
S1C7. Relationship OCD - An introduction

ROCD can be of three types - Type 1 - where you doubt your love for your partner, Type 2 - where you doubt your partner's love for you, and Type 3 (Doron et al, 2012a) - where you doubt if the relationship is 'right' in general (with elements of the first two types co-existing).

In ROCD Type 1, obsessions may center on perceived flaws in the partner (Doron et al., 2012b). These flaws may be regarding the partner's intelligence, looks, sense of humor, social skills, or anything that you may consider important. Compulsions may be comparison with other people, checking your own attraction to your partner, or hyper focus on the perceived flaws.

In ROCD Type 2, the obsessions may be about perceived inadequacy in self. These inadequacies may be related to any aspect about you that you may think your partner may dislike you for. Compulsions may be the constant need to check if your partner loves you, or if your partner is cheating on you.

In ROCD Type 3, the obsessions may not be specific to the partner or yourself but about the relationship itself. Doubts if the relationship is right, if it will last, if there is a possibility of a better partner, etc may plague you. Compulsions here may be looking at other couples and wondering if you have what they have, or other rituals around such obsessions.

Importantly enough, not only do people switch from one presentation to another in OCD, but even within ROCD, you may switch types. The presentations may co-exist and even perpetuate one another at times (Szepsenwol et al., 2016). You may start off with ROCD Type 1 and, sometime later you may have an ROCD Type 2 obsession. This may make you wonder if you have OCD at all. Then it may morph to ROCD Type 3 and add complexity. Sometimes, your anxiety may be on account of not being able to go back to your original presentation. '*Why can't I go back to what it was earlier?*' you may end up remonstrating. So, your ROCD may keep switching from one type to another and may sometimes create obsessions of two types together too.

Hence, being able to differentiate between the types and knowing which type or types of ROCD you are affected by is important too, as the exercises that you will use to deal with them will differ from type to type. Discuss with your partner about the types of ROCD you experience and note them down in Worksheet 2.

In the next chapter we shall look at the other forms of ROCD.

To-Do:

Fill WS2 - presentations of OCD experienced