



OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a mental illness in which people experience obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours.

What are the symptoms of OCD?

OCD affects each person differently. However, a particular pattern usually occurs:

1. Obsession – unwanted, distressing and intrusive thoughts/images/urges enter your mind
2. Anxiety – brought on by the obsession
3. Compulsion – repetitive behaviours/acts that you feel the need to perform as a result of the anxiety caused by obsession
4. Temporary relief – the compulsive behaviour relieves the anxiety for a short while, but the cycle continues eventually

Common obsessive thoughts are:

- fear of deliberately harming yourself or others
- fear of accidentally harming yourself or others by mistake
- fear of contamination by disease, infection or unpleasant substance
- a need for symmetry or orderliness

Common compulsive behaviours are:

- cleaning and hand washing
- ordering and arranging
- repeatedly checking doors/locks etc.
- asking for reassurance
- avoiding places and situations

For more information on ODC, visit the NHS website:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/obsessive-compulsive-disorder

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

There is no one clear cause of OCD. However there are a number of different factors that may play a role in the condition:

- family history – you're more likely to develop it if a family member has it
- brain differences – areas of unusually high brain activity or low levels of serotonin
- stressful life events
- personality traits- neat, meticulous, methodological people with high personal standards may be more likely to develop OCD

If you think a friend or family member may have OCD, try talking to them about your concerns and suggest they seek help from their GP.

HOW CAN OCD BE TREATED?

Your treatment for OCD will depend on the severity of your condition. The two main treatments are:

- psychological therapies
- medications

Your GP will recommend the best treatment for you.

If you have any concerns about yourself, or a friend, you can come to the **Student Wellbeing Service Drop-In** (via the Student Guidance Centre information desk) Mon-Fri, term time, 12.30-1.30pm. or you can **email** studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk to book an appointment with a Wellbeing Advisor.

Take5

steps to wellbeing



Give



Be active



Connect



Keep learning



Take notice

Most of us know when we are mentally and physically well, but sometimes we need a little extra support to keep well.



There are five simple actions to help maintain and improve your emotional wellbeing in everyday life. Try to build these into your daily life – think of them as your 'five a day' for emotional wellbeing.



Connect

Connect with the people around you, with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours at home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you everyday.



Be active

Go for a walk or run, step outside, cycle, play a game, garden or dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity that you enjoy; one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.



Take notice

Be curious, catch sight of the beautiful, remark on the unusual, notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are on a bus or taxi, eating lunch or talking to friends, be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.



Keep learning

Don't be afraid to try something new, rediscover an old hobby or interest or sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility, fix a bike, learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident, as well as being fun to do.



Give to others

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger, thank someone, smile, volunteer your time, or consider joining a community group. Look out, as well as in, seeing yourself, and your happiness linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and will create connections with the people around you.

The 5 ways to wellbeing were developed by the New Economics Foundation

www.mindingyourhead.info

Would you like to share your story on the back of this leaflet? If so please email studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk

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E: studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk

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