

# How to Date Someone Who Has Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

If that special someone in your life happens to have OCD, take heart. Many OCD sufferers manage to lead normal (or crazy and normal) lives, which includes marriage, children and career. Just because a person has OCD, does not mean that they cannot be a huge asset to your life and make an excellent partner and parent.

So here are some tips on how to treat your special someone and have a wonderful life regardless of their OCD:

1) Never say, "why can't you just snap out of it?!" The answer is no they can't snap out of it, any more than a diabetic can snap out of being unable to produce insulin. Except in the OCD sufferer it's serotonin (among other neurotransmitters) that is not being delivered in adequate quantities to the relevant areas of the brain. OCD is a biological disorder of the brain, and needs to be understood as such.

2) Listen to your loved one. Talking about OCD can be hard, because words often fall short of illustrating the true depth of pain and anxiety experienced by the sufferer. To quote from a novel on the subject of OCD:

As I listened to the words pour from my mouth, I could have thumped myself in the face. Not because the words evoked emotions, rather I was disappointed by the extent to which the words trivialized the mental anguish associated with these decorating dilemmas. It was like suffering from a broken leg but only having the vocabulary to describe a scraped knee. Words just didn't do justice to the pain. How do you tell a stranger that you don't like the shape of your lampshade and at the same time expect them to understand that you are describing a pain that inhabits you fully, inserts itself between your cells like cement and wears your skin like a coat? I just sounded like I was whining.

If you give the impression that you really get it, you will have taken a huge step in making your loved one feel less isolated with their condition.

3) Inform yourself. For the reasons stated above, go online, get books and learn what it really means to be nagged by intrusive thoughts.

4) If your partner's OCD is under control with the use of medication, therapy, or both, be supportive. Never ask them to come off their meds or stop therapy just because they "seem fine now." Your loved one is fine and able to be in a great relationship with you because they have their OCD under control. OCD is a lifelong illness, and this means that the medications are for life. Asking someone to come off their meds would not only bring back their symptoms, but may make symptoms worse. A relapse can set a person back so far that when they return to their meds, the old dose may not be sufficient and a higher dose would be required.

5) If your partner's OCD is not under control, if they are symptomatic and it is causing disruption to their life, then urge and encourage them to get help. Remind them that it is not t



that they are unwell, and that they cannot get better alone. You may also offer to become partners in treatment, by attending therapy with them, helping out with exposure exercises, and reminding your loved one to take their medications. This will, at the very least, help to build a strong bond between the two of you.

6) You don't have to exclude someone because "OCD might be hereditary." They might be thinking the same about your hairy back. Again no one is perfect.

7) Accept your partner just the way they are. After all, you likely fell in love with this person as a whole package that included their issues with anxiety. Acceptance delivers a positive message that may allow you and your loved one to actually become closer. If your loved one is struggling with the idea of getting help, your unconditional acceptance can actually free them to start taking risks which is one of the things they'll have to do if they want to overcome their anxiety. Change always requires being able to take risks, be vulnerable, and make mistakes. When people feel safe, they can do these things more easily. The best gift you can give is your unconditional love and support.

Many OCD sufferers have their condition under control due to a mix of education, and a willingness to address and treat the problem. So long as a person is prepared to acknowledge their illness and desires to treat it, then there is no reason that they should not make a wonderful life partner. We are all far from perfect, but only those in denial are undatable. Everyone else is fair game.

Dr Annabelle R Charbit

Author of A Life Lived Ridiculously

When a girl with obsessive compulsive disorder falls in love with a sociopath, she must fight for her sanity and her life...

**FDCPA lawsuit**