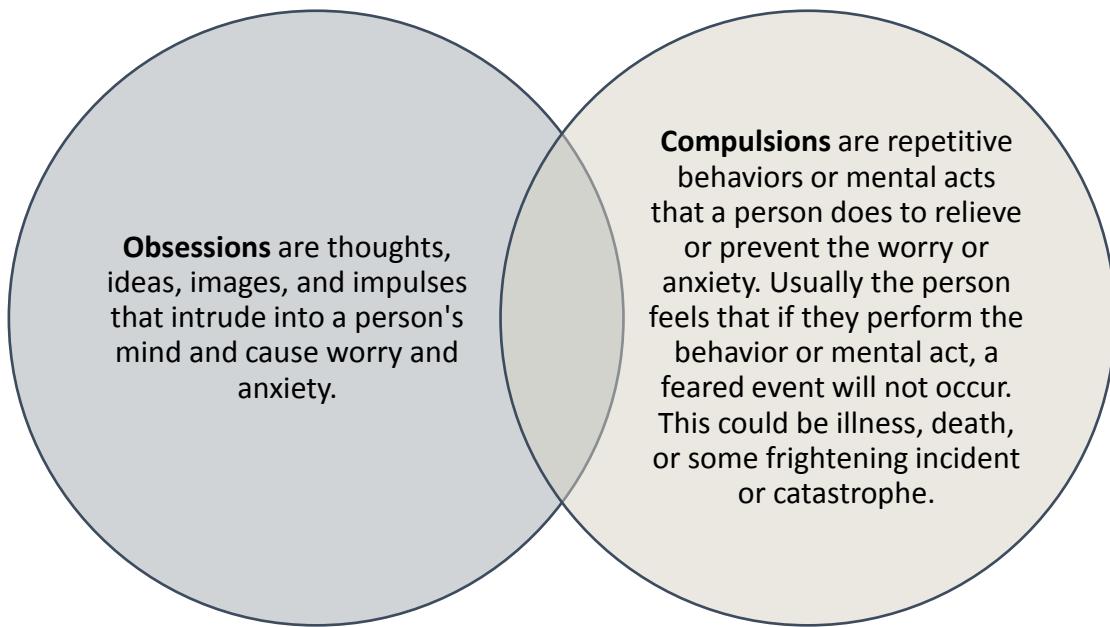




Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Many of us have routines that we engage in daily. **Habits** are often, but not always, enjoyable. When habitual behaviors make us feel good, we are more likely to repeat them for that good feeling. For example, we all know that exercise is good for our health. When we get into the habit of exercising, we may find we enjoy it more. Continuing a habit of exercising is reinforced.

