



Spiritual Studies Institute

ESOTERIC HEALING CLASS SERIES

Psychological Diseases: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

*We honor and thank all who came before us,
all teachers, from whom we have learned and who have
been there for us with infinite patience, love, and wisdom.*

Psychological Diseases: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

1. Explanation of Terms
2. General Developmental Process
3. Pathological Process of OCD
4. Therapeutic Methods and Tools

Psychological Diseases: Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

The following presentation does not include the traditional, clinical conceptualization of OCD. It intends to add to the existing body of clinical knowledge. It focuses on life processes, which are perceived and considered by esoteric psychologists in addition to the existing clinical understanding.

1. Explanation of Terms

Clinical Definition of OCD:

"recurrent obsessions or compulsions ... that are severe enough to be time consuming (i.e., they take more than 1 hour a day) or cause marked distress or significant impairment ... the person has recognized that the obsessions or compulsions are excessive or unreasonable."

"Obsessions are persistent ideas, thoughts, impulses, or images that are experienced as intrusive and inappropriate and that cause marked anxiety or distress."

"Compulsions are repetitive behaviors (e.g., hand washing, ordering, checking) or mental acts (e.g., praying, counting, repeating words silently) the goal of which is to prevent or reduce anxiety or distress, not to provide pleasure or gratification." (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 417, 418)

Esoteric Healing Terms:

Heelee: A term used to identify the one who is seeking healing. Due to the nature of esoteric healing, every effort is being made to convey a sense of a co-creative, sacred relationship between the esoteric healer and heelee.

Healer: We are all healers when we unconsciously or consciously—with the intention to heal—utilize the energy of goodwill. Healers give their best depending on their abilities and training to the one who seeks healing. Today the overall goal of healers is the evolutionary unfoldment of humanity "to aid

group learning • self-discovery • spiritual transformation

in the bringing about of health of the body and its sustained experience in life.” (EH, 352)

Transmutation: “Transmutation is the method whereby that which is lower is absorbed by the higher, whereby force is transmuted into energy” (RI, 278). For the disciple, transmutation is a stepping up of personality force into soul energy (RI, 248). For the aspirant, transmutation is a method of changing difficult emotions into something that can be accepted and applied in daily life.

KEY THOUGHTS

- o Neurological and causative environmental factors
- o Symptomology of compulsions and obsessions
- o Cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral symptoms
- o Reacting to internal fear cues (intrusive thoughts, images, impulses)
- o Tendency to orderliness, rigidity, indecisiveness and perfectionism and the need that everything is decent and kept clean
- o Anxious to do everything properly
- o Sensitive, shy and nervous with people
- o Difficulties making decisions
- o Easily hurt and reassurance seeking
- o Finding it impossible to let go of feelings of minor and/or major hurts and in general of injustices in the world—causing anything from discomfort to shock reactions
- o Often feels sad, brooding and apprehensive, yet at the same time, ambitious
- o Inhibition of Soul Life, resulting in absence of spontaneity and joy
- o Congestion of solar plexus center, lung connection.

2. General Developmental Process

Our three-fold personality (physical/etheric, emotional, and mental) can be viewed symbolically as a sense organ, through which soul from its plane can experience earthly existence. This three-fold personality, like anything else in nature, develops in successive stages from birth to early adulthood to its final exit.

Approximately from age 1-7, we develop the physical/etheric body. From about 7-14 years, we develop the emotional body, and from around 14-21 years and somewhat later, we develop the mental body. These 7-year cycles continue throughout the entire life, giving soul and personality a chance to interact and work together. Each stage has its specific opportunities and demands.

These successive stages can be compared to an earlier developmental process of the child growing in the womb of the mother—from the fertilized egg to the embryo to the full-grown healthy baby being born. Considering the growth and development of a healthy human personality, the process of growing up during an individual life is similar. Each stage needs its cycle or time to unfold stage-specific qualities and abilities on which the subsequent stage can be built and continued.

