



This graphic novel is based on a young person's experience of OCD. We thank him for sharing his story.

To get help see your local GP or call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

More information is available at the following resources.

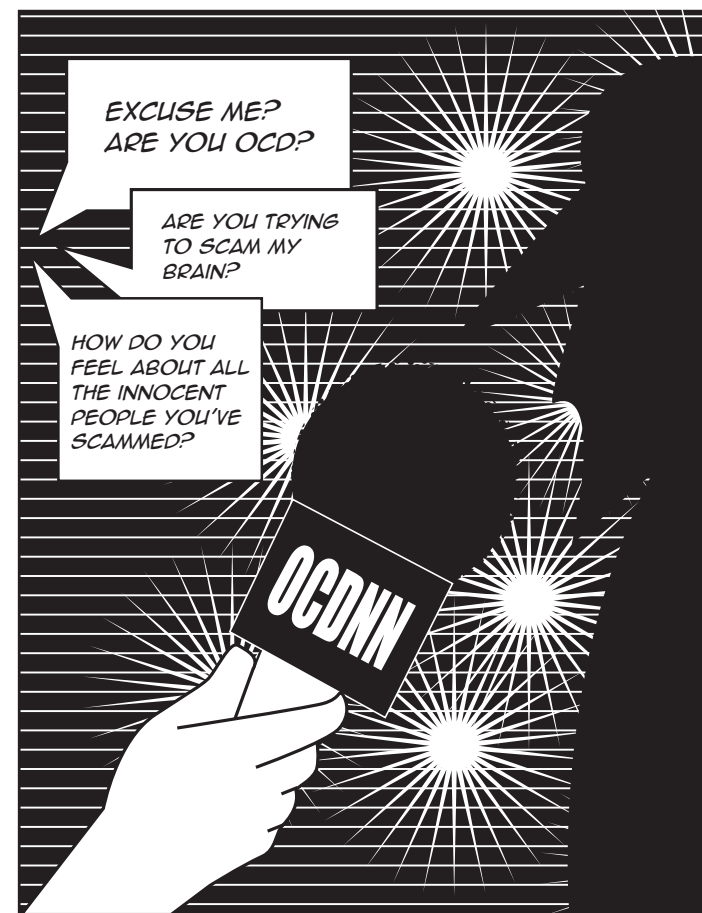
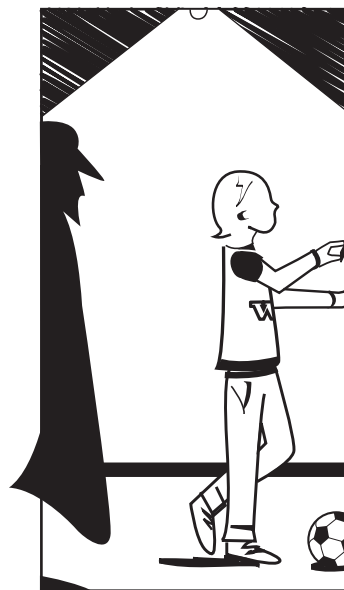
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The BRAIN SCAM

IS OCD SCAMMING YOU?



EXCUSE ME?
ARE YOU OCD?

ARE YOU TRYING
TO SCAM MY
BRAIN?

HOW DO YOU
FEEL ABOUT ALL
THE INNOCENT
PEOPLE YOU'VE
SCAMMED?

OCDNN

THIS GRAPHIC NOVEL HAS BEEN CREATED AS AN AWARENESS-RAISING RESOURCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD) AND HELPSEEKING.

IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN BY A YOUNG PERSON WITH OCD, IN COLLABORATION WITH ORYGEN YOUTH HEALTH STAFF.



Opening minds to a brighter future

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Content was written by a young person with OCD, with the assistance of Orygen Youth Health staff.

