

OCD: The Lies We Believe

My uncensored experience struggling with OCD



By

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DEDICATION

To you, for not giving up.

Author's Note.

Why did I write this book and make it free? Well, it's because I was angry. On February 16th, I was searching for a book review, and the internet, being the internet, took me down a rabbit hole.

During this search, I came across a question on Quora where someone was talking about having blasphemous thoughts against God, thoughts they didn't want. They wanted to know if they had committed the unforgivable sin. That triggered me.

It triggered me because the same thing happened to me in 2016, and for over eight years, I struggled to keep intrusive thoughts out of my mind. But you know with OCD, it's a losing game trying to control them. (But I digress, that's for another part of the book.)

I got so angry because I hate, and I say this from the depth of my heart, seeing people suffer as I suffered. Maybe that's the defender in me; I don't know. But I felt so angry.

I thought, 'This useless OCD that made me so depressed in 2016, that made me so depressed I spent hours in bed staring at the wall because of these useless intrusive thoughts. 'This useless OCD that made me question myself, question my sanity, this same worthless, useless trash had the audacity to do the same thing to someone else?'

Gosh, I was so angry. I really wish I could tell that person they are okay, they are normal, and those thoughts are nothing but intrusive thoughts. I wish I could let them know they are not alone because OCD makes you feel like you're the only one in the world like that.

I wished I could talk to them, but the question was asked three years ago, and I doubt they'd even see my account or my answer. So, I decided to write this book. I'd been toying with the idea, but having just finished my first book, I wasn't looking to start a second immediately.

I was also handling two new projects, but I had to do this and make it free. I needed to let people know they are normal, they are not going mad, and they aren't the only ones going through this. Screw this bastard, OCD.

Introduction.

I think it was between May and June of 2016. That's when I first had the intrusive thought. I didn't know it was an intrusive thought at first; I just called it a negative thought. Because, of course, it was negative.

It's still very vivid. I was listening to the radio, and the presenter was talking about a young boy with mental issues who was moving around destitute, and how he had to track the boy down to give him some food. Then, just like that, an image, which my mind interpreted as an angel, though I'm not sure what an angel truly looks like, came into my mind. (For those who suffer from OCD, you understand. For those who don't, this is as far as I can go.)

The thought came in slow motion, and as soon as it did, I was disgusted. I was like, "Where from the pit of hell did that useless thing come from?" I shook it off, but little did I know, that was just the beginning.

I can't recall the next intrusive thoughts, but that day was the start. I will write my experiences in different categories and how OCD affected them.

This book is not here to replace medical or professional help. I want to give you hope that if I can at least have this OCD under control, it can happen for you too. I won't sit here and tell you that these intrusive thoughts don't come, nor will I lie and say I don't still fall into those rituals, but I can tell you that I am far better than I was eight years ago.

This book was written to be an easy read, and although I am a fiction writer, my friends, family, and, most importantly, God, whom I ask to forgive my sins over 20 times a day, know that nothing in this book is fictional.

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Chapter One.

All Things Spiritual.

During those years, I hated praying. Don't get me wrong, I prayed every day and spent time with God, but I hated it. Especially prayer, and even worse, the daily prayers, like thanksgiving and preservation.

As a Christian, I love my relationship with Jesus. Anyone who knows me will be shocked to read that I disliked praying because I am a very prayerful woman. So how could I continue praying even though I hated it? Why did I hate it?

I prayed every day because I knew it was important. No matter how much I didn't want to, I knew I had to. But I didn't enjoy it.

When I prayed, I would have intrusive thoughts. These thoughts came out of nowhere, I don't even know how to explain it. I'd be praying, and suddenly, an intrusive thought would pop up, contradicting what I was praying about.

For example, if I'm thanking God for life, the next thought might be, "God just wants you to thank Him. You could be

doing something else. Is this even necessary?” This thought feels stupid and foreign because I’m the one who decided to pray. God didn’t say, “Come and thank Me.” I made the choice. So why would such a thought even come?