Finally, in early adulthood, the product is a mature personality with all three bodies integrated and functioning. Ideally, the physical/etheric body is healthy, the emotional body is calm and sensitive, and the mental body is clear and able to focus. The personality is an appropriate instrument then to experience, perceive, and transmute life impressions. If all these circumstances are present, one is ready for the next stage, namely to open up to intuition (EP, 1942; Pearce, 1992).

If the growth and unfoldment of any of these stages are stunted, neurological and/or environmental pathological reactions may develop during childhood and/or later in adulthood. Symbolically, these stages can be viewed like a consciousness ladder. On a ladder, if we do not have a secure footing on any of the steps, we might "loose it;" loose our balance and a mishap might happen.

For instance, today our educational system sets the tone to prematurely force the mental development of the child before its proper time and cycle is reached. The stages for sensory and feeling development are shortened and impoverished. The children are prevented to assimilate and utilize sufficiently perceptions and experiences, which would benefit the healthy development of a physical/etheric and/or emotional body. The result often is an overdeveloped mental body and an unstable physical/etheric and emotional body (Treichler, 1989).

In addition to the above, a more recent understanding of OCD includes neurological determined errors in the functioning of the basal ganglia region of the brain influencing feelings, thinking, and behaviors (Komor, 2010). It seems, however, more than one determining factor needs to be present to result in the symptoms of OCD, for instance, when neurological and environmental factors coincide.

A. A. Bailey compared the healthy personality to a modern house with light, water, telephone, and gas. "Light, the symbol of the soul; water, the symbol of the emotions; telephonic interchange, the symbol of mind with its intercommunication of knowledge; and gas, the symbol of the etheric nature" (EH, 39). We all know from own experience, how our life can be disrupted, when any of these conveniences are not installed properly and/or function insufficiently.

3. Pathological Process of OCD

If due to neurological and causative environmental factors during age 7-14 the emotional body cannot develop fully, then later in life adverse cognitive, emotional and/or behavioral reactions may develop. The result might be just an "anal" personality, or "checkers, washers, orderers, and repeaters" with a more pronounced symptomology.

Bailey differentiated the causes arising from the emotional-desire body the following way:

- o uncontrolled and ill-regulated emotions;
- o desire, inhibited or rampant;
- o diseases of worry and irritation. (EH, 38-67)

We can agree with her, when she expressed, "These are the insidious poisons, which lurk behind the phenomena of disease" (EH, 67).

There is an intensification and hypersensitivity of the emotional body in OCD, which in turn has its effect upon the nervous system. The result is often exaggerated self-importance, self-interest, and self-sufficiency. The solar plexus center is overactive and/or congested. Soul contact and the realization of oneness are pushed to the background, interrupted, or even absent.

How can we understand the obsessive-compulsive reaction? Generally, the hypersensitive emotional body reacts to a perceived lack of order in the world, whatever it might be. It wants to take control. It results in worry and irritation, which can transform into unsubstantiated compulsive fears. Mental images arise, which in turn can become obsessive ideas. These are fought with symbolic cognitive and/or behavioral actions like checking, obsessing, washing, ordering, and repeating.

Symbolically, instead of "breathing in" and "breathing out" in a rhythmic way, those life impressions are more or less held on in the sphere of feeling by the hypersensitive emotional body. On overload, the emotional body consequently gets tight and rigid. Instead of receiving, accepting, and transmuting impressions from life's experience, an obsessional idea is formed.

This idea feels like an alien to the emotional body and it repetitively tries to throw it out. It resists it and tries to keep it away, but cannot get free of it. Being held in a semi-conscious state of awareness, it returns and imposes itself repeatedly on the consciousness, like an unwanted guest or intruder into a home. Consequently, this results in tension, which can cause feelings from discomfort to high anxiety. If the anxiety separates from the originating idea, it becomes free floating within the body. It needs to be remembered that there is most often an original compulsive idea behind the free-floating anxiety (Treichler, 1989).

