



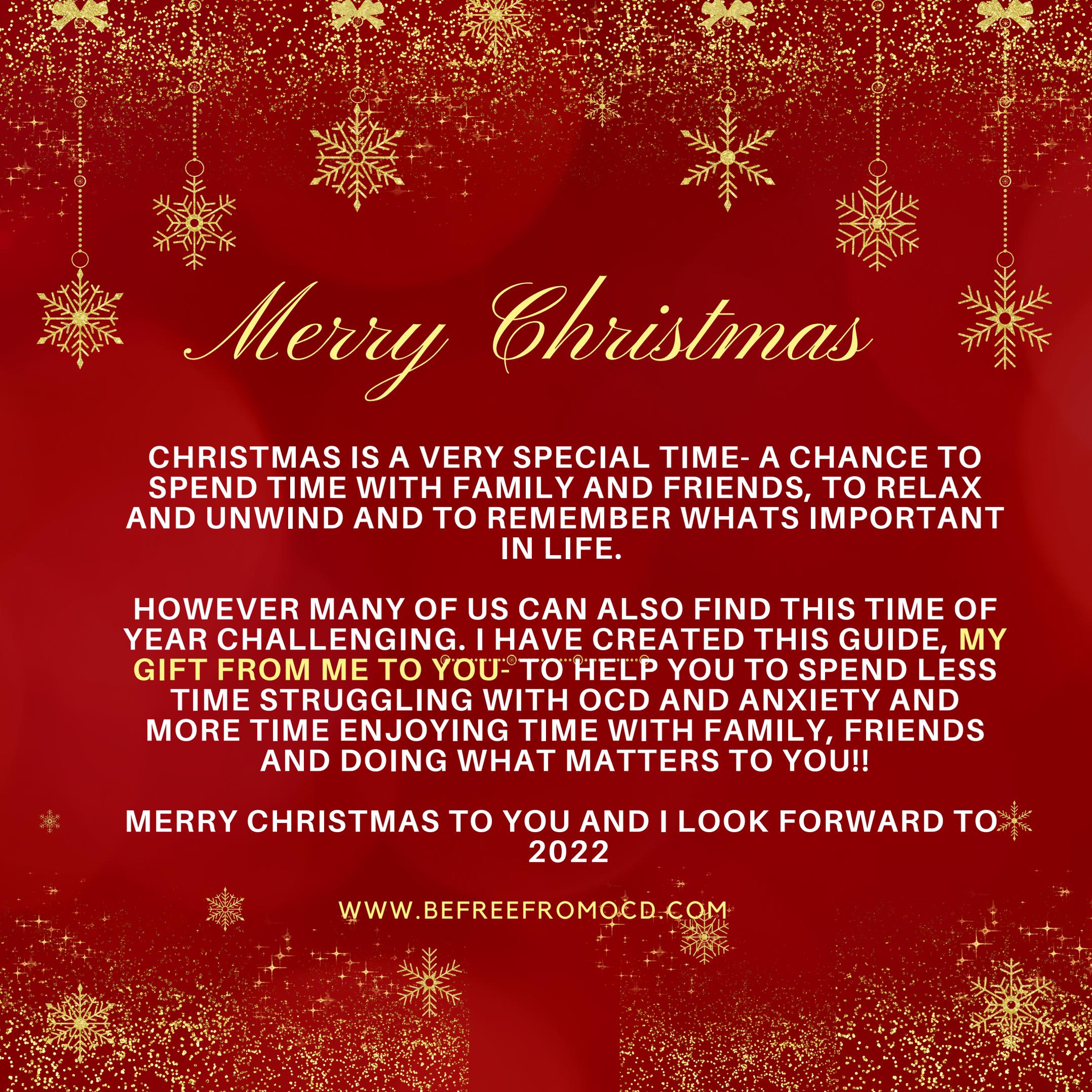
'Tis the season to be Jolly'

My present from me to you

A guide to managing
your OCD & anxiety
during the Christmas
period



www.befreefromocd.com



Merry Christmas

CHRISTMAS IS A VERY SPECIAL TIME- A CHANCE TO SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS, TO RELAX AND UNWIND AND TO REMEMBER WHATS IMPORTANT IN LIFE.

