
Meditation Exercise for Easing OCD and Anxiety Symptoms|The Two Witnesses Technique|Script

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Introduction:

The purpose of this meditation is to help those with existing OCD and anxiety conditions to activate their parasympathetic response (the body healing and relaxation centre) to serve as a protective factor in this worrying time. This meditation is designed to help you rewire your brain for greater control over your OCD and anxiety long-term. In the meantime, it keeps your entire being in a healing and resilient state against the uncertainties and negative emotions generated by COVID-19.

The COVID-19 epidemic, regular washing of the hands, self-isolation, the lock down situation of the society, and of course, the overwhelming conflicting media reports regarding how bad things could get before they get better can devastate the emotional state of many, especially those with existing obsessive-compulsive disorder and anxiety.

This meditation helps reduce your stress level, boost blood flow to your brain, strengthen your immune system and gut flora (healthy bowel bacteria) for better gastro-intestinal reflexes and diminish your OCD tendencies. OCD often serves as a defence mechanism against overwhelming unresolved traumatic emotions, buried in the subconscious mind. In times of uncertainties and stress, obsessive-compulsive disorder and anxiety symptoms escalate. The fear that we feel in our minds instructs the anxiety circuits in the brain to up-regulate our sympathetic nervous system for hyper-arousal. This bio-chemical instruction increases our somatic symptoms of anxiety and OCD symptoms, and the Amygdala (fear and anxiety centre) starts to micro-manage our mind and body. Some people experience increased anxiety symptoms, such as palpitations, tingling of arms and legs, headache, nausea, raising heart, insomnia, dizziness.

Additionally, our digestive system gets compromised as it receives persistent survival instructions from the brain that its blood-flow will be cut. When you are in survival mode, as a result of the challenges that you face at the moment, the survival headquarters in your brain (brain stem) starts to allocate cerebral blood flow (CBF) based on survival, pumping more blood to the regions of the brain directly involved in survival activities (such as your amygdala, heart, lungs and your extremities), while reducing CBF from the regions which are not directly involved in your emergency survival contingencies (such as your pre-frontal cortex and bowel). This is why your thinking brain struggles to activate its executive capabilities when in survival mode (such as being able to concentrate on tasks, problem-solve, retrieve memories easily, control inappropriate impulses and behaviours, etc. The neurones in the brain are obsessed with the blood-flow, as this is the only delivery pathway for their fuel (glucose and oxygen). Regional blood-flow (rCBF) determines brain functionality.

Your PFC, which is the leader of your psyche, is often offline (low rCBF) in times of great uncertainties, fear and stress, forcing you to dissociate through a variety of mood altering activities, such as, day-dreaming, remuneration, substance abuse, foods, TV, social media, alcohol, sleep, gambling, etc. When the PFC is offline regularly, the amygdala (the chief security officer) has to step up its micro-management of the entire site (your brain and body) in order to ensure safety and survival. The amygdala achieves this by ordering excess stress chemicals production for your fight-or-flight activations. This is the beginning of psychological sufferings if the stressors persist. Excess cortisol levels increase the inflammation profile of the brain and body, and also compromise the immune system functions, making us to be prone to inflammation-based illnesses and diseases.

Relaxing:

Choose a spot above your chest level and focus on that spot as I count from 1 to 10. As I count, allow your eyes to get tired and tired until they just want to close, and move into a better state of relaxation.

Relaxation is a bridge that connects you to your parasympathetic centre - your body healing centre. Relaxation reduces the cortisol levels and optimises your brain functions for calm and confidence. But you must choose to cooperate and surrender to your relaxation response in this present moment and become pure consciousness...

Before I count, take a deep breath..... and let it go out through your mouth slowly and gradually. Breathing is energy.

Breathing is the life-force that instructs the viscera to move into a state of healing, homeostasis and self-regulation.