Then, immediately, another thought follows: “You’re so ungrateful after all God has done.” All of this happens while I’m trying to pray. Next, a third thought tells me that I’ve ruined every prayer. No matter how hard I try, I can’t continue, so I restart.

When I get back to thanking God, the point where the intrusive thought first appeared, it’s a trigger. Immediately, more intrusive thoughts come, and the cycle continues. Sometimes, a 10-minute prayer takes close to 45 minutes because I keep restarting to make it “perfect” so God can hear me.

If you don’t suffer from OCD, this might sound ridiculous. But trust me, we believe those thoughts and take them as gospel. That’s why they have such control. The more we try to suppress them, the louder they get.

I remember praying over my food. A simple prayer like, “Jesus, thank You for this food. I bless it in Jesus’ name,”

shouldn't take more than 15 seconds. But it sometimes took me 5 minutes.

I vividly remember one day when I was eating rice. I was so frustrated with repeating my prayers that I finally said it once and started eating. As I was chewing, the thought came: "You better pray properly so God will answer it." With food in my mouth, trying not to swallow, I prayed again from the beginning, and repeated it two or three times until it felt "perfect." Only then could I continue eating.

What a chaotic life. It became a race between me and the intrusive thoughts. I rushed through my prayers so quickly it seemed like a speed contest. I used this tactic for short prayers because I didn't want to repeat them.

For example, when thanking God for my food, I prayed so fast the intrusive thoughts didn't have a chance to interrupt. Praise and worship was worse. In 2017, my aunt, bless her soul, wanted us to do praise and worship every day for 15 minutes for something specific. After a few days, I struggled.

For example, one day, I was singing, "Eternal life, eternal life, I want to live eternal life. God, save my soul." "Live"

sounds like “leave,” and a stupid thought popped into my mind: “Oh, so you want to leave eternal life?” Of course, I meant “live,” but because it sounds like “leave,” my mind overanalyzed. I thought, “You better say something else so it doesn’t sound like you’re saying you want to leave eternal life.”

So I avoided using the word, live, and used another word in place of it in order to avoid triggering negative thoughts. I know what I’m saying, and God knows what’s in my heart, so why should a useless thought dictate my words? That’s just one example. Imagine all these thoughts while trying to stay focused during worship. It was exhausting.

I couldn’t tell my aunt I dreaded it. We did it every day for two years, and when it stopped, I was grateful. During those two years, I often prayed for the worship sessions to end because I felt miserable afterward due to the negative thoughts triggered by the songs.

One time, when my sister was singing, I asked her to lower her voice. I really wanted to say, “Shut up!” because her singing triggered those thoughts, and I was distressed. My sister asked why I didn’t like her singing gospel songs, but I

didn't know how to explain that her singing brought on those thoughts.

Remember, I'm a spiritual person, so it was strange that I would ask someone to sing quietly.

I truly, desperately wanted to sing in my mind like a normal person, but that was impossible because every time I tried, I regretted it. So, I stopped singing mentally. Thankfully, this didn't affect my ability to listen to preaching, which I did almost every day. However, I could only enjoy it as long as the Holy Spirit wasn't mentioned.

Why? If you're a Christian, you likely know about the unforgivable sin, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. I've never spoken negatively about the Holy Spirit. In fact, I'm so terrified of committing this sin that instead of saying, "The Holy Spirit told me something," I'd say, "God told me," or "I felt I should do this." I would never claim the Holy Spirit said something because I didn't want to risk it. I was that careful.

But then, intrusive thoughts about the Holy Spirit started, and I felt like dying. I felt like my spiritual life was over. I had to call a spiritual friend to ask what constituted blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. I always skipped that part

in the Bible because I didn't want to be triggered. I even considered contacting a prayer team of Benny Hinn just to be sure.

The same useless, intrusive thoughts that said something negative about God were now telling me I had sinned against the Holy Spirit. This made me scared, nervous, distressed, and sometimes even brought me to tears.

