

**B1: Common unhelpful thoughts in OCD****OVERESTIMATION**

We tend to overinflate the chances of negative things happening; for example, we might believe that the chance of our family being contaminated by asbestos after a bushfire is about 60 per cent. This interpretation would cause a great deal of anxiety. However, based on fact, this is an overestimation of the actual probability or risk of this happening. When all of the variables are considered, the risk would be quite low.

**OVER-RESPONSIBILITY**

We tend to take on more responsibility than we need for things that might go wrong; for example, we may feel 100 per cent responsible if our mother were to get sick. We may believe that we need to ring and check her well-being every day, and if we get a worrying thought about her we may feel compelled to replace that thought with a positive one, or perhaps repeat a small prayer for her each time we have an intrusive thought about her being unwell.

Believing that you are 100 per cent responsible creates a great deal of distress. Based on reality, there are usually many other variables or factors involved in negative things happening. In this example, our mother has the greatest responsibility for her own well-being.

**MAGICAL THINKING**

We begin to believe that negative events can occur simply as a result of a negative thought or an unlucky number; for example, we might believe that we are an unlucky person and we have a bad influence on others simply by having a negative thought about someone. We might have an intrusive thought of one of our friends being in an accident, and then magically believe that the thought might somehow create that reality.

**B1: Common unhelpful thoughts in OCD (continued)**

Thoughts on their own cannot cause actual events to occur. If we think as hard as we can about the roof caving in, it will not increase the chances of this happening. Despite superstitious beliefs that exist around the world, there is no evidence that certain numbers cause bad things to happen.

**PERFECTIONISM**

We believe that unless we do something perfectly, something bad will happen. People prone to perfectionism can be very self-critical if they believe they haven't completed a task perfectly. They can then begin to feel responsible if something went wrong as a result of their failure to do something perfectly. For example, I didn't complete perfect checking ritual of the locks and someone broke in, therefore I am 100 per cent responsible.