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## S4C5. Why the evidence then?

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Sometimes despite being told that our thoughts are untrue, we keep seeing evidence of our fears coming true. When you think that your partner has stopped loving you, you will begin to notice how her texts are not affectionate enough, how she spends more time away than she used to and so on. You ask why you shouldn't believe what your mind tells you. You have the Baader-Meinhof phenomenon to blame.

The Baader-Meinhof phenomenon, also called the frequency illusion (Kluchka, 2021), is a way in which our minds play a trick on us and we begin to see more of what we have put our minds on. Like, if a girl is getting married, she would begin to notice bridal exhibitions, wedding venues, honeymoon destinations, and so on. Or, if you are planning to buy a laptop, you may begin to see laptop ads everywhere - in magazines, in newspapers or on billboards. It isn't as if those cues did not exist before. It is merely that we begin to notice more of them when they are actively on our minds. Thus, we see what we seek.

The Baader-Meinhof phenomenon is dominant in people with ROCD. You struggle to deal with the anxiety your intrusive thoughts bring. So, you try your best to avoid being triggered and the Baader-Meinhof phenomenon kicks in right there. Because paradoxically, what you want to avoid seeing is more dominant on your mind and you end up noticing more triggers. So, even if your partner does a hundred things right, she would be ignored. But the few things she does differently (not wrong, just different from your expectations), you seem to notice more and consider them to be evidence.

The trick is to look at everything they do and not just the things they do differently and base your judgment on that. The Baader-Meinhof phenomenon is sneaky and takes hold without our realization. But when we do realize its occurrence, we can take active steps to disallow it from getting in the way of our relationships.

In the next chapter, I shall discuss one self-fulfilling prophecy typical to ROCD Type 2.