



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Thank you for your interest in this study. Please read the information below carefully, to see if you might like to take part on a voluntary basis.

The Researcher

My name is Rudi Coulter, and I am currently studying for an MSc in Psychology with the University of Roehampton. I am 41 years old and have suffered with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) all my life, and my experiences have included every recognised form of obsession and compulsion. After many years of misdiagnosis, I was finally correctly diagnosed at the age of 30, and have since then managed to overcome the disorder with a mix of pharmaceutical, psychoeducational and cognitive-behavioural therapies.

Background and The Study

As you may know, diagnosing Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) in sufferers is often delayed for many years, sometimes decades and often goes completely undiagnosed. This study particularly focuses on the occurrence of overt compulsions and/or noticeable behaviours/habits associated with OCD in childhood, adolescence and as a young adult, exploring related perceptions and experiences of the sufferer, as well as their subsequent feelings related to others' perceptions.

Aims and Potential Benefits

The aims of this study are two. Firstly, establishing whether successful identification of overt compulsions and noticeable behaviours/habits has the potential to contribute to research looking to better and earlier diagnosis of OCD. Secondly, exploring OCD sufferers' feelings around noticeable compulsions and behaviours, including being "caught out" by others when carrying out a compulsion or behaviour/habit.

Participants

If you are someone who had moderate to severe OCD* in childhood, adolescence or as a young adult and are now recovered or in a good state of recovery**, I am looking for volunteers to discuss their overt compulsions and other signs of OCD (from a hindsight perspective).

*OCD thoughts and compulsions took up a minimum of 3 hours a day (at some points), or significant daily functional impairment, or as diagnosed by clinician.

** In the last two years, OCD thoughts and compulsions have taken up less than one hour a day, and there is little to no daily functional impairment.

To be eligible you must:

- have suffered moderate to severe OCD in the past
- be in a good state of recovery from OCD
- be aged 25-65
- have attended school until at least 15 years old
- recognise that the onset of your OCD was in childhood or adolescence

Procedure

If you do not wish to take part, you do not need to do anything, and thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. If you decide that you might like to take part, please contact me via email with the contact details at the end of this sheet.

Once you have considered your consent, we will arrange between us a suitable day and time to have an interview via Skype or similar. You will receive the main interview questions at least two weeks before the interview to allow you time to think about your answers (I found this worked for me when I trialled it on myself). The interview will then take place and your interview will be recorded (and temporarily kept in order to be assessed later). After the interview, I may ask you to note down anything over the following two to three weeks that you think of subsequently that you think could have been pertinent to the interview. I will therefore contact you again to make sure you are happy to consent for your data to be used and whether you have thought of anything further to add. Interviews are estimated to take from 45-60 minutes.

(My role as researcher is independent of my own personal experiences and opinions)

Confidentiality and Anonymity

All your contact details will be stored in a secured place for six months after the interviews and then deleted. Your interview will be transcribed and stored without any personal details associated, and you will be assigned a pseudonym during the process. Further, anything that you speak about that I feel reveals too much of your personal identity will not be written up in the study.

Withdrawal

You have the right to withdraw at any stage during this study (at the start, during, or after the interview). If you wish to withdraw, please contact me and let me know of your wish to withdraw, I will remove all data collected on your part.

Potential Risks

It is important to acknowledge that by remembering and recalling OCD experiences from the past, you could experience some negative emotions. Please be assured that if this is the case, you can withdraw at any point and you will not be left without support. In the unlikelyhood of distress, I can refer you to people who can give the right support.

Legal Rights

By agreeing to participate in this study, you do NOT waive any legal rights that you have. Further all information is collected in line with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the University of Roehampton's Data Policy.

Compensation

Unfortunately, I cannot offer any gifts or payments for participation in this study, only my extreme gratitude.

Your consideration of participation is very much appreciated. Please contact me if you would like to participate, if you would like more information or clarification, or for any other questions.

Kind regards

Rudi Coulter (researcher)

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