Take a deeper breath as you release your abdominal muscles and allow your entire being to accept the refreshing life-oxygen. Allow your out-breath to come out through your mouth slowly and gradually, as you imagine all the tensions in your body coming out with it. This is your natural state - relaxation.

Now, I begin to count.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....
deeply relaxed.....6.....7.....deeply relaxed
still.....8.....9.....and.....10.

If you have not already closed your eyes, just let them close in beautiful surrender to the healing energy of relaxation.

Deepening:

Now, allow your mind to shift for a moment, as you imagine that there are 10 stairs in front of you. It is a beautiful stair case....

Now, I am going to count down from 10 to 1, each count invites you to take a step down the stairs. Each step moves you into a deeper state of relaxation.

10.....take the first step.

9.....8.....7.....6.....deeper in relaxation.....

5.....4.....deeply relaxed like never before.....

3.....2.....and.....1.

As you get to the bottom of the stairs, you realise that you are in your special place - a place of safety, calm, rejuvenation and resiliency. It could be somewhere you have been physically before. Or simply allow your mind to construct your own lovely place in real-time. This is your resource centre.....a place of safety, power, rejuvenation, healing and brain rewiring. Explore this beautiful environment in awareness as you breathe in the fresh air, and unite with the beauty of your environment. This is your new special place for resilience, courage and empowerment.

Accessing Your Obsessions and Compulsions:

Now take a comfortable position in your special place. Imagine that your entire body is feeling very relaxed and in gratitude in this special place. It is a lovely day. The sun is shining and everything around you is calm and beautiful.

Now, you realise that there are two unusual personalities in front of you, they appear from nowhere and they represent your obsessions and your compulsions. Now, pay attention to these two personalities. How does our mind represent them? What pictures come to your mind with regards to their physical features? Allow your mind to picture them any way it likes. What does your obsession look like? How do you perceive your compulsions? Picture them and make them vivid in your mind. If you like, you can even give each of them a name.

Remember that your intrusive obsessions and your compulsive behaviours that you perform to relieve the anxiety generated by your obsessions are both psychic personalities with distinctive roles within the psyche. They think they are protecting you from danger. They actually believe that they are your only true protectors, shielding you from unbearable repressed emotions of your childhood.

Building relationship:

Now it is time to build relationship with them. Thank them that you are now aware that they are serving a protective role within your psyche, trying their hardest to ensure your safety. Tell them that you appreciate their concerns about you.

Now, ask them one after the other, why they have decided to play a protective role within your psyche. What are they protecting you from by making your thoughts to be dominated by obsessive intrusive thoughts and your behaviours with compulsive urges? Listen carefully to what they tell you. Listen

with your internal channels (imagination, intuitive knowing, emotions, perceptions, bodily sensations).

Defending yourself and asking them to step aside

Now, tell your obsessions and compulsions that you appreciate all their efforts in your life, however, you are no longer a helpless and vulnerable child who was unable to defend and keep herself safe. Tell them that you are now a grown-up adult with many allies, supporters and fans who are able to come to your rescue should you are faced with danger. Let them know that you are now well resourced with better physical agility, cognitive functions and emotional regulatory capacities. Let them know that you now have the ability to use words to defend yourself and verbally ventilate your repressed emotions towards whoever wants to take advantage of you. Inform your obsessions and compulsions that you can now activate your natural aggression (your fight/flight response) against anyone who might want to harm you. Re-affirm the following affirmations:

“I am now an adult, and no longer a child who requires constant protection and micro-management. I am now responsible to process any repressed emotions of my inner child and grieve my childhood losses and developmental unmet needs. These may be what you are protecting me from. But I now take responsibility for processing these emotions and carry out my own grief-release work and heal the trauma of my inner child. I now embrace self-compassion, self-acceptance, empathy and self-care towards my inner child. As an adult, I am ready and willing to re-father (self-protection) my inner-self

and re-mother (self-compassion) my inner child. I need no help from your protective roles that drive me towards obsessions and compulsions as a way of hiding me away from the repressed emotions of my childhood. I am now in awareness and no longer in dissociation. I now deal in compassion and not in denial or repression.”

