

Living With OFD: Obsessive Fangirl Disorder

✓ Nice title

What started out as a simple hobby quickly became an ongoing obsession and ultimately, a way of life. Indeed, I am a fangirl. You may ask, what is a fangirl? It's someone who's a super fan, whether it be about a certain movie, television show, music, celebrity, pop culture or just about anything else. I'm sure there's someone out there fangirling about cheese. Weirder out yet?

Let me be clear; fangirls don't simply like something. Instead, they love it so intensely to the point that their whole world, rather universe, revolves around this one thing. They devote half of their lives creating fan pages, writing, reading fanfiction, constantly keeping updated with new content, freaking out over anything that has even the slightest relation to it and most of the time being in a state of emotional pain or happiness because there are some things you just "can't even". Fangirling is practically a religion and I consider myself a devout worshipper.

We live in these conceptual communities called, "fandoms," where all the hypnotized fans share an excessive admiration for a particular person or thing. In loose terms, it's a cult. Although these members are from different parts of the world with varying lifestyles and personalities, it is this that connects us. We laugh, cry, scream, and go absolutely nuts together. It's a connection formed faster than one could say hello, literally. For instance, one fandom themed merchandise seen worn by another is an instant indication of friendship.

Sounds fun? Not always. Because, outside of these theoretical communities, the word "fangirl" is ridiculed as overdramatic, stalkers, nerds, weird or simply "not normal". We face many challenges especially struggling to fit within society's "normality". Thus, being a fangirl is often an identity kept in secret. Between juggling a non-paying, full-time fangirling job and aiming to belong in the reality of a disapproving world, life as a fangirl is never easy. ✓ Nice wording.

Many people don't understand how fangirls can love something so excessively that they become die-hard addicts. They say we get too attached to fictional characters, celebrities, and the things we fangirl about. We spend too much time with our noses on our phones, binge-watching, memorizing TV show lines and fantasizing about them day and night. Some are afraid they might catch this "disease". I've heard this countless of times. But really, I'd just call us very passionate lovers.

I never liked inviting people into my bedroom. Because, it's like entering a fangirl sin city with gigantic posters up on the walls with godly statues of my favourite celebrities and TV shows. In one corner you'll see a shrine with every fan merchandise I've collected over the years from cd albums, to special knickknacks, only the highest quality of DVDs, unopened magazines and all things fandom related that is sure to say, "Dude, you have a serious problem." I proudly expose my greatest possessions, only to receive weird looks and awful judgments. But hey, I'd have enough to pay for college if I sold them for how much they're really worth to me. And If fangirling was a job, heck I'd be a millionaire.

However, being a fangirl can be an exhausting job. Nothing is as tiring as joining a fandom, except joining multiple fandoms. Honestly, I don't even have enough fingers to count all of the fandoms I'm in. Specific fandoms have a name for their obsessive members. Just to name a few, I've been a "Gleek", a "Psycho", a "Sherlockian", and a "Hollander". These names bring shame upon me especially

from my parents. It seems that the only titles they approve of are a doctor, a nurse or a lawyer. I can't blame them, those jobs certainly pay a lot more than internally screaming at my obsessions 24/7. ✓

And pardon us for being too emotional. Finding true love is near impossible for a fangirl. At least that's what my friends say. Apparently, I set my standards way too high according to ideal and flawless characteristics, that only a celebrity or TV character I'm obsessed with can fill. One of my friends even bet money that I'll never meet my beloved idols, nevertheless be with them.

Little do they know, I'm already mentally dating three perfect guys, one's in London busy filming a movie and another is performing an epic concert in New York. And the last one, well, he won't ever meet me; he's fictional. It's a real struggle being in a long-distance relationship though, especially if your true love doesn't even know you exist. ✓ See, my friends poke fun at how unrealistic a fangirl's life had become. I've got my head in the clouds they said. And it seems like I've been stuck there forever. But, I like to dream that I will meet them and get that \$10 someday.

So how obsessive can fangirls really be? Two words can describe this; Bieber Fever. Picture millions of girls fighting and cat-clawing over one decent singing, Canadian boy. If you happen to belong to a fandom like that, happy Hunger Games to you! You see, there are many different levels of fangirl "obsessiveness". According to an article I once read, there's 14. It starts off with a casual fangirl saving a couple pictures on her phone to extreme cases where she sleeps next to that picture glued to her pillow. Perhaps, I lay 8th on that scale. Watch out, I'm dangerously crazy and way far off the "sanity" level of zero.

I like to think my obsessive trait derived from having a condition called Obsessive Compulsive Disorder back when I was a child. One day, my mother told me that a doctor named Web M.D. said that I clearly had the symptoms. ^{Ha!} Negative things are associated with having OCD, like being a "freak," a "weirdo," or "Why is she doing that?". That's why don't have that three-letter word tattooed on my forehead.

It's certainly wasn't easy to deal with once it's out there and so is being a fangirl.

Likewise, being a fangirl is always pre-packaged with negative connotations courtesy of society's being "normal" spectrum. My somewhat "unhealthy" obsession bugs my friends, family and people who don't understand my unconditional love for a beloved idol or TV show. Tell me, what makes something worth loving in the eyes of society? Why can't I love, what I love, the way I love it? My obsession is constantly being pointed out to me. I used to go for the, "You can blame my OCD," response. Trying to explain fangirling can be very complicated.

But, I know I'm not alone in this world. And so, I proudly say, I am a fangirl. I definitely cannot deny that fact, so why should I fangirl silently? Despite others telling us fangirls that we waste our time obsessing over things we love and supporting our fandoms that we're simply a bunch of crazed, screaming teenagers, we're honoured and unashamed. Yes, our lifestyle's a little different, a little extreme, but nothing else makes us more inspired and motivated than seeing them on screens and hearing their names. And in the case of the cheese lover, tasting those smelly deliciousness. Truly, it is something that we live for.

Some psychologists may consider this a new type of illness. It's called OFD: Obsessive Fangirl Disorder. Well, good luck finding a cure for that. Millions of us are gonna need it. ✓

Producing Text - 7

Using Language - 8

Very funny! Well written with the perfect sprinkling of irony, sarcasm and satire. You've opened my eyes to a world I know nothing about.