**In-Person Relapse Prevention Group Discussion Questions**
November 2026 | River City OCD Clinic

---

From the article "*Choice,*" by Dr. Steve Phillipson:

"You should make *choosing* well, not *feeling* well your priority."

Phillipson emphasizes the importance of maintaining commitments even when our thoughts and emotions are encouraging us to abandon them. Yet people struggling with OCD, anxiety, or perfectionism can sometimes turn discipline itself into another rigid rule.

- How do you distinguish between healthy persistence in recovery and becoming excessively rigid or demanding of yourself?

- Can you share an example of when *flexibility*, rather than *pushing harder*, was actually the more therapeutic choice?

Phillipson introduces the idea of being willing to "live on the crumbs," continuing to participate in life even when you feel you have only a fraction of your usual emotional or mental resources available.

Think about a recent day when you felt particularly anxious, overwhelmed, discouraged, or emotionally depleted.

- How did you decide what to do with the resources you had available?
    - What would it look like to measure your success on difficult days by your **willingness to remain engaged in life** rather than by how well you performed or how good you felt?

---

From *Overcoming Body-Focused Repetitive Behaviors* by Mansueto & friends:

"No lapse or setback can deprive you of the knowledge you have gained. Use it as an opportunity to move forward, better prepared than ever to make further progress."

The authors encourage viewing setbacks as opportunities for learning. However, for people who struggle with OCD, anxiety, BFRBs, or perfectionism, trying to understand why something went wrong can sometimes turn into excessive analysis, rumination, or self-criticism.

- How do you distinguish between **genuinely learning from a difficult experience** and getting caught in an unproductive effort to figure out exactly what went wrong?
    - Can you think of a recent example when accepting an imperfect explanation and moving forward was more helpful than continuing to analyze the situation?

The authors discuss how people sometimes stop using certain skills once things are going well, only to discover later that they still need some of those supports.

- As you've progressed in recovery, how have you decided which skills/strategies are worth maintaining and which you can gradually loosen or discontinue?
    - How do you distinguish between healthy confidence in your recovery and subtly drifting back toward avoidance, compulsions, or old habits?

*For group discussion only. Please review at your own pace—there's no need to prepare "perfect" answers.*