

Why is today different?

By Josephine McPhaul

characters from obsessed by Allison Britz

My name is Allison Britz and I have OCD. I have been receiving treatment from Dr. Nelson to help me get better. Right now, I can feel her words burning in the back of my mind. "You will probably always have some level of OCD thoughts. Some days it will be worse than others. It will ebb and flow. And you'll learn to control it better. But OCD tends to be for life." It pains me to say it, but today is one of the bad days.

Ever since then I have created a system that I know will challenge me, but help me remain semi-sane at the same time. It is like the same day on repeat, yet every day I wake up, my brain filled with positive and motivational thoughts, although, today I feel different. I can feel all the negativity I push to the back of my brain somehow fighting its way forward.

I walk down my stairs in frustration. I rush outside the door, not wanting to hear the regular optimistic outlook that stumbles out of my sleepy mom's mouth every morning. My mind begins bubbling with disappointment in myself because I promised that a bad day wouldn't come unless I allowed it to.

I feel the itch of something bad coming on as I drive to my first class. It is a new trial my school district is testing called "off-campus learning". I tried out the class hoping the change of scenery would test me and my limitations. It definitely does that. I get to the class and sit down on the grass that I am not so afraid of anymore.

The itching sensation starts tingling my neck and crawling slowly down my spine. I immediately stand up, determined to find what is bothering me so much. I can feel everyone's gaze slowly drift up to me when I see my friend Jenny spring up, clearly worried about me. The sting of complete embarrassment attacks my eyes as I slowly back up and sprint to my car. I

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whimper quietly before the tears start cascading down my face. I look up in my rearview mirror after my meltdown and immediately notice what is messing me up so much. My hair.

Absolutely nothing is different about it, but today I completely hate it. The way it shines in the mirror, the blonde color, completely blinding in the sunshine. I slowly get out of my car, making my way to the teacher, explaining the situation, grabbing my stuff, and rushing back to my car. I reach over to the passenger's seat and grab my pencil pack. I rummage through it until I find the one thing my mom doesn't know I have in it, scissors. I pick them up and grab a chunk of my hair and squeeze my eyes shut.

Snip!

I then hear a knock on my car window. I ease my eyes open and notice Jenny standing there with her jaw almost reaching the floor.

She manages to stumble out, "What happened?"

I put the car in reverse.

"I'm so sorry!", I scream before speeding off.

I know Jenny is one of the only people there for me, but today I just couldn't sit there and pretend to be ok. Even when I wasn't getting help from Dr.Nelson I never felt the compulsive urge to cut my hair. As I am driving home, I felt the all too familiar grumble in my stomach, longing for something to eat. Even the thought of food right now makes me want to throw up, but I can see the complete look of sadness on Dr.Nelson's face if I go into my session without the proper eating styles I have worked on for so long.

I walk in my house, thankfully no one is home to criticize me on leaving class. I head straight to the kitchen in search of something edible that does not make me want to vomit. I take

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one look and my eyes are attracted to the one thing I haven't been able to eat since being diagnosed. A chocolate chip cookie. I can feel it glaring at me with its evil eyes. I dash to the sink, holding my chunks of uneven hair as I hurl the nonexistent contents of my stomach into it. I drop to the floor in pain and defeat. I thought I was past all of this. I've worked so hard.

Why is today so different?