

THE G.O.A.L. POST

Volume 1, Issue 2

Giving Obsessive-Compulsives Another Lifestyle

Summer 1999

The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Affiliate of the National OC Foundation

[to familiarize the public with OCD and OCD spectrum disorders, to educate and encourage those affected, and to promote understanding among their families, colleagues and friends]

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDIUM

Dear Friends,

We are proud to serve the Philadelphia Affiliate as Co-Presidents for 1999 and pleased to have this opportunity to address you in this second issue of our new newsletter. As the new millennium approaches, it is hard to believe that our G.O.A.L. support group, which started in 1981, has grown from its original five members to its sizeable current membership. Its success is due largely to the generosity, dedication, and commitment by Board members, our professional Advisory Board, and each of you who attends meetings, supports our varied functions, and volunteers in any way you can. We salute especially those of you who have reached maintenance and yet continue to attend meetings, thereby showing your appreciation to the Affiliate by helping other individuals reach their own goal of recovery and maintenance. We appreciate your support and look forward to its continuation. Each year, we present a roster of guest lecturers from all over the U. S. Thus far this year we are fortunate to have had Dr. Fred Penzel, Dr. Jonathan Hoffman, and Dr. Mark Freeston as our speakers. If you missed them, for your convenience our library has their lectures on video. It also has other information on OCD.

Plans for this year are to continue to serve as a clearing-house for information on OCD to professionals and the public, to conferences and schools. We are planning on expanding our School Outreach Program by providing in-service programs for educators. This year we will begin passing on to you information on advocacy and OCD so that you can stay involved. At your suggestion, we are instituting a voluntary e-mail list for those of you who prefer to communicate in this manner. Our National Tag Sale, in which many affiliates across the country will be participating, is an important fund-raising event for both our Philadelphia Affiliate and the National Foundation. Your participation and support is necessary for its success. Our annual camping trip is scheduled for June. If you are interested, please speak to Dr. Jon Grayson at a support group meeting. We look forward to seeing you at scheduled events and welcome any suggestions you may have. It is, after all, YOUR GROUP, and as such its success will reflect your involvement. We hope to meet the challenge of the future regarding OCD education, research, treatment, and recovery as we conclude this year and enter the new millennium together.

See you at the next meeting!

Your Presidium,

Gayle Frankel
Anna Mae Yurkanin II



[This is the second of four installments of an essay I began in the first issue of The G.O.A.L. Post. A reading of installments one and two within the context of the entire essay is critical to a full understanding of how they deserve to belong to the title of this column. -Jene Beardsley]

What Happens to Me during an OC Attack

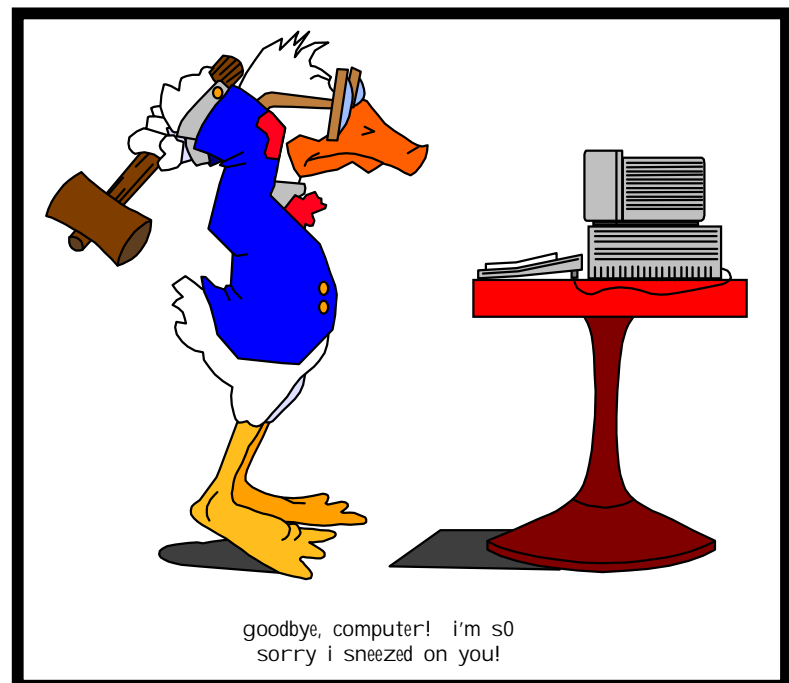
The person outside of the obsessive-compulsive disorder may suspect the following of melodrama, but to the best of my verbal ability, it is an accurate rendering, without exaggeration, of a major attack as I experience it. The involuntary violation of some taboo detonates outward from the center of me an explosion of searing sub-zero fear. I am frozen in its paradoxically protracted flash, which is like, I would imagine, the terrible recognition one on death row wakes up to on the morning of his scheduled execution or the glacial slump the patient feels in his depths on hearing that the biopsy showed advanced malignancy. All my internal organs, from my brain on downwards, are stunned with nearly impotent panic. It is as though I am locked into a moment and cannot go forward with time, as though I have been forced to exit the human species and will not be allowed back in until I perform a diabolically torturous labor on the precarious edge of human limits. All the physical and intellectual strength--the muscle and the wit--I need for dealing with this assault faints away to a bare minimum and the soap and water and paper towels which are my tools are rendered almost ineffectual. The telling and damnable words here are "bare minimum" and "almost," because if I were disabled totally and if the tools were futile entirely, I would, I suppose, give up the cleaning as hopeless and perhaps eventually come to sane terms with a world whose dirt is largely inescapable, for who can cleanse much a planet whose very name is a synonym for dirt?

