

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Obsessive-Compulsive Symptom Checklist

Rev. 11/11

(Derived from the Yale-Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Symptom Checklist by Goodman et al., 1989; modified by Baer, 2000 and Mansbridge, 2003. Used with permission.)

*Check only those symptoms that are bothering you right now. To decide whether you have a particular symptom, refer to the description or examples that follow each item. Remember that the examples given are just a few of the infinite variety of obsessions and compulsions that people experience.*

*Reminder: OBSESSIONS are unwelcome, intrusive, and distressing thoughts, images, ideas, or impulses that repeatedly enter your mind. They may seem to occur against your will or be repugnant to you. You may recognize them as senseless, and they may not fit your personality. COMPULSIONS are behaviors or acts that you feel driven to perform, although you may recognize them as senseless or excessive. At times, you may try to resist doing them, but this may prove difficult. You may experience anxiety that does not diminish until the behavior is completed.*

*If you wish, you may provide more information by adding a word or two or underscoring any of the words or phrases that pertain especially to you.*

## OBSESSIONS

### *Aggressive Obsessions:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Fear that you might harm yourself, either accidentally or impulsively. (Fear of eating with a knife or fork, fear of handling sharp objects, fear of walking near glass windows.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Fear that you might harm other people, either accidentally or impulsively. (Fear of poisoning other people's food, fear of harming babies, fear of pushing someone in front of a train, fear of hurting someone's feelings, fear of being responsible by not preventing some imagined catastrophe, fear of causing harm by giving bad advice or incorrect information.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Having violent or horrific images in your mind. (Images of murders, dismembered bodies, or other disgusting scenes.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Fearing you will blurt out obscenities or insults. (Fear of shouting obscenities in public situations like church, fear of writing obscenities.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Excessive fear of doing something else embarrassing. (Excessive fear of appearing foolish in social situations, fear of fainting, vomiting, or losing bowel or bladder control in front of others.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Fear that you will act on an unwanted impulse. (Fear of driving a car into a tree, fear of running someone over, fear of stabbing a friend or stranger.)

- \_\_\_ 7. Fear that you will steal things, either accidentally or impulsively. (Fear of “cheating” a cashier, fear of shoplifting, fear of filing an inaccurate tax return.)
- \_\_\_ 8. Fearing you’ll cause harm to others through carelessness or negligence. (Fear of inadvertently infecting someone, fear of causing an accident without being aware of it, such as a hit-and-run automobile accident, fear of having left a pill where a child could get it.)
- \_\_\_ 9. Fear that you’ll be responsible for something else terrible happening. (Fear of causing a fire or burglary because of not being careful enough in checking the house before leaving.)

### *Contamination Obsessions*

- \_\_\_ 10. Disgust with bodily waste or secretions. (Fear of contracting AIDS, cancer, or other diseases from public rest rooms; fears of your own saliva, urine, feces, semen, or vaginal secretions.)
- \_\_\_ 11. Worry about dirt or germs. (Fear of picking up germs from sitting in certain chairs, shaking hands, or touching door handles.)
- \_\_\_ 12. Excessive concern with environmental contaminants. (Fear of being contaminated by radon, asbestos, or radioactive substances, fear of things associated with toxic waste sites.)
- \_\_\_ 13. Fear of contact with certain household cleansers. (Fear of poisonous kitchen or bathroom cleansers, solvents, insect sprays, or turpentine.)
- \_\_\_ 14. Fear of contact with animals. (Fear of being contaminated by touching an insect, dog, cat, or other animal.)
- \_\_\_ 15. Aversion to sticky substances or residues. (Being bothered by adhesive tape or other sticky substances.)
- \_\_\_ 16. Worry that you will get sick because of contamination. (Fear of becoming ill as a direct result of being contaminated; beliefs vary as to how long the disease will take to appear.)
- \_\_\_ 17. Worry that you will contaminate or infect others. (Fear of touching other people or preparing their food after touching certain objects, substances, or your own body.)