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For more information about Orygen Youth Health, publications & resources please visit our website

www.oyh.org.au

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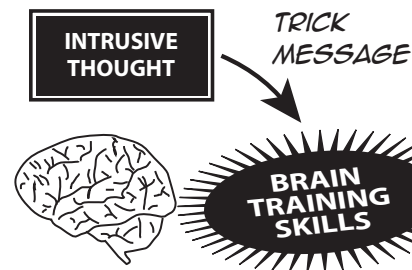
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 To read this publication online or print it yourself on your home printer visit www.oyh.org.au/brainscam and follow the instructions for printing and assembly.

I NEED TO BE ON CONSTANT ALERT FOR THE SCAM AND ANY OPPORTUNITY TO DISOBEY THE TRICK MESSAGES OVER AND OVER AGAIN... BUT I AM PROOF THAT YOU CAN UNCOVER AND OUTSMART A BRAIN SCAM.

AFTER GOING TO THERAPY AND HAVING MEDICATION FOR THE PAST 2 YEARS I FEEL 85% BETTER.

THE TRICK MESSAGES STILL COME BUT I CAN RESPOND TO THEM IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT WAY AND THEY RARELY CAUSE ME MUCH ANXIETY OR DISTRESS.



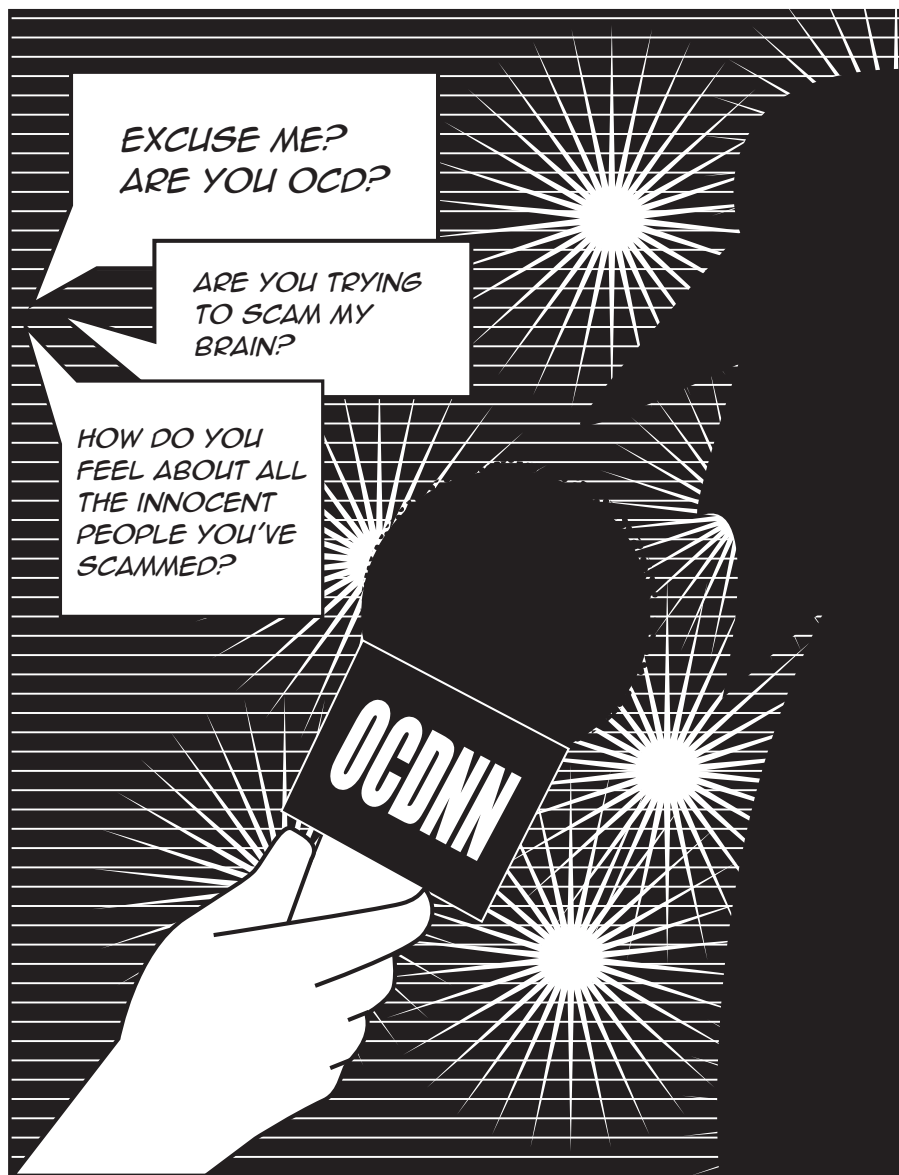
I NOW HAVE THE SKILLS TO MANAGE THE BRAIN SCAM ON MY OWN.