Some years ago, I told a friend that for me an obsessive-compulsive attack begins when, set off by either a real or an imagined transgression against some obsessive-compulsive rule, a force rushes up from something unresolved in the libidinous infinity of my depths and tries to give itself definition and resolution in the inadequacies of household things. Foreign with forbiddenness, it discharges itself into some object belonging to the familiar world, the world of daily routine. The object, throbbing with guilt, heats up from the overcharge and threatens to explode irretrievably in all directions my finiteness with its own. In anxiety for my life, I try to calm it down with ritual cleaning, but its overheat burns my hands and my materials so that it takes a frighteningly high number of repeated attempts before I am successful. It is, however, a Pyrrhic victory because I have survived by surrendering to a compulsion that has contorted my human image nearly beyond recognition. In the humiliation of the antic, I have wrecked my good fame with myself, and looking about that wreckage with an untenable confusion of relief and revulsion, I, being male, imagine I have come close to feeling the violation of a woman who saved her life by submitting to rape.

It has been said that the obsessive-compulsive are, in general, drawn from the ranks of the creative. Repeatedly, the disorder bends my creativity around from its healthy directions into tortuously complicated verbal rituals which I invent to give me the word of God himself that something is sinlessly clean. For these

(continued on page 3, column 1)

MAKE SURE YOU GO TO A THERAPIST WHO IS KNOWLEDGEABLE IN THE TREATMENT OF OCD!



rituals I go to what is strikingly tangible or original to fortify my memory of the thing's blamelessness against flashbacks to the contrary which I commonly experience--sometimes for even days--after an episode. Many of these rituals are muttered behind teeth clenched with distress, but not a few are driven with a desperate pencil into paper. The following past examples of them do not begin to communicate the horror of checking on checks that checked on original checks into which they often ramified, but they do show the infernalization of inventiveness. I drew an oak tree to stand for the pronouncement "Everything is OK." "EIOK" became an acronym for the same assertion. I would not use "fine" in place of "OK" because the former expression is also the word for penalty. "Credence Clearwater!" ("I believe the water is clear!") assured me that water coming out of a faucet had not been contaminated. Because it belongs to the character in James Joyce's *Ulysses* who embodies Joyce's affirmation of life on earth and who in the famous dithyrambic monologue which closes that novel signifies this affirmation with the spell-like repetition of the word "yes," I used the name *Molly Brown* to insist that, yes, something was indeed clean. Every so often I encounter an artifact--a bookmark, a page from an old manuscript, a program of some event I attended, and the like--on which one of these rituals was scribbled out in panicky haste for a protective memo and I stare down in disbelief at its clever insanity, thankful to the point of awe that lately I have regained my dignity considerably from such state-of-the-art drivel.

