



# **"It'll be Okay.": How I Kept Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) from Ruining My Life**

*Shannon Shy*

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Keynote Speaker, 2010 International OCD Foundation (IOCDF) Annual Conference and Member IOCDF Speakers Bureau. Shannon Shy is a senior civilian attorney with the Department of the Navy and a retired U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Lieutenant Colonel. In 1997, while on active duty with the Marines, he was diagnosed with a severe case of obsessive-compulsive disorder or "OCD." His OCD had become so severe he became practically non-functioning. He constantly found himself in a seemingly endless loop of intrusive and irrational thoughts, mental anguish, physical pain, and odd behaviors. It got to the point where he secretly and repeatedly thought that suicide would be better than the anguish, embarrassment, and the pain. While he had suspected for several years that he had some disorder, he was afraid to admit it to anyone and afraid to be diagnosed. He had concluded that doing so would cause him to lose his career and his wife and two young sons. Finally, after some nudging from his wife and a colleague and after one very memorable OCD episode, he called a psychiatrist. With the aid of doctors, medication, and behavioral therapy, he developed an effective behavioral strategy (what he calls "Ground Rules and Checkpoints") to manage his OCD. He now lives a very happy and productive life and has for many years--without medication and without doctors. OCD no longer adversely affects him. This book is about how a young Marine officer, attorney, and family man faced and overcame a relentless "enemy" called OCD. It is a story about struggle, perseverance, and overcoming adversity. This book is not intended as medical advice. Rather, it provides hope, comfort, confidence and insight to some practical techniques for those suffering from OCD and for those trying to help someone with OCD.

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