HOWEVER MANY OF US CAN ALSO FIND THIS TIME OF YEAR CHALLENGING. I HAVE CREATED THIS GUIDE, **MY GIFT FROM ME TO YOU- TO HELP YOU TO SPEND LESS TIME STRUGGLING WITH OCD AND ANXIETY AND MORE TIME ENJOYING TIME WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND DOING WHAT MATTERS TO YOU!!**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU AND I LOOK FORWARD TO
2022**

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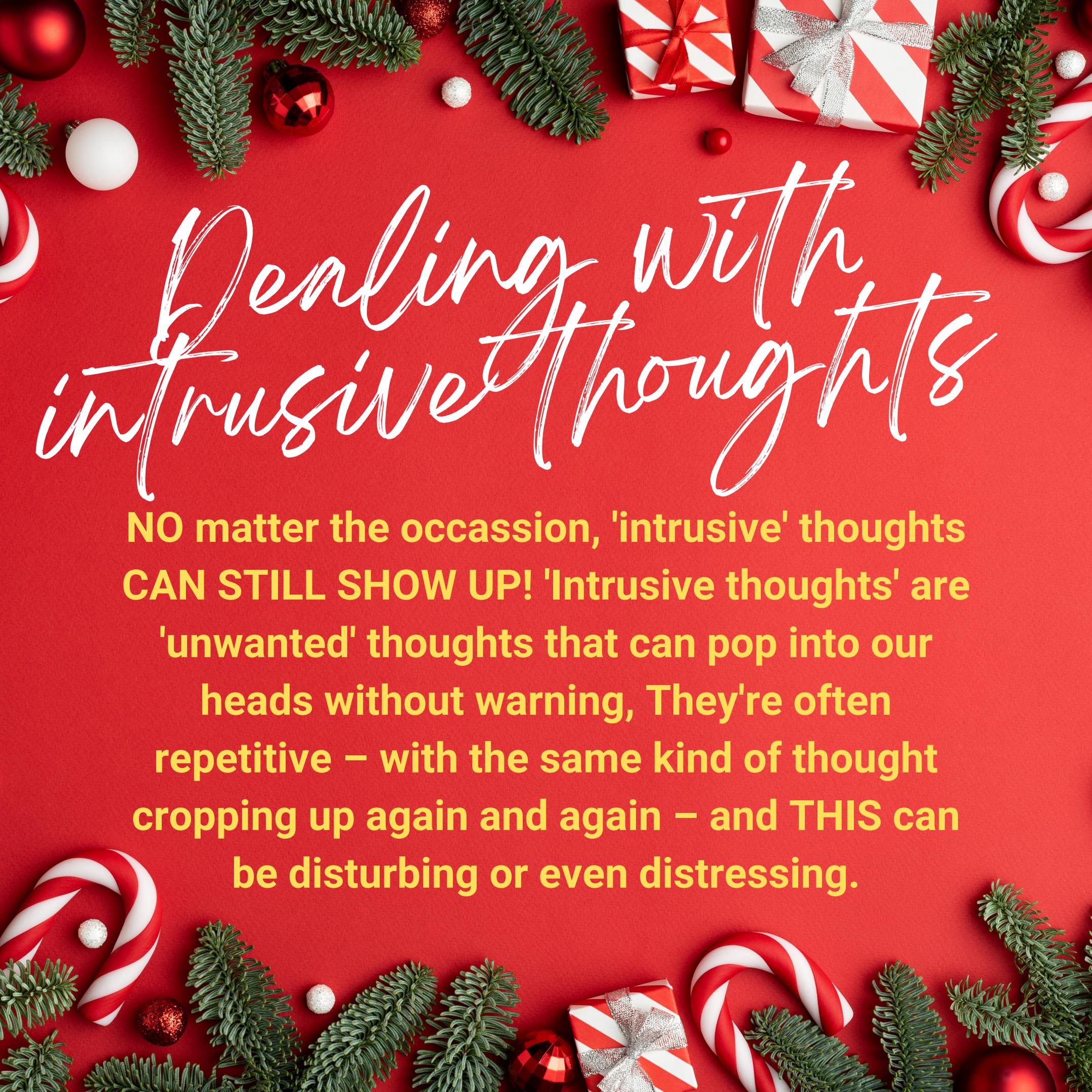
Table of Contents

Dealing with intrusive thoughts ★

Master Your Attention ★

This too shall pass ★

Website & further resources ★



Dealing with intrusive thoughts

NO matter the occasion, 'intrusive' thoughts **CAN STILL SHOW UP!** 'Intrusive thoughts' are 'unwanted' thoughts that can pop into our heads without warning, They're often repetitive – with the same kind of thought cropping up again and again – and **THIS** can be disturbing or even distressing.