Back in the past, however, the orders to authenticate cleanliness or to clean or to dispose of what cannot be cleaned come down again and again with imperial urgency. It will be a long while yet before I learn that just because these commands will not take "no" for an answer does not mean I cannot answer "no." When I submit, all that my heart beats for is driven from consciousness and I involve myself in a life-and-death interest in something I have no interest in whatsoever. Nothing exists in the world but me and the guilty object trapped before each other in a prefiguration of what my religion calls the "Last Judgment." The anxiety to make the object innocent again consumes all other feelings. I call this anxiety "The Great Obligation." I have at times considered its likeness to what astrophysics calls a "singularity," roughly a black hole, whose unimaginably crammed matter, though small in diameter, drags all things, including light, into itself. The "matter" in this case, though the light of its victim's reason knows it to be trivial and not worthy of his attention, amasses such a density of affective claim on him that unless a disciplined therapy keeps him from stepping off from what astrophysics calls *the event horizon* (in black-hole language, the point of no return), it involves his entire life--his protesting rationality and all--into itself.

This analogy between a singularity and the anxiety of an obsessive-compulsive attack becomes more striking from the fact that the profound gravity of both situations distorts space and time. In all of my anxiety attacks, space, as noted in the preceding paragraph, contracted to only me and the object to be cleaned. One evening, in the support group I will write more of later, I saw in another sufferer an unforgettable example of what appeared to be this same distortion of space. As the topic of the evening was closing its round of the members, I noticed that a woman seated across from me in the circle had locked her vision onto a small area of the carpet in front of her and that her eyes, fierce with attentiveness to something invisible to me, had the dazzle of impending tears. She did not blink once. Her isolation in her distress was heightened by the empty chair to her right and by the fact that from the friend to her left whom she always sat with, she had turned her body away in a posture that was eloquent with separation. For all my rising empathy, she was totally unaware that I was watching her--for her the room and the other people in it had ceased to exist. She could not have been more alone if she had been seated in the circle of a distant galaxy.

(continued on page 4, column 1)

**The National Summit of Mental Health
Consumers and Survivors
August 25-29, 1999
Portland, Oregon**

The National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse is sponsoring a National Summit to work toward a national consensus for action on issues building in the national arena.



The summit will be a forum for consumers and survivors to come together, discuss their concerns, and organize their ideas into a strong, collective voice that can influence debate on emerging issues.

The Clearinghouse urges interested consumers and survivors to participate with us in taking the next step toward building a united national advocacy initiative.

For more information contact:
The National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse
1211 Chestnut St., Suite 1000
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Phone: (800) 553-4539, Ext. 297 TTY: (215) 751-9655
Fax: (215) 636-6310 e-mail: info@mhselfhelp.org
Web site: <http://www.mhselfhelp.org>



WHY SOME THINGS NEVER GET BORN

Obsessed with having flawlessly polite children, a young first-time mother-to-be talked her doctor into letting her take an experimental drug known unscientifically as "the polite pill." Her anxiousness led her to exceed the safe dosage of the drug during her pregnancy. More than nine months passed and she did not deliver. A year passed--then two years, then five, then ten, and still no birth. At the age of eighty-three she died childless and the talk of the scientific community. At the autopsy the medical examiner discovered twins. One was saying "After you!" the other "No, after you!" II

OBSESSIVE - COMPULSIVE CREED

Today I am going to help myself by confronting uncomfortable situations, and discontinuing my rituals, for avoiding and ritualizing will only hurt me.

Today I will make an effort to expose myself to situations or objects I found difficult dealing with yesterday, for each day I do so, I move one step closer to my goal.

Today if I slip, I will immediately re-expose myself to the upsetting object or situation, for confronting a fear is the only way to overcome it.

Today if I find it hard to cope with my fears, I will call a friend, because encouragement and support always helps.

And last of all, I will try to keep in mind that if I try just a little harder today, I will make living a little easier tomorrow.

--Written by Linda for adoption by G.O.A.L. II

I consider this woman rather beautiful and on studying her that night, I wondered what it is about this thing called human life that loveliness like hers comes down from the steady shine of its mountain to live among us in the shifting shadows of our suffering valley.

