A silhouette of a person kneeling in prayer against a sunset sky. The person is in the center, with their head bowed and hands clasped. The background is a soft, hazy sky with warm colors from the setting sun, and some grass is visible at the bottom.

# **Embracing Faith, Overcoming OCD: Using Doctrine, CBT, and ACT to Treat Scrupulosity**

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# Introduction

- Professor of MFT at Fresno State
- Associate Director of Fresno Family Counseling Center
- Therapist at Roubicek & Thacker (Previously with LDS Family Services)
- Author of
  - *Why Repentance Matters* (2018; Finegold Creek Press)
  - *Intimacy, Identity, and Ice Cream* (2016; Cedar Fort)
  - *Scrupulosity: Practical Treatment Considerations Drawn from Clinical and Ecclesiastical Experiences with Latter-day Saint Persons Struggling with Religiously-oriented Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*, (2014; *Issues in Religion and Psychotherapy*)
  - Two other books about Adoption and many academic journal articles about adoption and play therapy
- Married, Father of Six, Grandfather of One
- Previous Bishop of the Yosemite Ward, Fresno West Stake

# Summary of Model

- Caveat: Experimental Nature
- Joining – Establish “Religious Authority”/Knowledge
- Discussions of Religious Concerns
- Reframe Ideas about God towards Less Legalistic and More Empathic
- Embrace a “Developmental/Gospel of Growth” Approach Rather than one of Judgment
- Engage in ACT and CBT Once Client is More Open

# Eight Steps

1. Joining/Building a Relationship of Trust
2. Assessment - Including the Penn Inventory of Scrupulosity (PIOS)
3. Ecclesiastical Consultation
4. Diagnosis (Including Client Acceptance of the Diagnosis) and Treatment Plan
5. Medication Evaluation Referral
6. Spiritual Doctrine Review/Reframes
7. Bibliotherapy—Church/Mormon publications; Ciarrocchi (1995) *The Doubting Disease*; and Schwartz (1996) *Brain Lock* among Others
8. ACT/CBT

# Samples of Religious Discussions

- See handout



# ACT and CBT

- Moral Thought-Action Fusion (TAF) Dilemma
  - See ACT Handout
- CBT - Cognitive Reframing
  - Seligman's "Disputation"/Cognitive Distortion work
  - Schwartz – Relabel, Reframe, Refocus, Revalue
  - For Younger Children – RIDE
- Beginning to Look at "God-Attachment" Issues
  - E.g. Paul Vitz *Faith of the Fatherless*; Clinton & Straub *God Attachment*

# Case Examples

- Young Man Pre-Mission Evaluation at LDS Family Services (Moderate Scrupulosity)
  - Repetitive Prayers and Alma's Prayer in Alma 31
  - Concern about Lust because He was Attracted to a Co-worker
  - With Medication and Continuing Therapy He Successfully Completed a Stateside Mission (I also Treated his Older Brother Who Served a Mission after Tx and their mother)

# Case Examples

- Young Woman College Age (Severe Scrupulosity)
  - Repetitive Prayers, Going into Public Restroom Stalls to Kneel in Prayer with her Pants off to better “Feel the Spirit”
  - Discomfort with Even Disney Cartoon Kissing for Fears of Lust
  - Intensive Two-Week Treatment and then Coordination with on-going Treatment Back Home

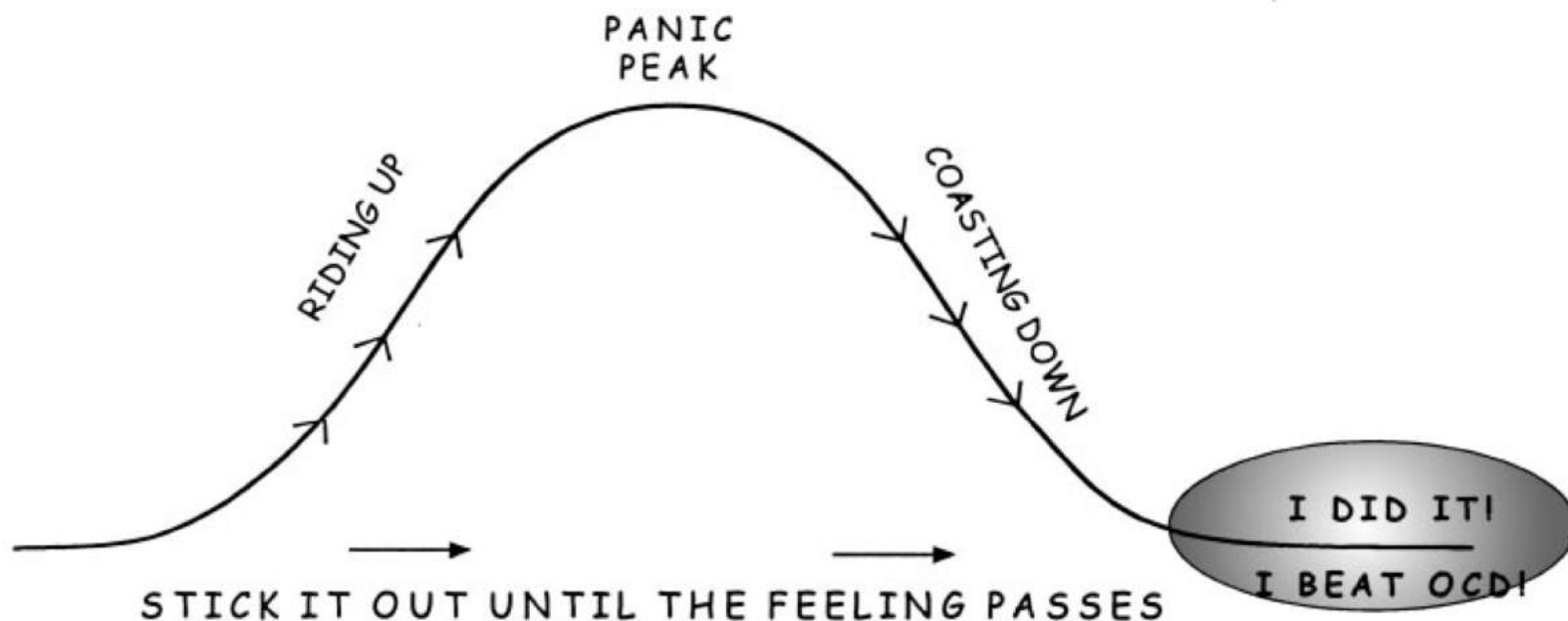


# Case Examples

- Five Year-old Girl with OCD
  - Fears about Attending Primary (Sharing Time)
  - Looking Into Garbage Cans
  - Washing Hands
  - Used RIDE, Puppets, “OCD Monster” along with Gospel Ideas about God at a Young Child’s Level.
  - Additionally, Doing Parenting Psycho-education
  - Remarkable Improvement in Matter of Weeks (Seen Every Other Week)

# Aureen Wagner, 2002: RIDE Up & Down the Worry Hill

RIDE: UP AND DOWN THE WORRY HILL



# RIDE

- R: Rename the thought. That's OCD talking, not me.
- I: Insist that YOU are in charge! I'm in charge. I choose not to believe OCD.
- D: Defy OCD. I will ride up the Worry Hill and stick it out until I can coast down.
- E: Enjoy your success, reward yourself. I did it! I beat OCD. I can do it again.

# Questions and Contact Information

- Conclusion/Q&A

## Contact Info:

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