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Common fears and compulsions

Tribune staff report

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Common obsessions and compulsions

Obsessions are unwanted, recurrent and disturbing thoughts that cause overwhelming anxiety. Compulsions are repetitive behaviors that a person feels he must perform to alleviate that anxiety. People with obsessive-compulsive disorder know their thoughts and actions are irrational yet are often unable to stop.

Common obsessions

- Fear of contamination or germs
- Fear of causing harm to others
- Fear of loss
- Fear of violating religious rules
- Need for symmetry or exactness
- Need for perfection

Common compulsions

- Washing/cleaning
- Checking door locks or stove burners
- Hoarding
- Preoccupation with religious observances
- Arranging/organizing
- Counting/repeating
- Seeking reassurance



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