But it is not physical space only that undergoes distortion. Figurative space, the space things take up in terms of their importance, is likewise altered. One evening, at a menacing intersection a short distance down the highway from where I live, a speeding car nearly struck with full force the back end of my car as I was driving to dine out with a friend. At the restaurant a few minutes later, somebody near me sneezed. I said: "So far this has been a terrible evening--first that near collision and now this sneeze!" In my upsetness, I did not understand immediately my friend's responding laughter.

The anxiety distorts time also. More than once I came out of a cleaning or a checking frenzy and was dismayed to discover that what I had believed were only minutes were actually hours that had passed, and sometimes at such occasions the thought frightened me that on the larger scale which is the seemingly interminable recurrence of such spells, my whole lifetime was slipping away in this manner. Someone of a bent toward belief in the supernatural might say that the forces behind these compulsions are eternal, and, accordingly, in their self-absorbed demands on human time and energy and goods they have no understanding of the limitations of such things or do not care that such things are finite and use them as though they were eternal also, not capable of exhaustion. This is essentially the attitude the ancient Greek imagination gave to the Olympian deities toward the mortals who lived below their mountain.

In his book *Mythology: The Voyage of the Hero*, David Adams Leeming quotes the Hungarian anthropologist Géza Róheim for the latter's definition of the priests of a society as "the lightning conductors of common anxiety. They fight the demons so that others can hunt the prey and in general fight reality" (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1973, 4). Carrying this perception further, I suspect that in a time of history when to a considerable extent a living belief in (as opposed to the social habit of) traditional religion is breaking down and individualism in private life is rearing itself up as a defense against corporate tyranny in the public sector, the individual is becoming his own priest and as such the burden of conducting the lightning of "common anxiety" is shifting to him and the high incidence of obsessive-compulsive ritualizing today is one manifestation of such a shift.

Once the obsessive-compulsive ritual begins, however, the anxiety that compels the individual to it for relief in the first place, worsens because, in keeping with the general character of the universe it occurs in, human experience moves on a circle, not in a straight line, so that when accelerated by desperation enough, the action to bring about something overshoots its intent and, swinging by that thing at the speed of panic, curves back in stark dismay to its opposite. Thus the fierce concentration on the cleaning task demanded by the certitude of cleanliness I sought erased, ironically, any memory of the cleaning just as soon as it was done and I would have to re-clean the same thing over and over as the same blackout occurred at each attempt. It was as though the ability to recall had burned up in the demonic glare of my attentiveness. This curvilinear peculiarity of human experience manifested itself also in another way. The annals of human behavior are burdened with examples of the law that a virtue become vicious casts a virtuous light on its

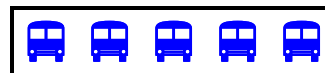
(continued on page 5, column 1)



THE OCD INSIDE OF ME

The OCD inside of me
Is a monster that you can't see,
A monster whose breath is as hot as fire,
A monster who is as round as a tire.
The OCD monster will just persist.
I struggle so hard to exist.
But I can conquer it, yes I can.
I can fight like a brave man.
I am strong—I am not weak,
But the OCD monster often has a mean streak.
The OCD monster is vicious and mean.
The OCD monster makes me scream.
I overruled it the way I should.
I overruled it the best I could.

--"Pocahontas," Age 11



**I'm not sick but I'm not well
I'm going out of my mind and
It has got to be from HELL.**

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a common problem which over 5,000,000 Americans have. I do not have a very bad case of this so I can't speak for the people who do. Before I started medicine to help me, thoughts and fears would endlessly sabotage my mind.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is mental misfortune. It is almost like having a battlefield in my mind: I am a general and OCD is the other general and we are battling against each other. I have to admit, though, I've pretty much already won the battle.

--Anonymous, Age 10 II

**TWO NEARBY SUMMER
EVENTS TO WATCH FOR**

❖ **June 16-19 IN KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA:
THE CONFERENCE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA
PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION***

To distribute information and increase public awareness of its presence and its work, the Philadelphia Affiliate will be sharing a table with the AATC at this conference.

❖ **JULY 9-11 IN ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA: THE SIXTH
ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL
OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE FOUNDATION***

On Friday afternoon of this event, the Affiliate will be presenting a workshop entitled "Recovery: A Trip Everyone Can Make."

