



I've built this body of work over the past two years. Each piece reflects my personal struggle with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and how I began to interpret the act of surrendering more positively throughout my journey. The structure of this body of work is depicted from left to right, left represents the consumption OCD had over my life, all the way to the right representing the peace I finally obtained after being consistent with surrendering to *exposure therapy*. Exposure therapy is another theme that correlates with the act of surrendering in my exhibition. In other words, exposure therapy IS surrendering. Rather than surrendering to compulsions, the goal is to accept that some things will cause panic. Exposure therapy forces me to remain with what is giving me such a high amount of anxiety until it no longer phases me. Which is why in my pieces to the right, I am

sitting down, sitting with the exposure. As the pieces move to the right, I depict my appreciative and positive feelings toward OCD more. This is because I began to realize how I needed to accept the ideas I was avoiding due to my obsessive reactions. With multiple occurrences of exposure therapy, I was able to obtain a sense of happiness I had forgotten was possible. This is what I want the audience to take away from my exhibition. How it is possible to remain peaceful in situations one would at first find alarming or difficult. By not fighting or surrendering to what is making me feel anxious.

My preferred medium when it came to depicting my perspective of terror and peace was acrylic paint on canvas. I felt it was easiest to portray when aiming to paint a scene with associated colors and types of brush strokes. As I began my exposure therapy, I became inspired by Salvador Dali and his use of distortion and decay. I began doing digital collages with rotted versions of myself and distorted versions of others I value to portray my confusion with anxiety as I moved forward. Dali inspired me when I had a negative perspective on OCD, however when I began to become more at peace with exposure, I created more pieces inspired by Dali that reflect a positive uncertainty by shifting the colors and removing the bugs representing decay.

Starting far left, is my portrayal of being in a constant state of anxiety and feeling like I'm in danger (*Iris Devouring Herself*). The next row of paintings is where the act of surrender takes place. At the very bottom (*Don't Panic!*), I depict noticing the problem with my compulsions including every hazard that a compulsion will highlight. Then, at the utmost top of the column (*Object Still Life*), I depict the objects that have given me the highest levels of anxiety due to my obsessive fear over harmful situations. Because this column begins my shift in perspective, the next column portrays how my acceptance of uncertainty (a key to exposure therapy). This is the stage where I surrender to avoidance, such as avoiding sharp objects and compulsions in general. This leads into my final collection of pieces representing my final goal of present happiness. Majority of these pieces represent a new and possibly difficult situation that I would otherwise act on compulsions. I was able to approach these situations from a present perspective and view them from a positive lens.