

Merrill Middle School  
Des Moines, Iowa

Dear Karen Spencer Hesser,

Your book, Kissing Doorknobs, changed the way I look at people with OCD and other similar diseases like autism and Down syndrome. It also made me very thankful that I do not have OCD. I had no idea how difficult life and everyday choices could be when you have this disease.

Like Tara's mom, when I was around people with odd behaviors I wanted to tell them to just stop. Your book helped me understand that they just can't stop. I now feel so bad for people with OCD.

I have a friend, named Andrew who is autistic. Your book opened my eyes to the fact that he can't help his responsive behaviors either. Andrew becomes very nervous in crowds, when his surroundings become really noisy, and when his routine is suddenly changed. During those times Andrew will try and leave the situation, jump around excitedly, or even talk or yell loudly to stop what is frightening him. Now, since I read your book, I have more respect for Andrew and the challenges he faces. I have more patience with Andrew. I try to make him laugh and help him feel more comfortable with his surroundings.

Your book taught me that diseases like OCD cause problems that are easy to see but difficult to understand. These problems are much harder to overcome than I imagined. I will now try not to judge other people by what they do, but take time to understand them and help them if I can.

Respectfully Yours,

Anna Fish