That made me dislike the Holy Spirit somewhat because the same thoughts told me that if there were no unforgivable sin, I wouldn't be suffering. In a way, I linked my suffering to the Holy Spirit. Do you understand? I felt like God was being unfair with that rule. I thought, God knows I hate these thoughts, but I still felt responsible.

I told God how much I respected the Holy Spirit and how much I didn't want to sin against Him. I even prayed, Jesus, You said You died for everybody, but I think You died for everybody except me. If You knew this would happen, why have that law?

Hearing the Holy Spirit's name, in a sermon or the Bible, immediately triggered those thoughts, leaving me distressed and angry. But thank God, the Holy Spirit didn't

leave me. God showed me I hadn't sinned against Him and that He loved me. God kept me in a relationship with Him.

After reading other people's experiences online, I realized something: OCD thrives on fear and love. Intrusive thoughts attack what you're most afraid of. I've always wondered where these thoughts come from. It's strange. Something you would never think about just pops into your mind as if it's been living there.

Because of my fear about the Holy Spirit, those thoughts targeted Him. Interestingly, they rarely came against Jesus or God the Father. Why? Subconsciously, I knew God and Jesus could always forgive you, but the sin against the Holy Spirit couldn't be. Deep down, I knew these thoughts were lies. As someone said, If you're scared you've blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, you haven't.

It's complicated, but I understood one thing: I hadn't done it. Even as I write this, there's that thought: Are you sure this isn't blasphemy? Don't be stupid. Useless thoughts! I'm writing what happened.

Chapter Two.

Diagnosis.

Before I continue sharing my struggles with OCD, I'd like to talk about how I discovered it was OCD. Six years after the first intrusive thought, I was following an online prayer meeting in July 2022. During the meeting, a girl gave testimony about her struggle with a mental health issue. I vividly remember her saying she would wash one plate for minutes, and her mom would have to pry it from her hands.

She also mentioned re-entering a room and stepping within the squares of the tiled floor when walking. Then she said God had delivered her from OCD. I had heard of OCD but never thought much about it. But as she spoke, it struck me: maybe this was what I was suffering from, not a spiritual issue.

Before, I had always assumed it was a spiritual problem, mainly because the intrusive thoughts were often against my faith. Yes, other negative thoughts occurred, but it started with those thoughts, so I attributed it to a spiritual battle. It never crossed my mind that it could be a mental health issue. After this realization, I reached out to a doctor and received my diagnosis.

I still prayed for freedom because I didn't have medical help nearby. Thinking about it now, it's strange, but that lady was the first person I ever heard talk about OCD. I would love to say that after I found out what it was, I researched and took practical steps. But I did no such thing.

However, knowing what it was helped because I could identify certain behaviors as compulsive. For example, I had a gown I would always hang on a particular hanger. Whenever I took it off that hanger, I wouldn't feel at ease until I put it back. I didn't think much of this at the time, but after I learned I had OCD, I realized this was a compulsive behavior. One day in frustration, I took the gown off the hanger and purposely left it on a different one, telling myself, "I don't care." And guess what? I never felt uneasy about it again, at least not in the same way.

I will never stop thanking God for the clarity to understand some patterns in my life. I began to notice that whenever I did things in a particular order, I found it distressing to do the same thing differently. So, I started avoiding patterns.

I'm so organized that if you move my stuff, I'll know, no matter how sneaky you are. This good quality is the perfect engine for OCD. Knowing this, I've tried to change my response. For example, if something isn't where I put it, whether I moved it or a family member did, I try not to make a big deal out of it or immediately return it.

Even today, when I move something that's been in a spot for a while, I still feel that urge to put it back. But the difference is, the feeling no longer overwhelms me. It's no longer a controlling force.

Chapter Three.

Tough Times.

I remember one evening lying near my mom when she asked, “Who are you talking to?” This wasn’t the first time. My siblings had also noticed it. I thought I was quiet when I mumbled, but I wasn’t. Even if I believed I was silent, people could see my lips moving.