OCD BARELY IMPACTS ON MY LIFE ANYMORE. IT CERTAINLY DOESN'T STOP ME FROM DOING ANYTHING I WANT TO NOW... LIKE GOING TO UNI, HAVING A PART TIME JOB, STUDYING, HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS AND DOING ALL THE DAILY STUFF.

GETTING MY LIFE BACK WHEN OCD USED TO INFECT EVERY PART OF MY DAY MEANS I CAN REALLY ENJOY AND APPRECIATE THE THINGS THAT OTHERS TAKE FOR GRANTED.

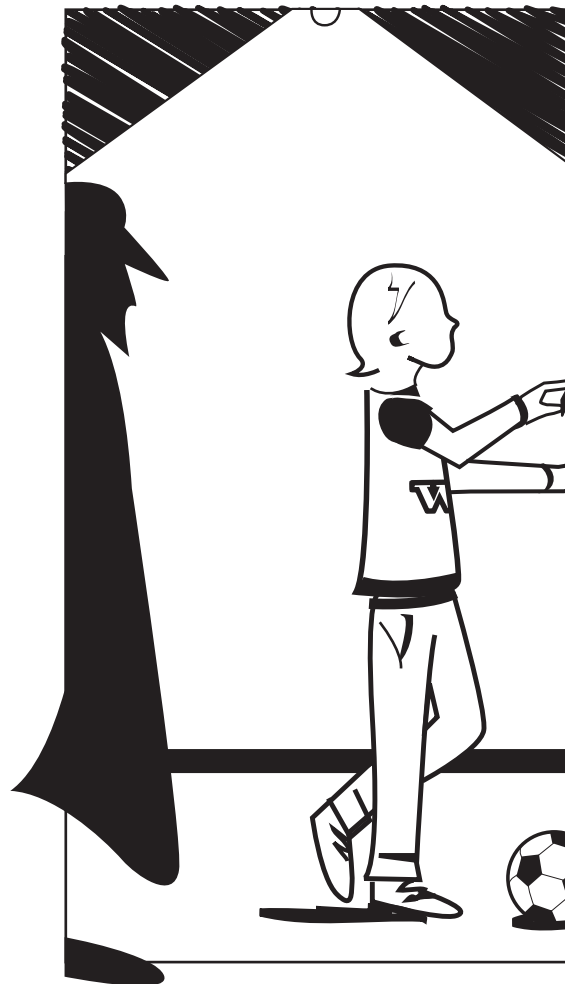


IT'S EASY TO GET CAUGHT UP IN THE SCAM SO I'VE LEARNT TO STEP BACK AND CREATE SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN ME AND MY THOUGHTS. I IMAGINE MYSELF AS A ROVING REPORTER EXPOSING OCD.

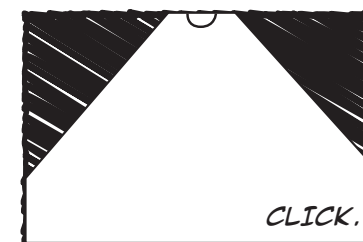


The BRAIN SCAM

OCD FIRST APPROACHED ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG AND DIDN'T KNOW ANY DIFFERENT...