*For more information, contact Gayle Frankel at 610-660-0549.

The Spinal Column *(continued from page 4, column 1)*

corresponding vice. Accordingly, in my personal experience, cleanliness became such a servitude that filth took on the value of freedom. Furthermore, the duress of cleaning grew to such a tyranny that my backlogged passion to be free of its outrage retaliated by imagining that my cleaning of an object was actually dirtying it, and this imagined defilement seemed so terrifyingly real in my feelings that again and again it set back the progress of the cleaning. Whether for this reason or because of the blanking out of my memory through excessive demands on it, this repetition of aborted cleanings within one obsessive-compulsive attack continued on and on until stubbornness and luck sometimes working together with exhaustion straightened my feelings out of the nightmarish entanglement they had snarled themselves into. In these frenzies, the discernment often came to me that the integration or integrity of my mind, which like that of every other mind is based on the balance of contraries (reasonable dirtiness and reasonable cleanliness, in this case), had disintegrated or been violated into reciprocally hostile twins--the twin who sat unreasonably in the mud puddle and, starting the whole ruckus, the twin who sat unreasonably in the bath water--each aggravating the other to an unhealthy pitch by insisting on being the whole of me to the complete extinction of the other. Vexed to rabidness by the rabidness of the other, the soiled twin knew inherently that it was rightfully a part of me and exercised that right by, in effect, repeatedly undoing all the scrubbed twin was trying to do, only to heighten further the latter's despairing intent to get it done. And so they went at it back and forth like two ungovernable children playing for alarmingly high stakes a not very amusing game of "Gotcha last." I discerned not only that I was caught in an irrelevant crisis as to which of these twins I wanted to be, but also that like the terrible power which discharges from the split atom or like the blood that hemorrhages from a deep break in the flesh, the anxiety I was undergoing was my life force driven to extremity and rushing out from the split between them. **II**

(To be continued in the next newsletter)

The Philadelphia Affiliate of the National Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation serves as a clearing-house for information on the obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and provides the following free professionally assisted support groups for those with the disorder.

The G.O.A.L. support group of Philadelphia will continue to meet through the summer every other Wednesday at 8 PM in the Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center, 112 Bala Avenue, Bala Cynwyd. The family group will continue to meet in the Center at the same time. For more information on the G.O.A.L. group, telephone Gayle Frankel at 610-660-0549. For more information on the family group, telephone Sally Allen at 610-525-1510.

Meetings of the trichotillomania support group are suspended for the summer but will resume on Wednesday, September 22, at 7 PM in Suite 9 of the Rosemont Plaza Apartments, 1062 Lancaster Avenue, Rosemont. For more information, telephone Sally Allen at 610-525-1510.

The support group for young people is meeting every other Thursday from 7 to 8 PM in Suite 9 of the Rosemont Plaza Apartments, 1062 Lancaster Avenue, Rosemont. For its summer status or any other information, telephone Judy Kolman at 610-525-1510. **II**

Pungent Extracts



In a world we find terrifying, we ratify that which doesn't threaten us.

--**David Mamet** (b. 1947), U.S. playwright. *Writing in Restaurants*, "Notes for a Catalogue for Raymond Saunders" (1986).

Sure I am of this, that you have only to endure to conquer. You have only to persevere to save yourselves.

--**Sir Winston Churchill** (1874–1965), British statesman, writer. First wartime address, 4 Sept. 1914, Guildhall, London.

Whoever is not grateful for little things has rejected the components for greatness.

--Anonymous

Perfect courage is to do without witnesses what one would be capable of doing with the world looking on.

--**François, Duc de La Rochefoucauld** (1613–80), French writer, moralist. *Sentences et Maximes Morales*, no. 216 (1678).

Man is always more than he can know of himself; consequently, his accomplishments, time and again, will come as a surprise to him.

--**Golo Mann** (b. 1909), German historian, son of Thomas Mann. Quoted in: Marcel Reich-Ranicki, *Thomas Mann and His Family*, "Golo Mann—The Liberation of an Unloved One" (1987; tr. 1989).

The shortest answer is doing.

