

MY WAR ON

# OCD

INITIATIVE BY

**HERE TO  
HELP**

CONSULT  
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SPECIAL



EPISODE

*Colin Minto*

FOR YOUR INFORMED AWARENESS

[WWW.LIVINGVIRTUOUSLY.IN](http://WWW.LIVINGVIRTUOUSLY.IN)



Colin tells  
his story...

## How it Started...

My first attack, or symptom as I now know, was when I was 10 years old. It was the day the Sun newspaper broke the story about a new disease spreading the world: AIDS. It showed a picture of a man with a bloated head (I still have no idea why but it did) with a long explanation about this new disease and its effects, which normally led to death at the time.

From that point on, unbeknown to me, my illness took charge. I was constantly pushing my skull and temple in at various points, checking to see if I was bloating to confirm if I, a ten year old, had contracted AIDS and was going to die. It went on from there and gathered intensity...



**Colin tells  
his story...**

I struggled in science at secondary school because of chemicals. I was the one washing my hands all the time and opening doors with my elbows then trying not to touch my jumper in case chemicals were on the elbow area.

At college I dropped biology because I just couldn't sit at the tables or open my folder that had been on the table. I would also open doors with elbows and wash intensely. I simply gave in and didn't want anyone to see me like that.

It soon progressed to me believing I was potentially a psychopath. Because of all the thoughts and rituals I was performing, I thought I was stereotypically mad and as a consequence was potentially someone who would snap and attack someone. If I saw a knife I would panic about potentially being able to use it to kill family, friends, partners and members of the general public.

**"OCD IS AN ILLNESS OF THE HEAD.  
NOTHING MORE. NO DIFFERENT  
TO AN ILLNESS OF  
THE HEART, LUNG, LIVER OR KIDNEYS."**



**COLIN MINTO  
SHARES HIS  
STORY...**

**"My War on OCD"**

**HOW IT ALL STARTED...**

**continued...**

**These are just a few of the vivid lowlights of my OCD life. I now know that all of the rituals and compulsions I engaged in reinforced in my mind that there was a potential problem to deal with, when in fact my dis-functioning brain was seizing on thoughts everyone has but don't even register.**

**In my case, however, they triggered the fight or flight function that exists in all of us, thus convincing me I was in a perilous situation that needed to be sorted. And sort it I had to do otherwise I was going to prison for the rest of my life or someone was going to die!**

# THE FACTS ABOUT OCD

COLIN MINTO SHARES HIS STORY

## “My War on OCD”



OCD is an illness of the head. Nothing more. No different to an illness of the heart, lung, liver or kidneys. The symptoms can be described as going into a blind and terrifying panic about things that others don't seem to panic about and things I didn't used to panic about either. The mechanism in my brain to make me react to dangerous situations (e.g. someone pointing a gun at me from across the street), kicks in when it shouldn't, with the exact same effect. This mechanism makes me react and panic, then take remedial action which forces me to ruminate, avoid things and try to talk myself into believing everything is OK. This unfortunately perpetuates the frequency and severity of the symptoms by reinforcing that there might be a problem in the first place. The brain is the most powerful thing on earth; period. And when your brain instinctively tells you to do something, you do it, right?

Wrong, not if you have OCD! I needed to slap my brain back down and convince it that it was wrong and had been tricked. I needed to train my brain not to react to things when it shouldn't.

COLIN MINTO TELL HIS STORY

# HOW I TOOK CONTROL OF MY OCD

*“My War on OCD”*



*Colin shares his story...*

**“MY WAR ON OCD”**

As a process and theoretically, battling OCD is quite straightforward, but in practice it's the hardest thing I have ever attempted and took a momentous amount of effort. But I did it and I hope others can to. I was at the bottom of my bed at the age of 34 crying uncontrollably, having suffered for 22+ years and losing about half of my life to panic. It actually took me reaching this point to realise I couldn't go any further downward and I just had to try different and uncomfortable things. So the very next time a panic hit me that same day I said to myself; “No, this isn't real, it's my brain tricking me to panic about something, it's not me it's my OCD.”

I then forced myself to do something else while experiencing the strongest and most unbelievable urges to panic, ruminate and take corrective action due to the thing I was panicking about.

Weirdly, after about two hours, my body and brain started to calm down and the thing I was panicking about didn't seem very concerning anymore.

I had contradicted my brain. I had proved it had been tricked by my illness. And from that point on the severity of panic of each subsequent episode was reduced as I applied the same approach, and the symptoms continued to weaken.

