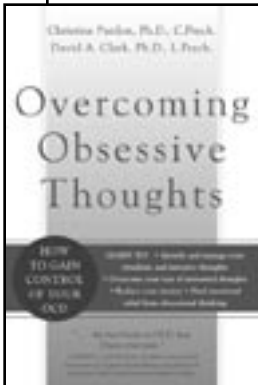


Invisible form of OCD comes to light in new book

Approximately 20 to 25 percent of those with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)—some 6.6 million Americans—suffer from a form of OCD that involves obsessive thoughts combined with largely mental rituals and compulsions. These compulsions include countering “bad” thoughts with “good” ones; engaging in some ritual to “undo” a perceived danger from a thought, like counting to a “lucky” number; seeking reassurance from others that they haven’t caused harm; checking for themselves that harm hasn’t occurred by scouring the newspaper and Internet for news of a hit and run in their area; and others. The obsessive thoughts that plague these OCD sufferers are called *repugnant obsessions*, which means that they involve thoughts about inflicting harm, committing a sex crime or a sexual gaffe, or engaging in a blasphemous or immoral act. In ***Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts***, Christine Purdon, Ph.D., and David A. Clark, Ph.D., two world-renowned researchers offer a complete, scientifically based program for overcoming this type of OCD.



Three profiles of those with obsessive thoughts

Along the way the authors introduce you to some of the sufferers of this under-recognized condition, like:

- **Mario**, a forty-three-year-old financial planner and happily married father of two, who experiences frightening and repeated thoughts about kicking pregnant women, lunging at his wife with the knife he’s using to prepare dinner, and socking a friendly colleague in the mouth. All of which would be totally out of character for this gentle and responsible family man.
- **Cara**, a devoted mother to her beloved four-year-old son, who is tormented by thoughts that she will sexually abuse her child. While bathing him she wonders if she feels sexually aroused. Before the child was toilet-trained she had similar thoughts while changing his diaper. It got so bad that she had to turn these duties over to her husband and visiting friends.
- **Anke**, a devout Christian, who suffers from “scrupulosity,” which is characterized by regular fear of committing a blasphemous thought or deed. She’s gone so far as to participate in an exorcism to free herself from these obsessions and she’s convinced that they are caused by either satanic influence or demonic possession.

There’s help for it

The program presenting in *Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts* is one that utilizes cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which is considered the most effective psychological treatment for obsessional problems. Purdon and Clark offer step-by-step help for building the knowledge and skills necessary to overcome obsessive thoughts. These include:

Establishing your symptom profile. Obsessive thoughts and the anxieties they generate differ from person to person. The authors show you how to recognize the particular way in which your symptoms manifest themselves and the degree to which they affect your life and well-being.

Challenging your internal responses to obsessive thought. The way in which you respond to an obsessive thought can go a long way in fueling or diminishing it. The authors show you how to dismantle the often-unrealistic responses that stoke obsessional thinking and replace them with more-realistic ones that halt it.

Building an exposure ladder. This involves gradually exposing yourself to the obsessive and distressing thoughts without using coping strategies to counter them. With regular practice exposure reduces the ability of these thoughts to unseat you emotionally.

Maintaining your gains. Purdon and Clark provide strategies for staying free of obsessive thoughts and coping with the stress that can trigger relapse.

**FOR AN INTERVIEW REQUEST OR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Lorna Garano, 510-652-0215, x107, lorna@newharbinger.com**

About the authors of *Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts*



Chris Hughes, UW Graphics

CHRISTINE PURDON, Ph.D., C.Psych., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Waterloo. She has been researching OCD since 1990 and has received early career awards for her work. Dr. Purdon currently holds a Standard Research Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada with David A. Clark and an Ontario Mental Health Foundation Research Grant, both of which fund research on intrusive thoughts and obsessions. Dr. Purdon has a private practice in which she assesses and treats anxiety and mood problems. She is a member of the Academy of Cognitive Therapy, the Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation, the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy, the Anxiety Disorders Association of America, and the British Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Psychotherapies.

DAVID A. CLARK, Ph.D., L.Psych., is a Professor in the Department of Psychology, University of New Brunswick, Canada. He received his doctorate from the Institute of Psychiatry, University of London, England. Dr. Clark has published widely on cognitive theory and therapy of depression and obsessive-compulsive disorders. His most recent books are *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for OCD* and *Intrusive Thoughts in Clinical Disorders: Theory, Research, and Treatment*. With Aaron T. Beck, Dr. Clark published a new questionnaire measure of OCD called the *Clark-Beck Obsessive Inventory* and co-authored *Scientific Foundations of Cognitive Theory and Therapy of Depression*. He has received numerous grants to study the cognitive basis of emotional disorders. Dr. Clark is a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association, a Founding Fellow of the Academy of Cognitive Therapy, and an Associate Editor of *Cognitive Therapy and Research*.

Suggested interview questions

1. In *Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts* you tackle a form of obsessive-compulsive disorder that takes place largely in the mind. Can you tell us how this type of OCD varies from the kind that involves overt compulsions like checking or washing? How common is this form of OCD?
2. The obsessions that you focus on in your book fall into the category of "repugnant" obsessions. What is a repugnant obsession?
3. You also talk about "normal" obsessions in your book. What is a normal obsession and how does it differ from one that indicates obsessive-compulsive disorder?
4. What is scrupulosity and who is likely to have it?
5. How do you differentiate between scrupulosity and religiosity?
6. What does the research currently tell us about the psychological and biological causes of this form of OCD?
7. What is neutralizing and how does it affect obsessive thinking?
8. Is this form of OCD any more or less resistant to treatment than other forms of OCD and what is the most effective treatment for it?
9. What is the "paradox of mental control?"
10. Chapter six of *Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts* is entitled, "Are You Ready to Make Changes?" How can you know if you are ready to confront and change obsessive thoughts and what are a few common stumbling blocks to change?

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Raves for *Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts*

"...**The best book on OCD** that I have ever seen...I will recommend this book to all of my patients with OCD. We are **grateful to these two eminent psychologists for their insightful and practical guide.**"
—Robert L. Leahy, Ph.D., president International Association for Cognitive Psychotherapy and professor of Psychiatry, Weill-Cornell University Medical College

"...Although most self-help books on OCD include sections on dealing with unwanted thoughts, **this excellent book provides the most thorough discussion of the topic that I have ever seen...**"
—Martin M. Antony, Ph.D., ABPP, director of the Anxiety Treatment and Research Centre at St. Joseph's Healthcare and professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University

"...(*Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts*) provides **a road map to a life without OCD...**"
—Dennis Greenberger, Ph.D., coauthor of *Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think*

"...I expect that many sufferers will benefit from (*Overcoming Obsessive Thoughts*), and **I strongly recommend it.**"
—S.J. Rachman, professor emeritus in the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia

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