LOOKING BACK I OFTEN DID LITTLE THINGS LIKE TURNING LIGHTS ON AND OFF. IT DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER MUCH BUT SATISFIED SOME UNIDENTIFIABLE URGE.



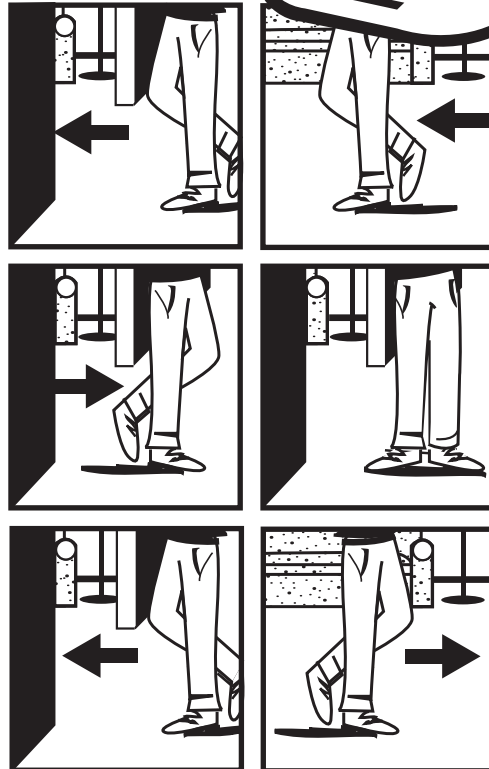
I HAD NO REASON TO STOP...



I WAS ABOUT 12 WHEN THE BEHAVIOUR BECAME APPARENT TO MY FAMILY.

THEY STARTED TO NOTICE ME DOING ODD THINGS LIKE WASHING MY HANDS ALL THE TIME AND WALKING IN AND OUT OF DOORWAYS OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

I REALISED SOME OF THE STUFF I WAS DOING WASN'T 'NORMAL' BUT IT DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER. AT FIRST IT WASN'T HURTING ANYONE...



ONE SCAM TRIED TO TRICK ME INTO THINKING THAT MY SOCKS WERE 'BAD'... AND THAT IF I CHOSE BAD SOCKS TO WEAR THEN SOMETHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN.

SOMETIMES I CHANGED MY SOCKS SEVERAL TIMES AS I WAS DRESSING, TRYING TO FIND THE 'GOOD' SOCKS.

WHAT A BRAIN SCAM!!! HOW CAN SOCKS BE 'GOOD' OR 'BAD'? HOW CAN THERE BE A CONNECTION BETWEEN MY SOCKS AND SOMETHING BAD HAPPENING?

