

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Autobiography/Biography/Memoir

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The following is an excerpt from my book:

Log One – Jul 11, 2005

These past two days have been a struggle. It's summer now in Provo.

Temperatures range from 82 to 92 Fahrenheit. And with the heat comes sweat. A trifle, insignificant fact, not even note worthy. But not to me, not to one clasped with the iron bands of OCD. Sweating is a crisis. Sweat must be exterminated at all cost. Most of the time I don't even know why. I just know I have to kill it.

How? Simply whisking the sweat off my brow? No, no. It's far more difficult. Drenching my face, my hair in warm water. Scrubbing the perspiration off my face. Feeling each and every follicle on my head for the slightest bead of salt. Splashing water across the sink as I drown myself in the water that's getting hotter and hotter every minute.

Or maybe I will use the wind to blow it off. Sticking my head outside my car window desperate for a reduction of heat. Never satisfied until I feel the last bead of sweat blown away, cooled by the wind as it slaps across my face. Still protruding out of the window as I drive faster and faster, giving the wind its necessary momentum. What's this? I feel the saturation of the hair just beyond the reach of the wind. It keeps moving around the cranial circumference. Now I'm struggling to keep the car moving forward even with the road while I strain to turn my head further and further around until I feel the swerve of my car and realize that I'm now looking directly at the car behind me.

Such a trite, insignificant event. Repeated over and over and over, forty, eighty, a hundred times each day. All to get rid of that building, escalating wave of anxiety. Anything to feel less anxious. Sweat must be terminated. It must be eradicated at all cost.

Or else what? I don't know. Salt dries up, giving me an exoskeleton of salt. It is like extraterrestrial ooze leaking out of my body, ready to kill me if I let enough of it out. Salty ooze. I might even to turn into a pillar of salt like Lot's wife . Doesn't make sense. But that doesn't matter. Logic must never be applied. I must obey. I must follow the cry of my Tormentor lest he whips me more than is necessary. He is always there, standing, itching to lash out, releasing several scarlet streams, bathing my back in blood. His whip is knotted, sprinkled with shards of glass and metal throughout the leather material. He waits in cheery anticipation to enjoy his work, laughing at me. Still he whispers lies to me, telling me he is there to protect me. But his whip, it cracks hard and swift. And the pain is unbearable even when I do what he commands. He whips me when I obey. But he whips me more when I disobey. Always filling me with pain and terror. Always using my flesh to carve his grotesque masterpiece.

No! I will not give in any longer. I'll let him whip me. Just long enough to turn and tear the whip from his grasp. Oh, the pain! The whip has never sliced into that area of my skin before. Blood is pouring. Oh, the pain, the pain! I must endure. For now I must endure until I can turn around completely and make the whip yield to my command. Oh, the pain, the pain!

This is what the past two days have been like for me. A victim of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

Log Two – Jul 13, 2005

I'm getting closer to the whip. It's almost within reach. The new cuts are hurting less. Life is getting better.

The wonderful thing about resistance is there's a peak battle and then gradually, ever so slowly, a victory. I've won that war. I don't have to have the treaty. I just have to reach the peak intervention. Once the tide turns, it is only a matter of time. I win. Life gets better.

I have had a couple of these victories of late. Last Thursday I learned that my life long love is engaged ... and not to me. I love her more than anybody I've ever known. She's an angel. Unfortunately, it was a long distance relationship that grew further away because of the OCD.

Two years ago I would have been holding a knife to myself. But I looked down at my hands and didn't see the knife this time.

Last Friday, I received a B+ on a test. Again most people would never understand the kind of anxiety this produces. However, a person with OCD understands. A perfectionist understands how he could go throughout all of middle school, high school, and into college and never receive a grade lower than an A- on a test, much less on a report card. He would understand how the sight of an 87 immediately causes breathing to cease, his pulse to raise, his eyes to cloud with tears that he didn't order to come. That is I. Yet when I saw that B+ I took a breath and I realized I did my best and for the first time in my life it was good enough.

There is hope. Life can get better. It became better because I swore I "would not go quietly into the night ... Today [I] declare [my] independence day!"

Log Three – Jul 15, 2005

My brain is being rattled, full of voices. Not schizophrenic voices—I do not hear any physical sound. Rather they are psychological imprints or shadows of voices that never enter the realm of physical sounds. At times they are all I can hear. Actually they are more than voices. They are entities, forms of life, beings I can see in my mind's eye. Sound a little bit freaky? I think it is. But it is all a part of this disorder, this disease.

What are these psycho creatures? They are my songs. They are radio stations. They are my towels. They are my sweats. And much more. What's more, they are all shouting, angrily accusing me of one great sin—favoritism. "Remember me. What happened? I thought you cared about me. Where have you gone? Why aren't you using me? Do you love them more than you do me? I hate you! Why do you always ignore me?"

I hear them frequently, some days almost constantly.