"Yasmina"

Behavioral Conceptualization and Treatment Plan

Jonathan Abramowitz, PhD University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Assessment of OCD Symptoms

- Y-BOCS, DOCS
- Functional assessment
 - External triggers
 - Internal triggers (thoughts, images, doubts, physiological)
 - Avoidance & rituals
 - Cognitive links between triggers and rituals/avoidance

Conceptualization

- Obsessional triggers and uncertainty give rise to excessive fear/anxiety
- Avoidance and rituals reduce distress in the short-term...
- But they maintain obsessional fear in the long run by preventing the natural extinction of anxiety and the correction of beliefs such as "I can't tolerate anxiety/uncertainty"

Treatment Plan

- Education and treatment planning
- Exposure and response prevention
 - Hierarchy based on Yasmina's feared situations
 - Goal: To extinguish conditioned pathological fear by forming new nonthreat associations that inhibit prior fear learning in multiple contexts
 - Bring partner on board

Possible Exposure Hierarchy Items

- Walk through dog park
- Step in dog poop
- Toilet paper with own bowel
- Own underwear
- Floors with brown stains
- Intercourse with Joe

How Does ERP Work?

- Yasmina learns...
 - Feared consequences less likely
 - Anxiety & uncertainty are tolerable and don't have to get in the way of life
 - Anxiety doesn't even stay forever (and even if it did...)
 - I don't need rituals because I can "get through" obsessional fear

Exposure and Response Prevention is...

the best form of cognitive therapy

the ultimate form of acceptance