### *Sexual Obsessions*

- \_\_\_ 18. Forbidden or perverse sexual thoughts, images, or impulses. (Unwanted sexual thoughts about strangers, family, or friends.)
- \_\_\_ 19. Disturbing thoughts about sex with children or incest. (Unwanted thoughts about sexually molesting either your own or other children; worries like, “What if I become a child molester?”)
- \_\_\_ 20. Worry about being or becoming homosexual. (Worries like, “Am I a homosexual?” or “What if I suddenly become gay?” when there is no basis for these thoughts.)
- \_\_\_ 21. Fear of being sexually aggressive toward other people. (Unwanted images of violent or forceful sexual behavior toward adult strangers, friends, or family members.)

### *Hoarding and Saving Obsessions:*

- \_\_\_ 22. Worry about throwing things away and/or acquiring things. (Worries about throwing away seemingly unimportant things that you “might need” in the future, thinking about acquiring things you don’t really need.)

### *Religious and Moral Obsessions*

- \_\_\_ 23. Worrying a great deal about sacrilege and blasphemy. (Concerns about having blasphemous thoughts, saying blasphemous things, or being punished for such things.)
- \_\_\_ 24. Excessive concern with morality. (Worries about always doing “the right thing,” having told a lie, or having cheated or taken unfair advantage of someone.)

### *Obsession with the Need for Symmetry or Exactness*

- \_\_\_ 25. Excessive concern with symmetry or exactness. (Excessive attention to objects being properly aligned, worries about calculations or handwriting being perfect.)

### *Somatic Obsessions*

- \_\_\_ 26. Excessive worry about illness or disease. (Worries that you have an illness like cancer, heart disease, or AIDS, despite reassurance from doctors that you do not.)
- \_\_\_ 27. Excessive concern with a part of your body or an aspect of your appearance (body dysmorphic disorder or “dysmorphophobia”). (Worries that your face, ears, nose, eyes, hair, breasts or genitals are hideously big, small, ugly, or deformed, despite reassurance to the contrary.)

### *Miscellaneous Obsessions*

- \_\_\_ 28. Fearing not saying just the right thing. (Fear of having said the wrong thing, fear of not using the “perfect” word.)
- \_\_\_ 29. Excessive worry about losing things. (Worries about losing important things, like a wallet, or unimportant things, like a scrap of notepaper.)
- \_\_\_ 30. Excessive need for reassurance. (Frequently feeling the need to ask for reassurance, finding the reassurance doesn’t last or that you can’t trust it.)
- \_\_\_ 31. Being bothered by intrusive, mental, nonsense sounds, words, music, or (neutral) mental images. (Words, songs, or music in your mind that you can’t stop; random, unwanted images in your mind.)
- \_\_\_ 32. Being bothered by certain sounds or noises that don’t seem to bother others. (Sounds of clocks ticking, air in heating or air conditioning ducts, voices in another room.)
- \_\_\_ 33. Having lucky and unlucky numbers. (Feeling that you need to avoid doing something an “unlucky” number of times or at a “bad” time of day, or to do something a “good” number of times or at a “favorable” time.)

- \_\_\_ 34. Avoiding certain colors that have special significance to you. (Fear of using or wearing things of certain colors [e.g., black may be associated with death, red with blood and injury].)
- \_\_\_ 35. Having superstitious fears. (Fear of passing a cemetery, hearse, or black cat; fear of things perceived as bad omens, such as hearing sirens.)
- \_\_\_ 36. Feeling a strong need to know or remember certain things. (Feeling that you need to remember insignificant things like license plate numbers, the names of actors on television shows, old telephone numbers, bumper stickers, or T-shirt slogans.)
- \_\_\_ 37. Worry about saying or writing certain things. (Fear of saying certain words, such as “thirteen,” because of superstitions, fear of saying something that might be disrespectful of a dead person, fear of using an apostrophe [because this denotes possession].)
- \_\_\_ 38. Feeling overly responsible. (Feeling personally responsible for things outside your control, such as war, or injuries that might occur in your neighborhood.)
- \_\_\_ 39. Other: Worrying or obsessing about \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPULSIONS

### *Cleaning and Washing Compulsions:*

- \_\_\_ 40. Washing your hands excessively or in a ritualized manner. (Washing your hands many times a day or for long periods of time after touching a “contaminated” object.)
- \_\_\_ 41. Having excessive or ritualized showering, bathing, toothbrushing, grooming, or toilet routines. (Taking showers or baths or performing other bathroom routines that may last for hours. If the sequence is interrupted, the entire process may have to be repeated.)
- \_\_\_ 42. Performing compulsions or rituals that involve cleaning household or personal items. (Excessive cleaning of faucets, toilets, floors, kitchen counters, kitchen utensils, books, etc.)
- \_\_\_ 43. Doing other things to prevent or remove contact with contaminants. (Asking family members to handle insect sprays, garbage, gasoline cans, raw meat, etc. If you can’t avoid these things, wearing gloves to handle them, such as when using a self-service gasoline pump.)

