Habits and Obsessions

Maybe you have an annoying habit that you want to get rid of. Most people do. You might not even know about your bad habit. Habits can be good, too. They are your routine.

# What is a habit?

A habit is a behavior that is repeated. *For instance*, shaking someone’s hand when you meet them, or brushing your teeth are some examples. A person usually doesn’t know about their habit, especially if it is a bad on you.

A habit can entertain you when you are bored or relax you when you need to calm down. Reading before falling asleep can be a good habit. Soon, a beneficial habit can easily turn bad, *such as* not being able to fall asleep without reading late into the night.

Bad habits can cause a lot of problems. Smoking is a bad habit, and causes damage to your body. Other examples of bad habits are procrastination, overeating, overspending, arguing, and not getting enough sleep. The same way that good habits turn bad, bad habits can turn into obsessions if you’re not careful.

# What are obsessions?

An obsession is a reoccurring thought, a feeling or an image that makes you feel anxious.

# OCD / Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

If your obsessions do not fade away and become very severe you could develop in an OCD. OCD is an anxiety disorder. This disorder can be as mild/severe as locking each window and door and checking them each several times

The most common obsessive thoughts are:

* Excessive worrying that something terrible might happen.
* Counting or repeating words and phrases.

The most common compulsions are:

* Excessive cleaning.
* Repetitive checking.
* Ritualistic touching, e.g. light switches, door handles, etc.
* Hand washing.
* Obsessions Concerning Order. Wanting things to be Symmetrical. Wanting things to be "perfect", exact. Seeking that feeling of "Just Right". books in a certain "perfect" way.

***Steps to Controlling Your Habits***

1. There is always something that I **automatically** do. It is my habit. Find out what it is.
2. I ask myself if I **gain** anything by doing your habit.
3. I ask myself if I **picture** a better “me” without my habit.

I try to find the **willpower** to stop.

***Overcoming OCD***

1. **I recognize my area of obsession.**  I also recognize what I do to “put it right.” For instance, if my obsession is keeping clean, I probably wash my hands a lot.
2. Gradually I **face the things I fear** by starting with the easiest and working my way up to the hardest.
3. **I Break** the obsessive- compulsive cycle.

*Note: Therapy can help!*