I am 45 now and since that day, every episode I have had (I do still have them because OCD isn't something you cure it's something you control), has been controlled and car parked quickly because I have done it before.

I did other things as well to give me the very best chance of defending myself against the ill effects of OCD. I got fit. I ate better. I reduced my alcohol intake. I stopped smoking when I drank.

I really believe that being in the right physical state gives me the strength to control my mental state.

I am not suggesting this is a solution for others, but it worked for me and pretty much follows the professional advice given to me by many.

***“My most important message is that I have mental difference!”***

COLIN MINTO TELLS HIS STORY

# THE FUTURE...

“MY WAR ON OCD”



***“I HAVE OCD  
AND I HAVE  
LEARNED TO  
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BECAUSE IT’S  
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MY OCD.”***

Since leaving G4S as its Group Head of Resourcing and HR Systems in November 2015, I have successfully supported three major corporates with global resourcing and HR technology transformation projects as a specialist consultant.

I also focus on helping people directly with what I call ‘mental difference’. I’ve set up the Mental Health in Business LinkedIn Group, and indirectly support employers to start or amplify their conversation surrounding mental wellbeing..

# THE FUTURE...

*says Colin Minto*



I speak at company events and workshops, developing or enhancing their wellbeing strategies to include focus on the capability that mental difference brings. I also develop workforce stress diagnostic solutions to enable businesses to target their wellbeing resources and investment to the areas that have the most impact to improve the working lives of their people. My most important message is that I have mental difference! And there are many positives to this. It enables me to approach situations differently and contribute to well-rounded discussions and debates on a particular subject.



I can proofread better than most, and I am an excellent problem solver because I have exercised my brain by continually solving catastrophic challenges, which are far more complex than the majority of business challenges.

I have OCD and I have learned to live with it because it's not me it's my OCD. I have OCD and it's part of me. In essence it completes me. I don't want it because there are some catastrophic downsides, however I do have it and there are some amazing upsides!

I would love to find others who have battled and won, are battling and winning, or are at the start of their battle and either need help, or want to join the movement to break down the stigma surrounding mental difference by sharing their story.

***“I HAVE OCD AND I HAVE LEARNED TO LIVE WITH IT BECAUSE IT'S NOT ME IT'S MY OCD.”***

# COLIN MINTO

## COACHING & SUPPORT

### SPECIALIST IN ANXIETY & OCD

He supports people, one-to-one, that are experiencing mental and physical conditions brought on by life's and work's stresses and strains, or are for some reason concerned about their current performance levels. Colin loves to enable people.

### SPECIALIST IN WORKFORCE STRESS

Face to face (preferable) or online meetings and time blocks to tackle any difficulties head on, improve instantly, work towards a sustainable solution, prevent future episodes and optimise personal and business performance.

### SPECIALIST IN WELLBEING & EDI

Colin is a Global Human Resources Leader, specialist in Workforce Stress, Burnout, Wellbeing and EDI. He has successfully combatted OCD, Anxiety and Stress over 40 years and enables others to do the same and thrive.



## A TESTIMONIAL

I first started working with Colin after what we are calling 'a mental health episode' in the summer, brought on by a build up of various life stresses over a period of a few months...nothing specific, no big trauma, just a number of changes in my life which all built up to a point I was finding unmanageable.

Working with Colin has enabled me to break down all stresses into clear and actionable blocks, each one much easier to understand, easier to define and easier to work through to what might 'better' look like and how to get there.

Colin is so easy to talk to and engage with, and personally I found it hugely relatable that he has first hand experience of how you get to a point where the cumulation of stresses are more than one can handle, but also how you are able to come back from that point. His program is completely applicable to everyday life; my mental health improvement has been based on changing how I might address the stresses in my life, rather than trying to completely change my life; and once at a point where I had the right mental capacity, he has supported me in working on any more deep rooted stress points. Just 3 months into our discussions, and I am more productive, more resilient, am planning for known stress- points and how I might best prepare for that moment and work through it, and I am continuing to improve and increase my available 'stress-capacity' every week.

## WHAT EXPERTISE COLIN HAVE?

Successfully applied cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), exposure and response prevention therapy (ERP), SSRI medication, breathing and relaxation exercises, mindfulness and managing the 15 drivers of stress.

## AVAILABILITY, GEOGRAPHY COVERED

Colin works with just 10 individuals at any one time to ensure optimum client availability. He encourages face to face support and is happy to travel globally.