

Accommodation in OCD

Examples of accommodation in OCD

Waiting for a loved one to complete a ritual

Assisting a loved one in a compulsion or allowing them to use you in a compulsion

Providing reassurance

Making changes in routines

Letting a loved one create unusual conditions in the home

Accommodation is when you actively and directly participate in and/or facilitate a loved one's compulsions or avoidance

Remember that accommodation...

- ▶ Reinforces the OCD and makes it stronger
- ▶ Gets in the way of Exposure Response Prevention and treatment
- ▶ Only provides temporary relief
- ▶ Impairs individual and family functioning
- ▶ Appears helpful, but really just keeps our loved ones stuck and entrenched in their OCD and avoidance

Accommodation

You can provide support, empathy, and connection without providing reassurance

Assurance is to provide truth and helps someone to feel more secure

Example: Giving someone the facts and they judge for themselves if all is well

Reassurance is done to lessen anxiety or help someone worry less by assuring them again;

Example: Telling someone all is well

No one wants to see their loved one in pain and distress AND accommodation doesn't make the OCD go away.

As your loved one is working on building their distress tolerance to a variety of triggers and uncertainty, you can work on building your own distress tolerance to seeing your loved one in distress.

More Tips

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- ▶ Discuss with your loved one, the ways that you have been accommodating their OCD and that you would like to work with them on decreasing your participation in their OCD
- ▶ Work with your loved one and their therapist on a plan to decrease accommodations. This can be done by creating a contract and having it in writing; that way everyone is on the same page.
- ▶ Don't do anything for your loved one, that they can do for themselves. " Remind yourself that this is being done to help your loved one feel more confident in themselves and in their ability to manage distress.
- ▶ Work towards providing validation of the emotional experience of distress and move away from providing reassurance. Practice being responsive, not reactive. Be curious and create uncertainty in responses. Examples: "Maybe." "I don't know." "How can I support without helping the OCD?"
- ▶ Get support for yourself by seeking professional help and therapy! This is the best way to care for yourself and to model self-care and seeking help in your family system.