
S3C1. Naming your ROCD

Sometimes it helps to give your ROCD a name (Prudovski, n.d.). That is, think of your ROCD as a separate person. You probably already think of your ROCD as another person because it seems to wield power over you and make you do things you know you should not. You seem to operate on the orders of another person.

Hmm, so let's look at it again. This person has power over you. This person makes you do things that you don't want to do. If you don't do its bidding, you feel anxious. What kind of a person would do that? A benevolent person who has your best interests in mind? Or a toxic person who is selfish and is thinking only of himself regardless of the emotional cost to you? I am sure you would agree that it is the latter. A toxic person who is definitely not a friend, but perhaps an irritant or a fear in your life. Once again, do realize that ROCD is not your friend but someone you don't want in your life.

So, think back on your life. Think of a person you dislike, fear, or have been traumatized by. You may have had a toxic boss or a toxic family member. You may have had a friend who betrayed your trust and you couldn't trust him anymore. Or it may be a person who you know is interested in your partner and will do anything to cause you to breakup with your partner and be with her instead. Think about this toxic person and think of his name. You may be inwardly cringing or may be feeling anxious. You know that if he asked you to do anything, it would have a selfish motive. You know that if he gave you any advice, it would definitely be the wrong advice. You know that following whatever that person says to you is a recipe for doom. So, if the advice is coming from him, you would dismiss it even if the advice feels like the right thing to do.

It may help to call your ROCD by that name. Knowing that that person is bad news for you in your life, believe that the person has not changed and will continue to hurt you at every possible opportunity. Therefore, everything said to you by your ROCD is to be looked at with the same mistrust and disbelief.

Let us say that in school you had a friend by the name of Kay who had betrayed your trust. Kay pretended to be your friend but called you names and laughed at you behind your back. When you found out and confronted Kay, you realized that Kay was never your friend, but was always in the *other camp*, so to speak. You stopped being friends with Kay and decided that you could never trust Kay again.

Start by calling your ROCD Kay. Believe that whatever your ROCD says to you is coming from Kay, something that cannot be trusted. So, when there is an obsessive thought in your head, mindfully remind yourself that despite this seeming real, it is Kay who is doing this to you. Kay is advising you to believe that you do not love your partner. Kay is advising you to compare and find flaws. Kay is advising you

OVERCOMING ROCD

to criticize your partner. Kay just wants to create a rift between you and your partner.

This means that nothing your ROCD says can be trusted. When you arrive at that conclusion, every time you have an urge to do a compulsion, if you recognize it mindfully, resist the urge. You may be able to resist the temptation to do your compulsions if you believe that Kay is urging you to do them and Kay does not have your best interests in mind.

If you did not have ROCD and if Kay told you to criticize your partner for a flaw, you wouldn't do that. In the same way, if you get the urge to criticize your partner for a flaw, resist it by recognizing that Kay is asking you to do it, so that you have a fall out with your partner.

Again, if you did not have ROCD and your partner did not text you immediately after you sent her a text, or if the text from your partner is not how you expected it to be, you would not fight with your partner on Kay's say so. So, if you get the urge to call up your partner and scream at her for not replying to your text immediately or for not having texted as per your exact expectations, resist the temptation to do so. Understand that Kay is again making you do that so that the rift between you and your partner increases.

Remember this name as this name will be important in your recovery process. If you do not have any specific person in mind for the purpose, you can give your ROCD the name of a negative character from a book or a movie or call it Satan or Devil. For the purpose of this course book, we shall continue to interchangeably refer to your ROCD as ROCD or Kay.

In the next chapter, we will understand another important concept of triggered and non-triggered states.