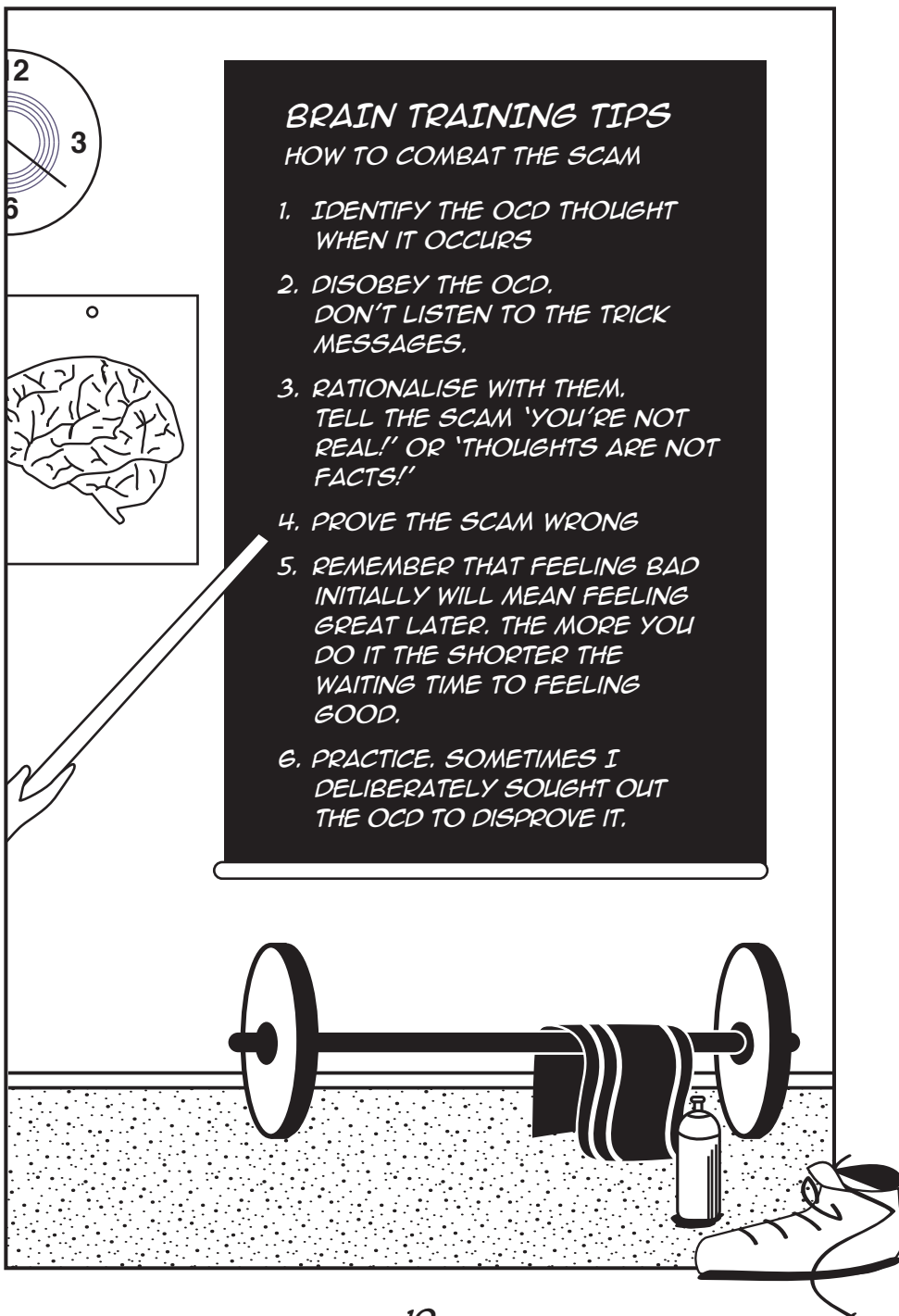
SO I TOOK ON THE BRAIN SCAM AND PUT ON ALL MY SOCKS, ONE BY ONE, AND SKIDDED AROUND THE HOUSE IN THEM LIKE TOM CRUISE IN 'RISKY BUSINESS'! I WAS WORRIED SOMETHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN BUT IT DIDN'T!

BRAIN TRAINING IS REALLY HARD AT FIRST BUT AFTER A FEW SUCCESSES I FELT STRONGER AND MORE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE CHALLENGE.



YOU'RE A BAD SOCK!





HELP!

I need help NOW!

THAT'S WHEN I AGREED TO GET HELP AND FIRST LEARNT ABOUT OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER, OR OCD.

