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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