

# STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ME

Here is a list of helpful strategies instead of engaging in the behaviour/compulsion.

\*\*Remember that we're not trying to escape discomfort, but instead working to support ourselves by staying with it.

## Urge-Surfing Skills

Let the urge rise, peak, and fall like a wave:

- "I can ride this."
- "This is discomfort, not danger."
- "It will pass."

## Sensory-Grounding Tools

Helpful for when OCD is mixed with tics or sensory tension:

- Press palms together lightly
- Grip chair armrests
- Plant feet on ground
- Slow breathing (inhale 4, exhale 6)
- Hold a fidget with no rituals attached

## Cognitive Defusion Statements

Use during exposure:

- "I'm having the thought that..."
- "My brain is sending a false alarm."
- "This urge is loud, but I don't have to obey it."
- "I'm not going to let OCD bully me"
- "I can get through this."

## Values Reminders

Helps build and maintain motivation for ERP:

- "I'm doing this to get more independence."
- "I want to feel braver and freer."
- "This helps me take back my time."

## Behavioural Alternatives (NOT Safety Behaviours)

These give the body something neutral to do:

- Slow breathing
- Stretching the hands or arms
- Brief posture shift
- Looking around the room and naming objects
- Saying silently, "Let it be there."

## For When We Need Something to 'Do'

- Hold still for 10 seconds before doing anything
- Sit on hands
- Let the urge rise without moving
- Focus on one point in the room
- Name 3 colours they see
- Imagine the urge shrinking by 1% each second