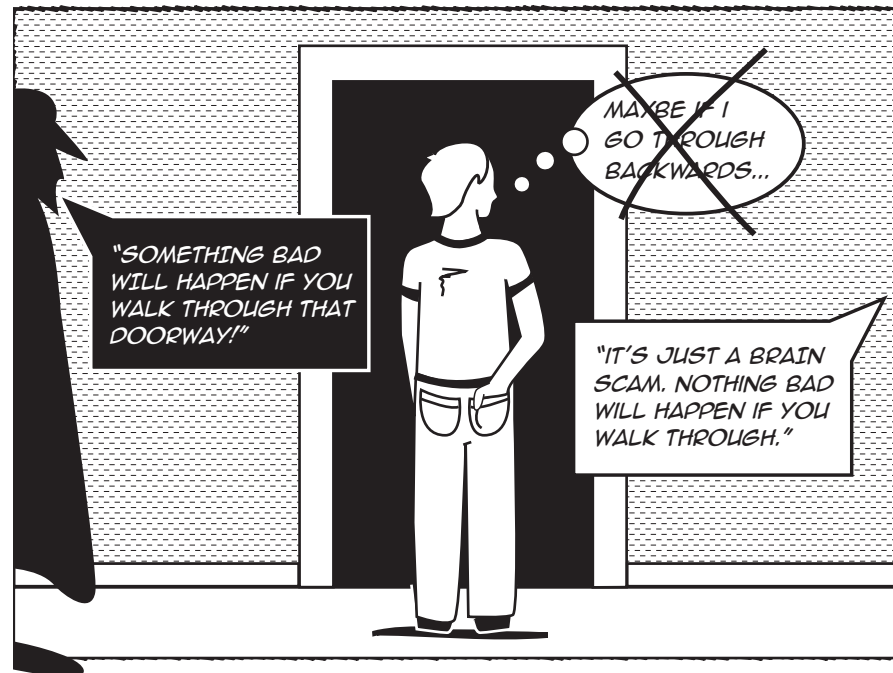
OCD

MY PARENTS TOOK ME TO OUR GP WHO REFERRED ME TO A SPECIALIST.

I THEN MET MY PSYCHOLOGIST WHO PROVIDED THERAPY AND MY PSYCHIATRIST WHO PRESCRIBED MEDICATION.

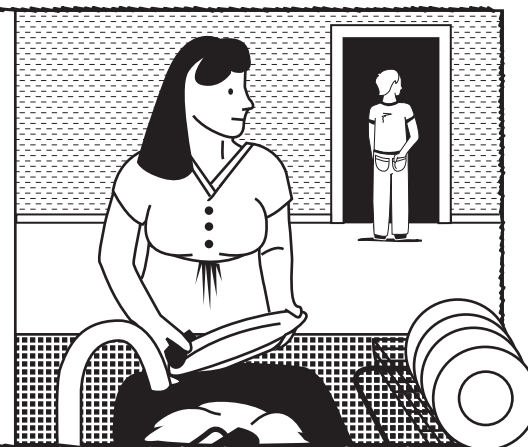
TOGETHER WITH MY FAMILY THEY FORMED MY SUPPORT TEAM AND WERE VITAL IN HELPING ME INVESTIGATE AND COMBAT WHAT I CAME TO KNOW AS 'THE BRAIN SCAM'.

WITH THE HELP OF MY THERAPIST I GRADUALLY LEARNT TO COMBAT THE SCAM BY PRACTICING SOME BRAIN TRAINING STEPS. THIS WAS A CHALLENGE AT FIRST, BECAUSE I HAD TO DEFY THE SCAM AND STOP MYSELF FROM DOING THE THINGS THAT HELPED TO KEEP MY STRESS DOWN.



MY PARENTS HELPED BY KEEPING THINGS CALM AT HOME, REDUCING THE FOCUS OF THE OCD AND BY JUST DOING NORMAL THINGS.

IT DIDN'T HELP IF THEY DREW ATTENTION TO MY ODD ACTIONS OR ENCOURAGED THEM.





THERAPY WAS STRANGE AT FIRST BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW MY THERAPIST BUT WAS EXPECTED TO TALK TO HER ABOUT PERSONAL THINGS AND ANSWER LOTS OF QUESTIONS. BUT THIS WAS JUST SO THAT SHE COULD GET TO KNOW ME BETTER AND FIND OUT HOW OCD WAS IMPACTING ON MY LIFE.



SOME DAYS I REALLY DIDN'T FEEL LIKE GOING...