Often healees suffering from OCD symptoms have great difficulties making decisions and acting spontaneously due to the overload of the emotional body. They are best advised to act on the first choice that comes to mind. Later choices might be greatly influenced by the doubts and insecurities associated with the OCD pathology.

If this condition becomes chronic, the emotional body can become exhausted and lets go of any attempts to control. What is happening inside the personality is now projected outside. We can observe this in the various manifestations of OCD, from the clutterer to the pathological hoarder. When the obsessive-compulsive reaction shifts from the emotional body to the physical/etheric level, then the physical/etheric body tries to reject it. It tries to "cough out" what feels foreign. Nervous coughing or even asthma may develop.

Ability for insight and detachment to the condition is one of the keys for the diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive reaction.

4. Therapeutic Methods and Tools

The following therapeutic methods and tools encouraging transmutation of life impressions, the transfer of energies from the Solar Plexus into the Heart Center and, therefore, normalization of the emotional body will consequently lessen the OCD symptoms.

As with all psychological conditions, the healee needs to be met at the point where he/she is now, needs to feel accepted and "seen." Considering the intelligent, creative but also sensitive nature of the healee, first only moderate challenge to the OCD symptoms needs to be provided. Focus is more on strength and positive aspects of the healee. Later in the course of treatment, this approach can be intensified and more confrontive methods can be employed.

Since the basis for OCD can be found in the astral body, it is here that therapy needs to focus.

- (a) Cognitive and behavioral therapy can help in restructuring automatic thoughts related to internal fear cues, anxiety, and over-sensitivity.

Exposure and response prevention seems also appropriate in some cases, especially involving trust issues.

- (b) "Paradoxical intention" (Frankl, 1966), for instance, for orderers can be effective, by doing the opposite of one's compulsion in an exacerbated way such as messing up the meticulously ordered books or kitchen utensils.
- (c) Regular and careful observations of nature (in less severe cases) might help the sufferer to live more in the present, letting go temporarily of worry and anxiety. This could involve regular nature walks, gardening, or even caring for an animal.
- (d) Art therapy—color and pencil drawing or watercolor—can express the inner world. Work with color and form makes visible that which plagues and tortures the healee. It can help to shed the light of soul on the OCD symptoms, soothing and healing.
- (e) Rhythmic, repetitive movements in harmony with the breath can facilitate sensory integration. For instance, physical movements with equal counts of inhaling and exhaling like Tai Chi, Yoga, or Radiant Body Exercise, rhythmic kneading of a soft or a clay ball, or quietly singing or humming a tune—all could result in sensory integration and, therefore, lessening of OCD symptoms. Another tool is using eye movement, which slowly follows several times an imaginary number 8, visualized horizontally, about half a foot in front of both eyes.
- (f) Evening review to let the soul symbolically "breathe out" fully the impressions of the day. First, identifying, naming, and accepting feelings that arose during the day. Second, sorting out which feelings are based in reality and which ones are secondary accompanying the obsessional symptoms and are therefore unrealistic.
- (g) Etheric Triangle Work: Soul, Heart, Solar Plexus Center may facilitate the lessening of self-centeredness and self-preoccupation, opening up more a sense of connectedness and oneness.
- (h) Soul-identification, for instance, during meditation lets the individual's apprehensions enter into the world of soul. It gives the opportunity to "see" the anxious pre-occupation in the "light of soul." Consequently, the healee may be able to transmute what was alien before into a more integrated, higher state of consciousness. The healee then arrives at a more realistic perception of the world. It is followed by appropriate self-care to keep the whole individual functioning at an optimal level.

