

Obsessed

To be obsessed is to be preoccupied by something—the fear of falling, the hope that no one saw you peeing in the neighbor’s yard. What you are obsessed by you can’t get out of your mind.

Examples

1 At one point in my life I was obsessive compulsive. When I left a room I was not easily satisfied that the door had been completely closed behind me. I associated this behavior with a widespread anxiety I was feeling at the time—associated with marital crisis. The consequence of the obsession was that I would return several times to reclose a door, making sure the handle had come to rest in just the right place. I was not easily satisfied, for the inner mechanism that would have said, OK, it’s OK now, was blocked.

2 It seems that stalkers can become obsessed with their target persons. A romantic fixation, upon a celebrity with whom one has no other connection, is now a familiar pathology. Neither romance nor lust quite describes the mindset of the stalker, who is obsessed with his or her object. The rigidity of such an obsession deprives the stalker of the delights to be derived from mutual affection between two adults. For the stalker the object of obsession is pinned, like a butterfly, against the wall of his obsession.