"If I don't wash my hands again, something 'bad' will happen".

This is a very common example of an intrusive thought, especially if you struggle with issues around '*contamination*'. In the previous slide, I mentioned that an intrusive thought is an unwanted thought. In other words, you didn't '*ask*' or '*want*' this particular thought. It is happening AGAINST your will. This is very important to remember!

Also, ALL of my clients '*know*' that the thought makes '*no sense*' and that there is no correlation between washing your hands one more time and '*something bad happening*'. Logically, they '*know*' that nothing bad will happen! Yet they '*feel*' that they have to to perform a ritual!

So what can be done?...



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Recognise that the 'feeling' to wash again is a 'false alarm'



Within OCD, it's like the brain's error detection circuit is over active, sending messages that there is 'something wrong' when there is actually 'no threat' to ourselves or others.

Imagine you are in your room- watching some tv, reading a book, or playing a game. You notice a car alarm going off in your street. Its annoying, its disturbing- so you go and check it out. You then realise that there is 'no burglar' and in fact the alarm is a 'false alarm'.

So what can we do?



We do our best to 'redirect' our attention to the task at hand and in time the alarm will stop and we can get on with doing what we are doing! Even if the alarm does persist for longer, we have learnt that it is a 'false alarm' and 'not worthy of our attention!!'



So notice the urge to wash again is a 'false alarm', walk away from the sink and refocus your attention on something more productive. This can be challenging at first, but with practice it will get easier!!





Master Your Attention

Get better with how you use your '**attention**'. One factor which is often overlooked in managing OCD and anxiety is the importance of '**where you place your attention**'.

'Master Your Attention'...

So what do I mean by 'Master Your Attention'?

One thing which is often missed or at least 'overlooked' is the role of 'attention' in the management of OCD & anxiety, and any mental health struggle for that matter