Now show your obsessions and compulsions the cloud that carries all your unresolved emotions. This cloud is right above all of you. Show them, right up the sky above. Ask them to look up. This cloud is transparent. You can see all your repressed emotions and they can see them too. Now mention all those emotions to your obsessions and compulsions. Your obsessions and compulsions personalities are now your witnesses. Take a deep breath, and remain grounded and centred in your special and empowered place. Then, say the following words:

Separate from your repressed emotions:

“My self-shaming is no longer mine, it belongs to the past. My anger is no longer mine, it belongs to the past. Now mention other repressed emotions or unresolved grief that you may remember having.....

Remember it is OK to allow yourself to express feelings and emotions at this moment. You are in your special place -fully grounded, and therefore protected from being overwhelmed by your emotions. But it is OK to allow yourself to grieve and heal by releasing those emotions through crying or emoting or

verbally ventilating for a while.....take your time. Feel the feelings....

My self-hate is no longer mine, it belongs to the past.
My inner critics are no longer mine, they belong to my past.
My low self-esteem is no longer mine, it belongs to my past.
My self-mutilation is no longer mine, it belongs to the past.
My fear and anxiety are no longer mine, they belong to my past.

My toxic guilt is no longer mine, it belongs to the past.
I am now releasing them today while the two of you
(obsessions and compulsions) serve as my witnesses. You are
now witnesses to the release of this cloud that contains all the
repressed emotions that you have been protecting me from.

Send the cloud away while the two witnesses watch

Once you have finished acknowledging all your repressed emotions in the presence of your two witnesses (your compulsions and obsessions), now take a deep breath, while still grounded in your special place and fully empowered. Visualise this cloud shrinking and moving away from you. This cloud is moving away from you and shrinking at the same time. Watch this cloud getting smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller..... until it disappears into the horizon.

Now take a huge deep breath of relief.....You are now free from these hidden repressed emotions that have been forcing your obsessions and compulsions to serve as your distractions so that you will not come face-to-face with those repressed emotions, which they think are more harmful to you than the discomfort of your obsessive and compulsive thoughts and urges.

Ask your two witnesses to give up their protective roles:

Now that you have released your repressed emotions, ask your obsessions and compulsions to give up their protective roles as there is nothing for them to protect you against. No job exists for them any more. Listen to what they say to you. If they say no, continue to reassure them until they cooperate with you and give up their roles within your psyche. Once agreed to relinquish their roles, visualise these two witnesses getting smaller and smaller as they back away from yourself. Watch them becoming smaller and smaller until they are caught up by the winds and blown away from your sight. They are now gone.....totally gone.....totally gone.....

You are now a fully-fledged, fully-responsible adult, able to self-regulate and build your internal locus of control. You are emotionally, biochemically, and cognitively resilient. You are able to enter a relaxation state daily to build your resilience, before any life situations get to you. You activate your body healing centre through daily meditations. This protects you

from getting overwhelmed with the fear that is generated by life uncertainties. You may feel afraid as a result of unexpected life uncertainties and problems, but reassure yourself that you are able to deal with challenges of life as they come without repressing them. You are open to seeking appropriate help from appropriate sources. You embrace interconnectedness with compassionate others to co-regulate your emotions and feelings. You resist and reject chronic self-isolation that shrinks the brain, breeds fear and increases obsessive and compulsive thoughts and behaviours. This is your new natural state - relaxation, reassurance and resilience.

Breaking the habits with the law of repetition

The mind and body still carry the habits of your old obsessions and compulsions, even though you have released the personalities of obsessions and compulsions within the psyche. The brain has rewired itself over the years to make your obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours automatic. So It will take time for the body and mind to unlearn their old hardwired obsessions and compulsions.