--**English Proverb**. Collected in: George Herbert, *Jacula Prudentum* (1651).

My case is a species of madness, only that it is a derangement of the *Volition*, & not of the intellectual faculties.

--**Samuel Taylor Coleridge** (1772–1834), English poet, critic. Letter, 26 April 1814 (published in *The Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, vol. 3, 1959), referring to his addiction to laudanum.

You can discover what your enemy fears most by observing the means he uses to frighten you.

--**Eric Hoffer** (1902–83), U.S. philosopher. *The Passionate State of Mind*, aph. 222 (1955).

The man who knows it can't be done counts the risk, not the reward.

--**Elbert Hubbard** (1856–1915), U.S. author. *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, "Index" (1921).

Man is made for something better than disturbing dirt.

--**Oscar Wilde** (1854–1900), Anglo-Irish playwright, author. *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*, in *Fortnightly Review* (London, Feb. 1891, repr. 1895).

I hate housework! You make the beds, you do the dishes—and six months later you have to start all over again.

--**Joan Rivers** (b. 1935), U.S. comedienne. Quoted in: *Woman Talk*, "Work" (ed. by Michèle Brown & Ann O'Connor, 1984). **II**



I often think of my OCD as a little rat inside of me with its constant patter of nervous energy and anxiety and its instinct to gnaw, pick, and hoard. At times I find it helpful to imagine putting the rat on an exercise wheel like a pet hamster in its cage and allowing it to do its thing off in the background while I get on with the business of my life. However, since I also have OCPD (obsessive-compulsive personality disorder), not all of my OC traits are ego-dystonic (that is, at variance with my conscious will), and sometimes I actually need to harness the rat's energy to accomplish what I want in life. So in a sense, the rat's exercise wheel is a part of my "mental transmission," and the real challenge before me is learning to drive it, rather than letting it drive me. This cartoon is an attempt to depict this precarious balancing act, which I must perform on the thin, frayed tightrope between chaos and paralysis, all the while juggling the demands of everyday life.

--Brian McHugh, Member of the G.O.A.L. Support Group II

What Will Ever Become of My Child?



The whole room is quiet. I am sitting next to another mother and we are both gazing at our children from across the room. "Look at my child," she whispers in my ear. "Look at her. She spends a great deal of time with the OCD. Why did God do this to us? I thought we had a perfect child. Maybe I did something wrong. Oh, what will ever become of my child?"

Tears are forming in her eyes and her whole face reads worry. She looks over at me and I am smiling as I watch my girl at play with hers. "Your daughter is not perfect, but whose is?" I interrupt. "Your daughter will have hard times, but whose doesn't? Your daughter will need guidance and love, but whose doesn't? I think she is lucky, your daughter."

"Lucky?" she yells. "How can you say that she is lucky? All I see is a life of pain."

"Please, look again," I ask. "I see a child as cute as can be. A child that has the most important thing she needs. A mom that loves her and will help her with her problems. A mom that will always be there when she is needed and not when she is not. I see a child that will appreciate her life. She will enjoy each smile, touch, laughter, and loving person that comes her way. She will have pride in everything that she conquers, and there will be many. She will be kindhearted and many will love her. She will always have God's love and yours."

"Who are you to see all of that in my child?" she asks.

"Teach her to Talk, Accept, Learn and Live with and about OCD and she will be more than fine," I said. "I know this because I have lived it. So does my child, my father's child, his father's child, and his," I told her.

"Stand O.C.D. T.A.L.L. (Talk, Accept, Learn, Live) and most of all, treat it and be happy!"

--Mary K. Hull (Reprinted from the newsletter of the Texas OC Affiliate) II

A Song for the Thoughtful



[Author's Note: The poem below first appeared in the Fall 1998 issue of *ArtWord Quarterly* in White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Its theme is the principle of circularity addressed in the ninth paragraph of this issue's installment of "The Spinal Column." It warns against the manic drive toward divine perfectionism which is often if not always a factor behind the obsessive-compulsive disorder.]