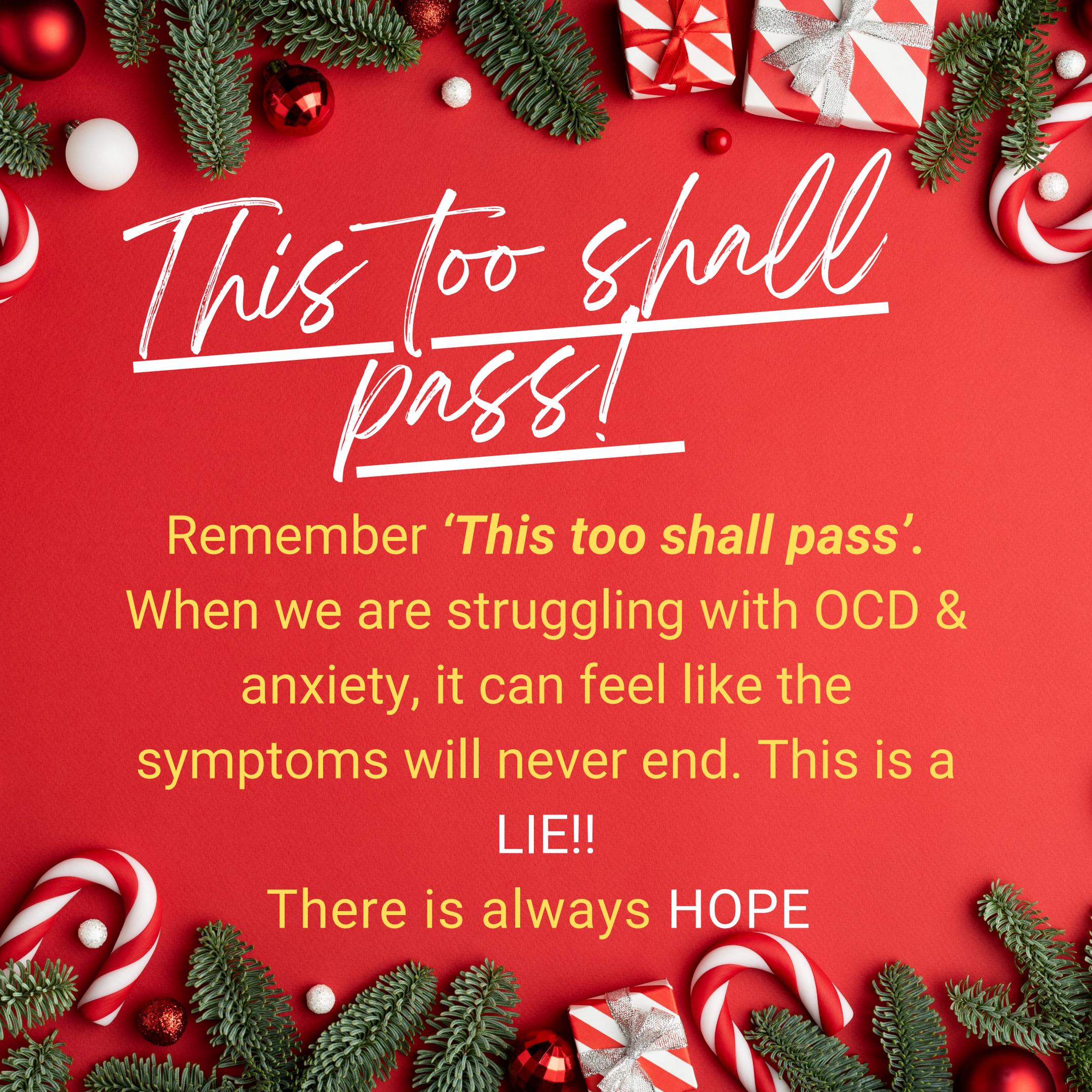
Generally when we are feeling anxious or worried about the types of thoughts and feelings we are having- our attention is INWARD! That is partly NORMAL but if we spend too MUCH TIME focusing on our internal world of thoughts, feelings and sensations... guess what happens??

They get BIGGER, they become more DOMINANT, and become more PROBLEMATIC! One simple way of dealing with this is getting our ATTENTION back OUTWARD again, onto EXTERNAL reality such as the scenery around us, paying attention to the person we are talking to or focusing on 5 things we can see or smell

This many sound SIMPLE and it really it is. But TRUST ME when I say when you make a deliberate effort to REFOCUS your attention on more wholesome things... rather than FIXATING on your internal world...

You will find that you will spend less time dwelling on your feelings, they will become easier to manage and you will begin to 'stop struggling & start living'.





*This too shall
pass!*

Remember ***'This too shall pass'***.
When we are struggling with OCD &
anxiety, it can feel like the
symptoms will never end. This is a
LIE!!

There is always **HOPE**

'This too shall pass'...

REMEMBER- 'This too shall pass!'

When we are struggling with difficult thoughts and feelings- they can feel **OVERWHELMING**. It can be very hard to do the things we want to do and spend quality time with those we care about- when we are all **CONSUMED** by what's going on in our heads.

Applying some of the previous tips that I have talked about in my own life over the years, like '**MASTERING MY ATTENTION**', '**BEING ACTIVE**', '**MINDFULNESS**' and '**EDUCATING MYSELF**' about my OCD and anxiety and how to manage it- I realised that these difficult internal experiences **DON'T** hang around forever. **They DO WAX AND WANE. That they do PASS!!**

Yes difficult thoughts and feelings may come back. **THATS OK!** We have tools now that help them to 'move along' while we **REFOCUS** on what really matters- where we can





Thank-You

I HOPE YOU
HAVE FOUND
THIS GUIDE
HELPFUL

CHECK OUT
www.befreefromocd.com

FOR THERAPY
RATES AND
FURTHER
RESOURCES



Merry Christmas

And Happy New Year

*Celebrate With Joy With
Loved Ones*

Thank-you