Now, you might wonder what I was saying. Well, I was rebuking the negative thoughts. For example, if an intrusive thought came, I would say aloud, “That is not true,” in response. But since no one could hear what I was hearing, they just saw me moving my lips or heard me say, “That is not true,” and thought something was wrong.

When people around me noticed, I had to either mumble or leave the room to say what I needed to. You can’t suppress a thought with another thought, which is why I used words to counteract them. But this only made them stronger.

One day, I was so agitated that I screamed. It was so loud that someone on the street yelled, “Who is that?” At one

point, I started closing my eyes and twisting my neck to stop focusing on the thoughts. This worked, but eventually, I had to be careful because it became a subconscious reaction.

The way I would whip my head, imagine being slapped four times harder, that's how forceful it was. This might sound extreme, but I had to find coping mechanisms.

I can't tell you how many times I cried and prayed about this. It was so bad. You might wonder why I always bring God into everything I'm saying about OCD. Well, it's because I can see His hand in every step. I don't know where I'd be without His help.

One particularly bad day, I felt so down and depressed because of the intrusive thoughts that I went to bed, lay facing the wall, and stayed there for hours. I only ate once that day. I was so overwhelmed and sad.

Even after my 2022 diagnosis, when I had started having significant improvement, something happened in 2023. I can't remember the exact month, but it was early in the year. The intrusive thoughts became worse than ever, so bad that my heart was always racing. It felt like I was constantly in fight-or-flight mode. All six years combined couldn't

compare to that single month. The distress I went through because of OCD, especially the intrusive thoughts, was worse than the previous six years.

I'm normally someone who keeps my problems to myself, but this was so overwhelming I had to confide in a friend. They told me they also struggled with OCD. They said it usually happened when they prayed, intrusive thoughts would tell them their prayer wasn't perfect enough. They shared that they would speak against the thought and continue praying, but that was the extent of their experience. It wasn't as severe as mine.

They say misery loves company, and I was relieved to know someone understood.

One Friday, my mom came into my room and started reading the Bible to me. She read the passage where the king was supposed to die, but the prophet said he would be okay in three days. I don't think my mom knew why she read that, and I didn't either, until the following Monday. That was when I became free from those intrusive thoughts. It has never been that bad again.

Chapter Four.

Personal Hygiene.

Sometimes I wonder where my personal hygiene ends and OCD begins. Even now, I don't always know the difference. However, I recognize some things that are clearly OCD. For example, I only allowed myself to wash my sheets and pillowcases. I didn't let anyone else, not even laundry professionals. I believed they wouldn't do it as well.

After God delivered me from OCD, and I still say God because no medical help was available, I began to take steps forward. The first breakthrough was giving my bedsheets to laundry people. However, I still washed my pillowcases myself.

As the months went by, I let go more. I started giving both my sheets and pillowcases to laundry people. Now that we have a washing machine, I simply hand them over to my siblings. I don't even care where the bedsheet is hung. I trust that other people also have good hygiene and that I'm not the only neat person.

Some things I still don't know if they're OCD or just hygiene. For example, when I come home, I can't sit on my bed with outside clothes. I feel like I might be bringing dirt onto the bed. So, I immediately strip and shower.

Back then, if I wore trousers, I had to brush them before hanging them. Now, I'm content with just taking them off. Sometimes, I'm tempted to wash my jeans immediately, but I've learned that's not good.

I normally twist my hair myself, and my siblings also help. I always ask them to wash their hands before braiding. And if they step away, I ask them to rewash or use sanitizer, before they continue braiding my hair. I don't know if this is OCD or hygiene, but I'm getting better, so I'll call it a right habit.

I also wash my combs, which I think is just hygiene.

Whenever I use a brush for my edges, I wash it afterward. I don't leave it dirty.

Overall, I think I'm improving. That's why I say sometimes I don't know where hygiene ends and OCD begins. But at least I'm getting better.

