

The Process of getting lost: OCD Edition

My experience from a recovering, recently diagnosed creative



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First off, I've felt so much anxiety trying to write this, but it's on my goals list on the "Finch" app, and gosh darn do I want to dress up my bird and decorate her nest. I also felt that I owed this to myself. Trust though, I will be overthinking with every letter and with every tap on my keyboard.

Shifting to the topic at hand, I've been lost on numerous occasions. Every time, my perspective of this phase has always shifted alongside my views on life. Like most people, I had thought I had a clear path in life. I had it mentally and verbally etched into myself and the world around me. The younger Camilles' trajectory was:

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1. 16-34 years old: Be an actress and a singer
2. 35-50 years old: Get behind the camera. Be a director, producer, and/or writer
3. 51+: Live off of the wealth I've built up, and write a book like every other celebrity around this age.

CAMILLE



Oh that sweet, sweet girl. Currently, with my birthday in a few months I will be closer to my 30s'. Sorry younger me, but that might be too strict of a deadline.

OCD: "Nobody wants to hear your life story."

Nobody will probably read this, duh.

How does OCD come into play?

The OCD constantly reminds me of that timeline I had given myself. It feels like I shouldn't be giving myself the option to get lost. Working through my OCD has made me realize that, every time I was lost, my OCD was trying to slip through the door. How it did that was feed some thoughts riddled with shame or guilt.

Such as:

- "All these years for what?"
- "You should be acting right now, what are you even doing in college getting a degree in a field that doesn't feel like you?"
- "That's why you're behind, look at so-and-so, they committed to this. Now it's too late for you."

Oh the *comparisons*, the OCD eats that stuff up. This is where I've used the most compulsions, which I am not proud of because I've watched budding friendships disappear because of it. I would hide it under the guise of "self-care," when it really was avoiding them and my feelings.

I've even booked up my schedule because of uncertainty. The rational is, "well, I don't have that much going on right now, so why not? I've gotta get ahead, and this one way I can do that." I'd rather have my calendar booked and planned out, even if it doesn't feel aligned to me just because *at least I'm doing something*.

Because of this obsession on needing to have a clear career path *now* it creates this viscous cycle of pushing myself so hard that I burnout, I get a moment of realization and promise myself I won't do it again, and then the cycle repeats itself.

"Uncertainty and doubt seem to lay at the bedrock of OCD. OCD demands 100% certainty, no matter the cost—a feat that is, of course, impossible to achieve. That's why **OCD is also known as the "doubting disorder."** It won't allow you to *feel* comfortable with uncertainty." - Stacy Quick

I could never pinpoint why till I got diagnosed. I'm aware of the consequences of overbooking myself, yet I couldn't understand why it was reoccurring. At times, I believed that, "oh well, I guess this is how I have to live my life, forever."

What helps in the process of accepting *being lost*

Each time I've gotten lost, I was in a different contextual state of my life. Some times, I was able to accept being lost, other times, it was really difficult for me. The importance of accepting this state is to be able to allow for things to come into sense. To not rush into things that might hurt or harm you and your loved ones. ***Mindfulness*** is key during this period. This is a list of things that helped me stay grounded and grateful for my life during these periods. They might not have occurred at the same time, but reminding myself of these things helped me to stay present and push forward. I hope that even one of these can be reflected in your own life as well and that you gradually build your own list.

Things that helped me

- **Financial stability**; if not financially *comfortable*. This is what I'm struggling with now and struggling to accept at the moment. But, when you do have it, it really does take a lot of the stress off and buys you time to sit in being lost.

- **Having high-quality relationships.** I've been relying on this a lot and I am continuously overflowed me with so much love, fueling me to continue to see where life leads me.
- **Taking care of myself.** These periods are always great reminders to return to myself. To love on me all the more. This looks like fixing my diet, getting those steps in, or having a little at home spa day. Anything that makes you feel loved.
- **Get into creativity or expressing yourself.** I noticed that I tend to have so much repressed energy during these times. So, I do my best to let it out. Whether it's writing on substack, going to a dance class, or simply writing down a story in my head, as long as I am able to get that energetic relief, that's what I'll do.
- **Do something new.** There are so many resources online. As much as the internet can be bad, it can expose you to new things as well. Recently, I've been learning the Phrygian scale and that's really got me excited about life.
- **Accessibility to healthcare.** Luckily, I do have access to a therapist and have been working with her. She's given me tools to learn how to allow myself those uncomfortable thoughts of uncertainty. How to distract my mind and completely shakeup the OCD. I'm still making mistakes here and there, but I have compassion for this journey and myself.

Things you can do from home

As I continue to uncover the root of these parts of me and healing them, I've been able to compile some habits to help me be okay with uncertainty. These are:

- 30-minute journaling in the morning
- Sit for 5-15 minutes in those uncomfortable thoughts and feelings and *let* it weigh me down. No distractions, no thinking of any positives to lighten the load of my feelings.

- Gratitude lists
- Literally, wait to make a decision
- Get outside of my house; go for a walk
- Baby steps in feeding my creativity; showing up for whatever comes up for me and whatever medium it desire to show up in.
- Limit my time on social media
- Mindfulness practices: leaves on a stream, boxes on a conveyor belt, breath work

Some of these habits, I've been able to do on a consistent basis, some of them I am failing towards. The important thing is the trying, I noticed that gratitude of my journey and mindfulness are what has helped me to stay present and be okay with uncertainty.

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