



# Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders: A Complete Guide to Getting Well and Staying Well

By Fred Penzel

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## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders: A Complete Guide to Getting Well and Staying Well By Fred Penzel

Morbid obsessions with sex, germs, or with one's appearance, and uncontrollable compulsions to hoard objects, to check and recheck locks, or to pull one's hair are just a few of the symptoms of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders, which afflict over ten million Americans. Many suffer in isolation, not knowing that their disorder has a name, how to seek help, or how to help themselves.

Dr. Penzel discusses the entire spectrum of these disorders, from the classic form characterized by intrusive, repetitive, and often unpleasant thoughts, to body dysmorphic disorder ("imagined ugliness"), trichotillomania (compulsive hair pulling), compulsive skin picking, and nail biting. He takes the reader through each step of the most effective behavioral therapies, detailing how progress is made and how to avoid relapse. He also offers a completely up-to-date discussion of medication--how it is used as part of the overall treatment, its effect on pregnancy, how to choose the best medicine, and how to know if it is working. In addition, Dr. Penzel discusses the treatment of children with these disorders, offers helpful advice for the families of sufferers, and lists sources of help and information (including the latest sites on the Internet).

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

*"Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders* is the most comprehensive, yet highly readable, book out yet on the group of tormenting disorders that includes OCD, Body Dysmorphic disorder, Trichotillomania, and nail biting. These disorders are dealt with collectively, chapter by chapter, as theory, psychotherapy, medications, childhood cases, family involvement, self-help, and recovery are discussed. The richly detailed material on behavior therapy for the OCDs is worth the price of the book by itself. Dr. Penzel takes the reader into his office for an in-depth, sympathetic discussion about a subject he knows from start to finish. This book will be treasured by professionals and patients alike, all those who want a comprehensive, clinically-oriented resource on OCD and OCD-like disorders. A terrific achievement."--Ian Osborn, M.D.

"Working in the vastly under-recognized and misunderstood arena of the Body-Focused Disorders, such as Trichotillomania (compulsive hair pulling), Skin Picking, Nail Biting and Body Dysmorphic Disorder, I am deeply pleased to see Dr. Penzel's book go to press. It will be a turning point for many, not only the sufferers of these OCD spectrum conditions, but for the therapeutic professionals that struggle to heal them. It's clarity, applicability and compassion are a refreshing approach to disorders that have caused such depths of suffering few can imagine. In my own life, if I had access to this book many years ago, it well could have helped me realize my teenage goals of becoming a doctor, instead of dropping out and hiding from society, desolately trapped within a behavioral prison with bars forged of compulsion." --Christina Pearson, Founder and Executive Director of the Trichotillomania Learning Center, Inc.

"Dr. Fred Penzel is a colleague whose work I have appreciated for almost two decades. He is always willing to help patients in need and will go the extra mile, and I often refer patients to him knowing that they will get excellent care. His book represents a comprehensive summary of OCD and related disorders. Topics include modern treatment aspects as well as discussions of biology, genetics, coping with these disorders, recovery and acceptance, family issues, rating scales, and many other pertinent subjects. Since he is a very experienced behavior therapist, this part of the book will be exceedingly helpful to patients and their families. I highly recommend this book to patients and their family members, and professionals who do not have Dr. Penzel's vast experience will find his discussions and recommendations useful as well."--Michael A. Jenike, MD

#### From the Inside Flap

Morbid obsessions with sex or germs or with one's appearance, and uncontrollable compulsions to hoard objects, to check and recheck locks, or to pull one's hair are just a few of the symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorders. Problems such as these afflict over ten million Americans. Many suffer in isolation, not knowing that their disorder has a name, how to seek help, or how to help themselves.

Now Dr. Fred Penzel, a psychologist with over eighteen years' experience in treating obsessive-compulsive

disorders, has written a book to help this group of sufferers, their families, and those who would help them. In Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders, Dr. Penzel discusses the entire spectrum of these disorders, from the classic form characterized by the intrusive, repetitive, and often unpleasant thoughts, to body dysmorphic disorder ("imagined ugliness"), trichotillomania (compulsive hair pulling), compulsive skin picking, and nail biting. Dr. Penzel takes the reader through each step of the most effective behavioral therapies, detailing how progress is made and how to avoid relapse. He also offers a completely up-to-date discussion of medication - - how medication is used as part of the overall treatment, its effect on pregnancy, how to choose the best medicine, and how to know if it is working. In addition, Dr. Penzel discusses the treatment of children with these disorders, offers helpful advice for the families of sufferers, and lists sources of help and information (including the latest sites on the Internet). The book also includes a useful appendix that features symptom checklists for each of the OC spectrum disorders, the DSM-IV diagnostic descriptions, a reading list, and aglossary.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders is the most complete guide ever written about this family of perplexing problems. Its practical, accurate, and up-to-the-minute information gives those with OC disorders all they need to know to get well and stay well.

#### About the Author

**Fred Penzel, Ph.D.**, has been dedicated to the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorders since 1982. He is a frequent contributor to the newsletters of both the Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation and the Trichotillomania Learning Center, and is the only psychologist to sit on the Science Advisory Boards of both organizations. He is the Executive Director of Western Suffolk Psychological Services in Huntington, New York.

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they also doing some exploration before they write on their book. One of them is this Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders: A Complete Guide to Getting Well and Staying Well.

**Elizabeth Branch:**

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