MY THERAPIST ASSURED ME IT WAS NORMAL TO FEEL THIS WAY, BUT REMINDED ME THAT THE GOAL OF GOING TO THE SESSIONS WAS TO MAKE THINGS BETTER FOR ME, AND THE MORE I WORKED ON IT THE QUICKER THINGS WOULD START TO CHANGE AND IMPROVE.

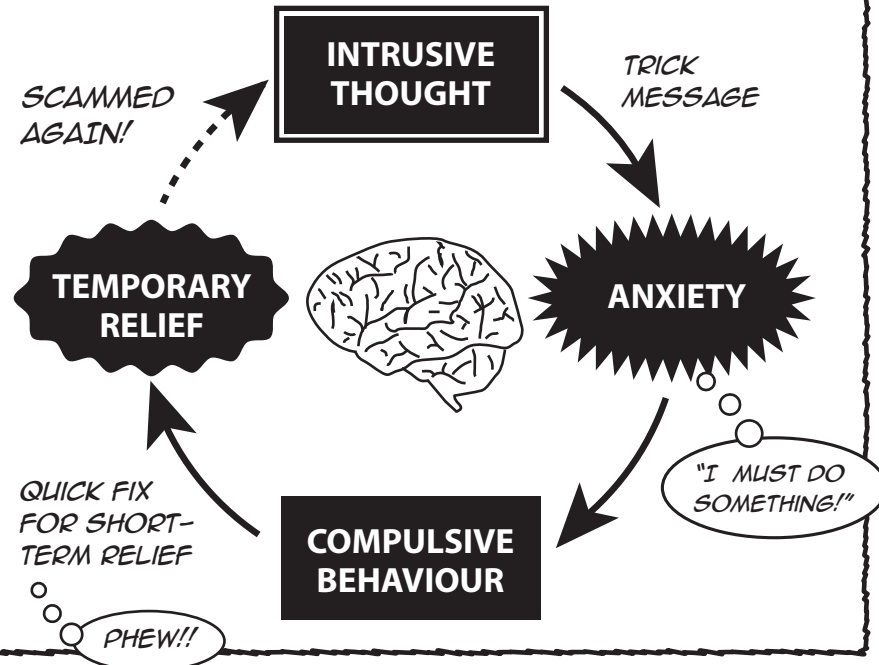
WE CAUGHT UP ONCE A WEEK AT FIRST, BUT AS TIME WENT ON I DIDN'T NEED TO COME IN AS OFTEN. I FOUND THAT AS I GOT TO KNOW HER AND TRUST HER I WAS ABLE TO LEARN A LOT OF NEW THINGS ABOUT THE BRAIN SCAM.

I LEARNT THAT OCD IS AN ANXIETY DISORDER. OCD CAN TRICK YOU BY PUTTING THOUGHTS IN YOUR HEAD THAT AREN'T TRUE AND THAT STRESS YOU OUT. THESE ARE CALLED OBSESSIONS. IT CAN MAKE YOU THINK THAT IF YOU DO SOMETHING TO COUNTERACT THE THOUGHT, LIKE A BEHAVIOUR, OR THINKING CERTAIN THOUGHTS, THEN THE STRESS WILL GO AWAY. THESE ARE CALLED COMPULSIONS.

THE PROBLEM WITH THE SCAM IS THAT THESE BEHAVIOURS AND THOUGHTS CAN TAKE UP **WAY** TOO MUCH TIME, AND GENERALLY ONLY WORK TO TAKE THE STRESS AWAY IN THE SHORT-TERM. AFTER A WHILE THE WORRYING THOUGHTS COME BACK AND THE CYCLE STARTS ALL OVER AGAIN.

I LEARNT THAT BRAIN SCAMS ARE NEVER EXACTLY THE SAME BUT THEY TEND TO OPERATE IN A SIMILAR WAY.

BRAIN SCAM MAP



I DISCOVERED THAT OCD IS A SNEAKY AND UNSCRUPULOUS CON ARTIST. IT HAD BEEN HANGING AROUND FOR YEARS BEFORE I RECOGNISED IT WAS SCAMMING ME.