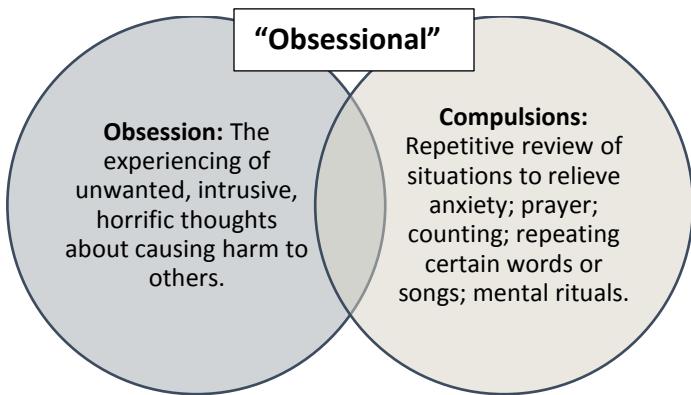
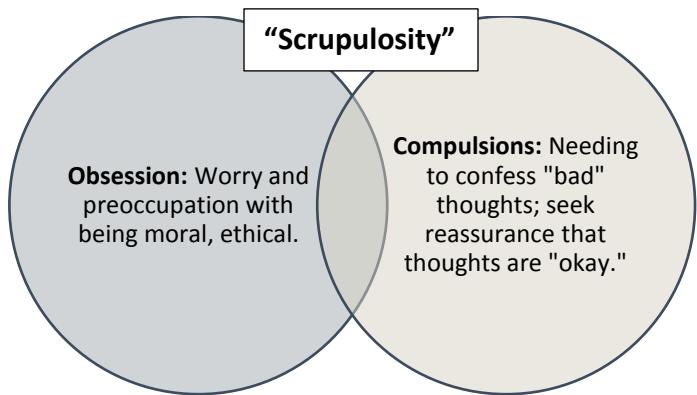
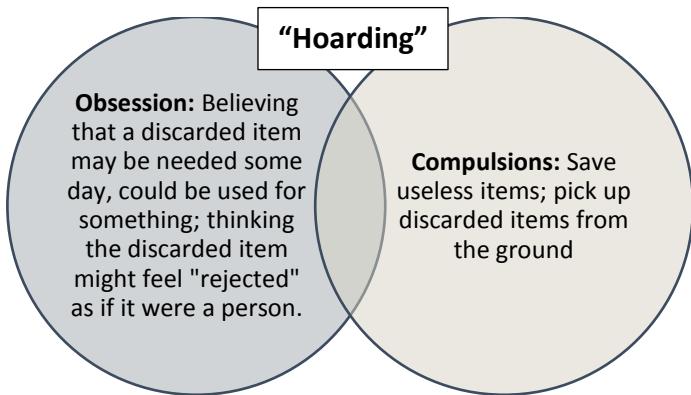
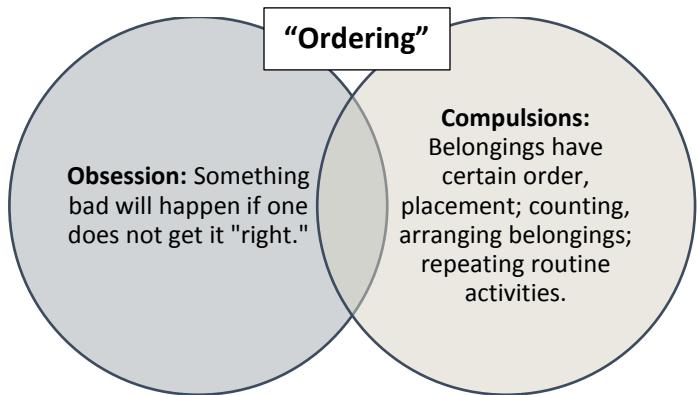
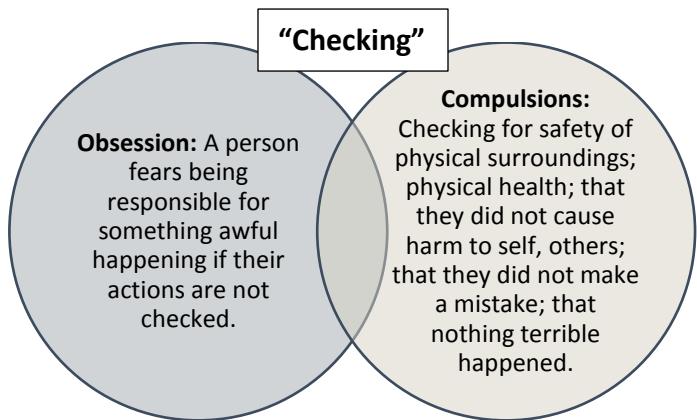
Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a disorder characterized by distressing thoughts that are often linked to habitual behaviors performed to stop the distressing thoughts.



- If engaging in certain behaviors takes more than one hour per day and interferes with daily functioning, a person might have OCD. These behaviors must cause distress to the person, who at some point realizes that these compulsions are excessive and unreasonable behaviors.
- 1 out of 40 people suffer from OCD.
- Symptoms can flair up or worsen when there is significant stress or change in a person's life.
- There is increasing evidence that OCD is caused by problems with chemistry of the brain. Sufferers usually have a family history of anxiety.

Treatment for OCD often includes Exposure and Response Prevention. By exposing the person to a feared situation, their brain “gets used to it” and realizes that the feared outcome does not actually happen.

Here are some types of OCD obsessions and compulsions:



Source: *The OCD Workbook: Your Guide to Breaking Free from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder*, by Bruce M. Hyman, Ph.D. and Cherry Pedrick, RN



Psychological and Counseling Services (PACS)

3 Garrison Avenue, Smith Hall - 3rd Floor, Durham, NH 03824

Tel: 603-862-2090 Website: www.unh.edu/pacs