EXORCISM

One does not drive out a devil by driving
Out a devil. We are constantly arriving
At this fact from our dramatic sleep,
Which, do what we will in daylight, will not keep
From us (thank God in the End Analysis)
Our secrets, has a mind of its own--and this
Of incredible intelligence, although
It speaks in pictures like a late dumb show.
One picture I recall is that of a mad-
Man running like the devil, all unclad,
From an open third-floor window, but his flight
Became a hurrying toward the mortal sill
And the fall of dead moonlight outdoors until
Over the edge he finally lunged from sight.
Old scribes may just as well have writ to say
That godly Joseph fleeing from Potiphar's wife
Met her coming lasciviously the other way.
Therefore, in this strange, deceptive life,
To fear or love a thing too much or run
From it, or toward, too urgently does one
No good, for in the overstress these acts
Become their opposites--and thus our race backtracks
Itself to fruits that drew us with the very thought
Of not approaching them. If one has caught
The desperate gestures that life makes to men
To live life well, see through its seeming, then
It should not come to him as impious or odd
That one drives out a devil by losing some interest in God.

--Jene Beardsley II

NOW LEAVING A MISH COUNTRY

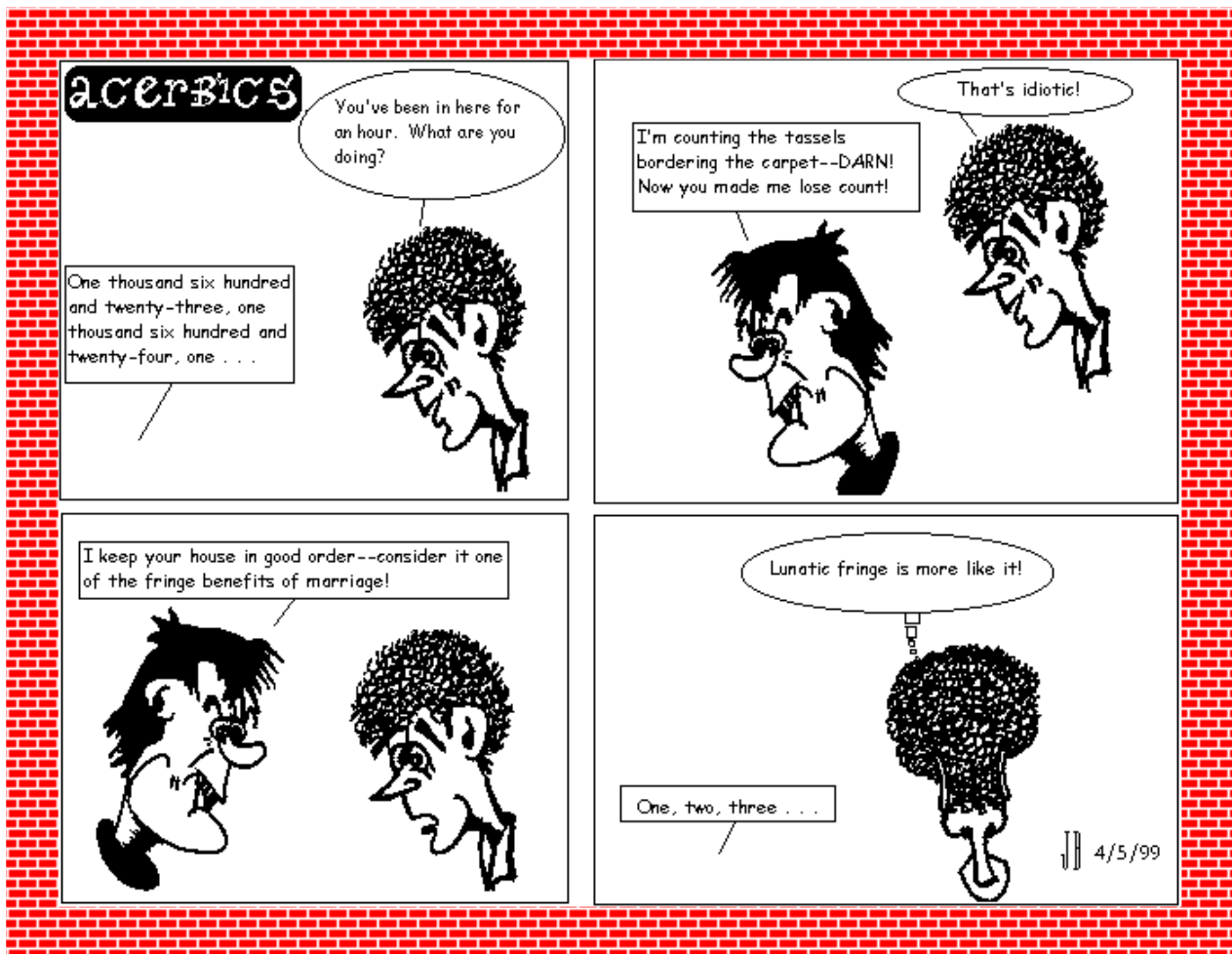


OH GOSH I JUST RAN OVER SOME ROAD
APPLES WITH THE TOP DOWN!

From a Victorian Masterpiece

By this end of a millennium, we have evolved a view of the universe and a form of society which make it difficult to believe in the momentousness of an individual human life. Does your obsessive-compulsive suffering intensify and do you fail to advance in your therapy because of the persistent feeling that your life is insignificant and therefore whatever you would do to affirm and improve it is inconsequential? If so, you would do well to ponder the words with which the English novelist George Eliot ends her novel *Middlemarch*. Referring to Dorothea Brooke, the heroine of the novel, she writes:

Her full nature . . . spent itself in channels which had no great name on the earth. But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs. II



Food for Thought How Do I Talk about OCD?

Recently at the OCD support group, I referred to myself as OC. One of my peers kindly reminded me that I have a neurobiological disorder called OCD. He went on to point out to me that I have many other personality traits, the OCD being only one of them. I saw how easily I sometimes forget my other traits and become "obsessed" with the OCD itself.

"What Are Your Five Most Positive Traits?" was the question posed at the very next support group meeting I attended. As often as I've been asked this question, it caught me "off-guard." I had to think before I could answer, even though deep down inside I know I have many positive traits. Why is it so hard for me to think of myself in a positive light?