In summary, OCD has its roots in a stunted emotional body, which can be due to neurological and environmental causative factors. The entire personality in its physical/etheric, emotional, and mental aspects can be affected. A whole range of methods and tools are available for the esoteric healer to assist the healee to cope with the OCD reaction. With the appropriate guidance, the pain and agony caused by this psychological condition can become a great motivator to liberate oneself from the shackles of this disease and expand upward to include the freeing world of soul.

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Disclaimer: The information in these documents is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease or illness. They are presented for educational purposes only. Disease and health are not examined from a physiological and scientific point of view, but explore them within the framework of esoteric philosophy. Matters of personal health should be under the direction of a personal physician or skilled care provider. A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for noncommercial personal use only.

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APPENDIX G

Finding Freedom From Obsessive Compulsive Symptoms

KEY THOUGHTS

- Shift focus from centers below to above the diaphragm
- Close solar plexus center to the emotional forces and open it via the heart center to the soul forces
- Imagine "siphoning" the forces of solar plexus via the heart center to soul using the breath
- Inhale – Interlude – Exhale
 - Inhalation: 6 counts – Gather the forces up to soul
 - Interlude: 8 counts – Forces are blended and fused
 - Exhalation: 6 counts – Blessing of humanity
- Steady consciousness in the head by using ancient mantra

MEDITATION

Alignment, Integration, Soul Identification

Installation of Etheric Triangles

- Soul – base – heart center
- Soul – heart – ajna center
- Soul – heart – solar plexus center

Inhalation

Inhale to the count of six and imagine the following:

- Gathering up the emotional forces from the solar plexus center
- Siphoning these forces up the etheric spinal column via the heart center to the soul
- Imagine and sense how they have risen upward

Interlude

Holding the breath to the count of eight, we imagine, they have been blended with the active force of the heart on their way upward and further up finally with the soul.

The emotional forces are being diluted and getting lost within an ocean of intelligent love.

Exhalation

Exhaling the breath to the count of six, realize that intelligent love is pouring out through the center between the eyebrows to all humanity.

Stabilizing consciousness above the diaphragm

Holding the consciousness steady in soul, say the following mantra:

*May the energy of the divine Self inspire
And the light of the soul direct.
May we be led from darkness to Light,
From the unreal to the Real, from death to Immortality.*

(Adapted from DNA I, pp. 212-213)

Reference:

Bailey, A. A. (1944). *Discipleship in the new age I*. New York, NY: Lucis Trust.

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APPENDIX H

Meditation for the Right Use and Understanding of Time

KEY THOUGHTS

- Time is of cyclic nature, like a pendulum swinging between past and future as both affect the present
- Interplay between the following creates the personality
 - That which has been
 - That which will be
 - That which is at any given moment
- Present established tendencies, habits, and qualities are working out expressions from past lives
- Soul contact and soul impulse concern the future
- Sense of urgency and importance of each moment in the present
- Make each moment count by
 - Being fully in the here and now and at the same time soul identified;
 - Enjoying the beauty of the moment;
 - Perfecting and completing each life episode and event.

MEDITATION

Alignment, Integration, and Soul Identification

Fuse as soul with the soul of the members of our spiritual group.

As soul, sound the *OM*, breathing it out upon humanity, saying inaudibly:

"The will of God moves the world"

This is the thought underlying the use of the *OM*.

Then ponder upon the significance of time as an expression of the will, realizing that this expression is a thought—instantaneous and effective—in the mind of God (the planetary Logos). Think carefully about some of the implications of this last statement.

Then say slowly and thoughtfully:

*The past has gone. I am that past.
It makes me what I am.
The future comes. I also am the coming destiny
And therefore, I am that.*

*The present flows out from the past.
The future colors that which is.
I make the future also by my present knowledge of the past
And the beauty of the present.
And, therefore, I am that I am.*

Close with the Great Invocation
Sound the *OM* softly three times.

(Adapted from DNA I, pp. 209-210)

Reference:

Bailey, A. A. (1944). *Discipleship in the new age I*. New York, NY: Lucis Trust.

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