



« Blog

Countdown to #OCDweek: IOCDF Spokesperson Liz McIngvale Shares Her Story

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In the next few weeks leading up to OCD Awareness Week, taking place October 11-17 this year, each of our spokespeople will be sharing with you why they're excited and energized to start spreading OCD awareness during the week and beyond! Kicking off this new blog series is Elizabeth McIngvale, PhD, LMSW, explaining why OCD Awareness Week is the perfect time to share your story and help others through the power of disclosing.

OCD Awareness Week is a time for those of us with the illness to share, impact, and make a difference for those suffering. It's a time for us to speak up and speak loud about what OCD really is and what it really is NOT. It's a time for us to educate others who may not understand or know about the disorder. I can't explain how happy it makes me to see how far we have come in terms of OCD awareness — we have a designated week, something we

didn't have years ago! Let's take advantage and use this platform to be heard. I hope this year you will participate in [OCD Awareness Week](#) because together, we can (and we are!) making a difference for those impacted by obsessive compulsive disorder. Ten years ago, I was asked to be the spokesperson for the International OCD Foundation. We launched a campaign titled, "What does OCD look like? Me, My name is Elizabeth." I remember being excited at the time to make a difference, but also did not know what advocacy looked like or how it might impact the OCD community. I was also nervous about being so open about my illness and what that might mean.

Ten years later, I can wholeheartedly tell you taking that "risk" and being vulnerable didn't just change my life and shape my career, but also provided hope to others in need. The first time I heard someone tell me that my story helped them to know that they weren't alone or that my story pushed them to seek treatment. These responses wiped away any fear I ever had about sharing my personal story so openly. Today however, I am not the only one publicly saying, "OCD looks like me." People all across the world are speaking out and sharing their story. Together, we are making an impact that one of us could never do alone. I am so inspired by the stories I hear, and it reminds me why I do the work that I do.

I feel so blessed to be able to continue to serve as a spokesperson for the IOCDF and am so proud of this amazing organization and what we stand for. I am so excited about the new launch of the [#OCDvocate campaign](#) and hope you will consider participating in this movement by being an advocate for OCD. Sharing our story can be scary and challenging, but it can also offer the greatest reward. I can't wait to hear what being an #OCDvocate means to you and how sharing your story or talking out about OCD has impacted you and others. Some of the greatest healing comes from knowing that you might have made a

difference in someone else's life. Thank you for what you do and for making a difference for those of us impacted by OCD. We salute you! I challenge you to spread the word about OCD during OCD week in your community and share your stories with me. I can't wait to hear all of the amazing things you all are doing. Remember, together we can #StampOutTheStigma of mental illness.

To learn more about OCD Awareness Week, and to find an event near you, visit www.iocdf.org/ocdweek.