

Hoarding:

The accumulation of worn out or old possessions. In some cases, a person's living space can be taken over by these items or possessions.