Use the thought-stopping technique:

So, you continue to resist the urges of your body to complete your old compulsions and the urges of your obsessive intrusive thoughts to paralyse you with fear and anxiety. Practise the thought-stopping technique. When your ingrained obsession strikes, say assertively within you, “stop,” “be quiet” and “shot up.” Use this technique daily and several times a day until the thoughts and urges start to shrink in intensity. This takes time, so be patient.

Use the 15-minutes rule technique:

Likewise, practise the fifteen minute rule technique. This is when you delay the gratification of performing your compulsions for at least 15 minutes. Re-direct your energy within this time-delay towards something that you enjoy doing that can contribute to the activation of your body healing centre (parasympathetic nervous system), such as, singing, going for a walk, speaking to a friend, meditating, playing a musical instrument, playing with a pet, etc.

You now possess the power to resist your urges for at least fifteen minutes. After you conquer the fifteen minute delay, extend the time-delay again until you relegate your old habits of obsessions and compulsions to just a mere toothless disturbance at the back of your mind. Each time that you resist, you reinforce your neurological pathways for recovery.

Each resistance changes your bio-chemistry towards greater freedom.

Always remind yourself that these obsessions and compulsions are no longer mine as they have no roles within my psyche anymore. They voluntarily gave up their role and I am now reconditioning the old habits of the body and mind. Remember that there will be times that your old compulsions will win, there is no condemnation. Whenever your compulsions seem to win, visualise yourself in your special place, unfolded by self-compassion.

Just tell your old compulsions and obsessions that, while they might have won in this case, you will win next time. Refuse to self-hate, self-shame and self-condemn. This is always the rhythm of progress - sometimes two steps forward and one step-backward. You never lose, unless you give up resisting.

By using this meditation daily for the next three months, you build stronger neuro-wiring for resilience that will help you to take full control of your old habits of compulsions and obsessions. You are now emotionally resilient like never before.

Reaffirming your new self:

Now take a deep breath. Feel a huge sense of relief as you absorb the positive energy of your resource environment once again. Now that your obsessions and their connecting compulsion have been relieved of their protective roles, say the following power-affirmations within you to re-construct the foundation of your full recovery:

'I am a human being, and not a human doing. I am now a fully grown adult that has a past. But in spite of my past, I now

embrace a future of resilience, responsibility and empowerment. I no longer need my psychic protectors to protect me, as though I was still that lost, helpless, vulnerable child that requires constant protection and micro-management. I am now a fully fledged human that have the ability to self-protect and self-regulate. I embrace my own healing process and full restoration. I embrace the courage to resist the residual body-memory to obsess with my old obsessions and carry out my old compulsions. They no longer have any negative protective roles within my psyche. I am totally free. I'm fully alive. I refuse to blend with my inner critics to undermine the progress and autonomy that I achieve today. I refuse to collaborate with the inner aggressors within, that represent the trauma and pains of my past to destroy my pathway to change and transformation. I am an embodiment of calm, relaxation, strength and happiness. I process my emerging repressed emotions that life might bring towards me in the future, before they take up a negative protective role within my psyche. I am constantly in awareness, and at the centre of consciousness, leading and governing my own psyche. This is my new natural state - healing, self-regulation, emotional regulation, creativity and expansiveness. I am fully alive and totally free.'

Re-orientating:

Now take a deep breath, stand up from where you are seated and gradually walk back to the bottom of the stairs. I am going to count from 1 to 10 for you to return to full awareness, feeling empowered and re-energised. Take a step upon each count.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....feeling completely rejuvenated.....6.....7.....8.....9.....becoming aware of your immediate environment.....and.....10. Fully awake, feeling refreshed.

Instruction on how to use this OCD recovery meditation:

Use this meditation for three months. The first 21 days are crucial to lay the solid foundation of your recovery. Replay this meditation for 21 days consecutively until the brain encodes these changes within your subconscious mind and the brain rewires around them for greater autonomy and self-regulation.