Even in writing this article, I'd like to put the focus on you or us rather than keep it on me. In fact, it is much easier for me to find five positive traits in you than it is in me. Aha! So . . . I judge me more critically than I judge you? Now I ask myself, "Does that make any sense?" Of course the answer is an emphatic "No!"

My point is that I need to be my own best friend. Affirming myself rather than "beating" myself would be good for a start. Now I say to myself, "I will be kind and compassionate to me." After all, that is how I would treat a friend.



--Helen Hans Kirschner, Member of the G.O.A.L. Support Group

 **Call for Submissions**

The G.O.A.L. Post would like to receive your submissions. It is looking for stories, poems, essays, questions for its professionals, and artwork. Subject matters may relate personal victories, personal defeats dealt with meaningfully, insights, strategies, sources of strength, humor, etc. Writings submitted should be literate (correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.), legible (typed, preferably), and of a reasonable length. All submissions accepted for publication are subject to editorial changes and must be properly attributed to their creators, who will be identified in the newsletter unless they request otherwise. No submissions will be returned. Address them to:

Jene Beardsley
P. O, Box 62384
King of Prussia
PA 19406-2384

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*The Anxiety and Agoraphobia Treatment Center

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C/o AATC

112 Bala Avenue

Bala Cynwyd PA 19004

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

OC Foundation, Inc. Application for New Membership and Renewal

Name _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____ Telephone (_____) _____

- Please renew my membership in the OC Foundation
- I wish to become a member of the OC Foundation

How did you hear of the OC Foundation? _____

- \$45 Regular Member (Canadian US \$50, Overseas US \$55)
- \$75 Professional Member (Canadian US \$80, Overseas US \$85)
- \$100+ Sustaining Member
- \$250+ Benefactor
- \$1,000+ President's Circle

Amount Enclosed _____

Credit Card Payment Authorization: For your convenience, we accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

Please check method of payment: VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS

Credit Card # _____ Expiration date _____

Amount \$ _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Please enclose payment (checks, in U.S. funds, payable to OC Foundation, Inc.) and mail to:

OCF, P.O. Box 70, Milford, CT 06460-0070

Telephone: (203) 878-5669 Fax: (203) 874-2826 E-mail: info@ocfoundation.org