
S1C1. Introduction to the course book

Hello and welcome to this course book on Overcoming Relationship-focused Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder or what is commonly known as ROCD. This course book is designed to provide the support you need and help you deal with your ROCD. I have taken pains to make the course book scientifically correct without any of the overwhelming scientific jargon (read gobbledygook). The language is simple and understandable even for non-native English speakers. My intention is to talk to you, talk you through your struggles, and walk with you in your recovery journey rather than preach to you from the side lines.

This course book is also designed to make your partner more aware of ROCD. Through it, the two of you will learn about ROCD, how it works and what compulsions it makes you do. Even though this disorder afflicts one person, the effect can be seen in both partners. Partners of people with ROCD are often clueless about what they can do to help. Lack of knowledge may lead them to enable their partners' ROCD, thereby making it stronger. Or they may push the sufferer away out of frustration. Breakups and divorces are common in couples where one person has ROCD. Hence, getting a thorough understanding of how ROCD works for both partners is critical, to avoid the pitfalls.

Through this course book, you will learn how to deal with the anxiety efficiently without doing your compulsions. You will learn that the power of not needing to do the compulsions is in your hands. You will learn ways to recognize when you are triggered, what your various triggers, obsessions and compulsions are, and how to manage your anxiety through response prevention. I have provided a step-by-step process to master ERP for ROCD, along with the application of the principles of acceptance and mindfulness, so that you do not find yourself held back by this disorder. I will show you how to spot the devious ways of ROCD so that you can recognize it and tackle it.

What I present to you is simple to understand, but not very simple to implement, especially if you are trying to do it on your own. Hence, there are two critical requirements if you want the course book to work for you. One, do not just read the course book. Internalize. If you do not understand anything, re-read. If it is still unclear, reach out to me on sunil.punjabi@unshackle.in and I will attempt to clarify it for you. But make sure you understand everything well. If you read the course book cursorily, without practising, it may not help much.

Two, you will find twenty practice worksheets at the end of the course book. Use them well and keep monitoring yourself. Make additional copies of the formats provided, when needed. These worksheets are the meat of the course book and the maximum benefit will come from using these worksheets extensively. Constant

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practice using the worksheets will help more than mere reading can. If you can get your partner involved in the process, it will be even better.

Apart from that, there is an MS-Excel workbook called ‘Worksheets’ that has all these twenty practice worksheets (in case you prefer the digital version), six psychometric tests (not available in the course book) and a dashboard sheet. You can download the workbook from www.unshackle.in/rocd/. (On certain devices though, the downloaded MS-Excel workbook may show up as ‘Read Only’ and you may have to click on the ‘Enable Editing’ button on your devices).

The first psychometric test is for your partner to determine if your partner accommodates your ROCD, and to what extent. The other five psychometric tests measure the presence and severity of your OCD, assess your mindfulness, understand your acceptance levels, check how compassionate you are towards yourself, and test your insight. All these tests are self-administered and free-to-use tests. In some cases, the scores have been adapted to suit replication on a spreadsheet, without any change in the scoring methodology. Please note, however, that the tests are not to be used as diagnostic tools. The diagnosis can only be made by a mental health professional. These tests should be considered as an indicator for further check-up, or for confirmation of a pre-existing diagnosis.

The last sheet in the Worksheets file is a visual dashboard. The graphical representation and the consolidated scores of five psychometric tests will show up on this sheet. Cells corresponding to a test in the Inference column will change color when the test is completed. Red is undesirable and green is desirable. Your endeavor would be to work on yourself to turn all reds and oranges into greens.

You will also find some additional reading resources that are instrumental to your recovery. I strongly urge you to read these thoroughly and internalize the information provided in them.

Your commitment to implementation will make the difference, so do commit to the completion and extensive practice of the course. If you have the right attitude for beating your ROCD and are willing to put in the effort, this course book will definitely help you in your recovery process.

If you have not read the Limit of liability/Disclaimer of warranty statement before choosing this course book, it is provided as Additional Resource 1. Kindly read through it now. Also, please provide me your details in the form appended.

The next chapter is addressed to the partner of the person with ROCD.

To-Do:

Read AR1 - Limit of liability/Disclaimer of warranty

Provide your basic details in the form provided