Chapter Five.

Extra Annoyances.

The negative thoughts, intrusive thoughts, weren't just against my faith. They were against myself, people, things, everything and everyone. No one was spared. This made me angry. I don't mean I had a bad temper, but I was easily annoyed. Something trivial would irritate me, and I would have to entertain negative thoughts to feel "normal." I still don't fully understand it.

Many times, I thought back to who I was before OCD and reminded myself I wasn't this person. I wasn't someone annoyed by trivial things. Even if I got angry, I didn't have negative thoughts. So, what was going on? It took nine years to understand that those intrusive thoughts should be ignored. They're not from me. This isn't who I used to be, and I refuse to believe any negative thought defines me.

Intrusive thoughts try to twist your mind and make you believe they're yours. But they're not. Someone said thoughts are like birds, they can land anywhere. The problem is allowing them to stay. So, even when those thoughts come, the best way to handle them is to ignore them. Yes,

it's difficult. But even if you notice them, you have to immediately shift your focus. A person without OCD can do this right away, but for someone with OCD, it might take a few seconds.

Don't even get me started on sleep. At one point, OCD tried to ruin it. I'm usually a deep sleeper. But if I was trying to sleep, with a quiet, calm mind, no distractions, that's when intrusive thoughts would show up. I preferred to just be "knocked out" instead of lying down and trying to sleep naturally. If I did the latter, those thoughts would come, causing stress and making me think about them, and then the cycle would continue. Some nights, I'd realize I hadn't even been sleeping. Thankfully, that's not the case anymore.

Anything I heard back then would turn into negative thoughts. If I focused on something, the OCD would twist it into a negative thought. As I type this, I'm angry at how OCD makes life difficult. My hope is that anyone reading this gets the help they deserve and breaks free from that useless monster. I wish I had a magic wand to free everyone suffering from OCD.

Sometimes, the intrusive thoughts creep into everything I do. Sometimes, I couldn't even drink water. I couldn't place

my hands on any part of my body. Even showering was frustrating, if I did anything, there's a negative thought waiting. The worst part is believing those thoughts were my own.

I remember having words ready in my mind in case any negative thoughts came up. For example, when I suspected one, I'd say, "Gold is very beautiful," in my head. That way, whatever negative thought tried to intrude, the phrase "gold is very beautiful" would act as a buffer. It helped me convince myself the negative thought had nothing to do with me. I don't know if this makes sense, but it worked. Sometimes, something would happen, and my mind would convince me it happened because of the intrusive thoughts. That made me even more afraid of them, trapping me in multiple cycles.

Sometimes, the intrusive thoughts would suggest that I do something to avoid something negative from happening. It could be anything from praying to saying a particular phrase or like changing my position. If I refuse to do those things, the intrusive thought will start bringing out images of the worst case scenarios, which will make me so scared thereby leading to repetitive rituals.

Conclusion.

This is my personal experience, and I thank God that I am better at handling intrusive thoughts than I was a couple of years ago. Of course, I prayed, and I still pray, for total freedom from them and those overwhelming feelings that come up suddenly. Those feelings just come up for me to have negative thoughts, I don't understand it. My mind is better now, and I will forever thank God.

I shared this story so you don't give up. This is a simple book to let you know you are not alone. If you believe in Jesus, continue praying to Him about this, but also seek professional help. Please know those intrusive thoughts are not yours. I shared this to let you know that if I can have them, and we don't know each other, then they are not yours. They just came from who-knows-where, and you should ignore them. Trust me, the more you ignore them, the less power they have.

I couldn't write every single experience I had, but I tried to write down some of them at least. Remember, this is years of struggling with OCD, so I know there are a million things I forgot. I know the things I have shared in this book

are truly bizarre for those who haven't experienced OCD, but I don't care because if even one person gets help by reading this, I have achieved something.

This book is free, so please share it with anyone going through this. Thanks for reading. I hope you have a more peaceful mind and life. Love you.