### *Checking Compulsions*

- \_\_\_ 44. Checking that nothing terrible has happened. (Searching the newspaper or listening to the news for information about a catastrophe you fear you may have caused, asking people for reassurance that you didn’t cause an accident).

- \_\_\_ 45. Checking that you didn't make a mistake or forget to do something. (Repeated checking of appliances, stove, locks, etc. before leaving home; repeated checking while reading, writing or doing simple calculations to try to be certain you didn't make a mistake.)
- \_\_\_ 46. Checking some aspect of your physical condition in response to obsessions about your body. (Seeking reassurance from friends or doctors about your health or appearance; repeatedly taking your pulse, temperature, blood pressure or other health "test" [e.g., AIDS test]; checking yourself for body odors; frequently checking your appearance in a mirror.)
- \_\_\_ 47. Checking that you did not harm yourself. (Looking for injuries or bleeding, frequently going to doctors for reassurance that you haven't hurt yourself.)
- \_\_\_ 48. Checking that you did not harm others. (Checking that you haven't hurt someone without knowing it. You may ask others for reassurance or telephone them to make sure that everything is all right.)
- \_\_\_ 49. Checking carefully when you get up from your chair to leave to make sure you don't leave anything behind. (At a restaurant, at the doctor's office.)

#### *Repeating Rituals*

- \_\_\_ 50. Rereading or rewriting things excessively. (Taking hours to read a few pages or to write a short letter; worrying that you didn't understand or won't remember everything you just read; worrying about what you were thinking when you read a certain word.)
- \_\_\_ 51. Repeating certain behaviors or activities. (Turning lights or appliances on and off, combing your hair, going through doorways, touching things, looking in a particular direction; feeling uncomfortable unless you do these things the "right" number of times or until it "feels right.")

#### *Counting Compulsions*

- \_\_\_ 52. Counting things that don't really merit counting. (Counting objects like tiles, books, nails in a wall; counting when you repeat certain activities, like washing or brushing your teeth.)
- \_\_\_ 53. Making decisions by counting. (Choosing which clothes to wear, which foods to eat, which products to buy, etc. by following rules involving counting.)

#### *Ordering and Arranging Compulsions*

- \_\_\_ 54. Arranging, straightening, or ordering things. (Straightening papers and pens on a desktop or books in a bookcase; spending hours putting things "in order" and becoming very upset if this order is disturbed.)
- \_\_\_ 55. Doing things symmetrically. (Touching your right elbow if you touch your left, "balancing" or "equalizing" other body movements.)

### *Hoarding and Collecting Compulsions*

- \_\_\_ 56. Saving things excessively. (Saving old newspapers or magazines, notes, receipts, cans or bottles, even pets; having extreme difficulty throwing things away.)
- \_\_\_ 57. Acquiring things excessively. (Compulsive shopping, acquiring things for which you may have no specific use but which might “make a nice gift for someone” or which are a bargain.)

### *Miscellaneous Compulsions*

- \_\_\_ 58. Having mental rituals (other than checking or counting). (Performing rituals in your head, like saying a special word, phrase, or prayer; thinking a “good” thought to “undo” a “bad” thought. [These are different from obsessions because you do them intentionally to reduce your anxiety or to feel better.])
- \_\_\_ 59. Seeking reassurance excessively. (Asking others to reassure you, indirectly seeking reassurance by making statements designed to prompt a reassuring response.)
- \_\_\_ 60. Telling or confessing things excessively. (Confessing to behaviors you never did, feeling that you have to tell others certain words, facts, or opinions.)
- \_\_\_ 61. Spending a lot of time or effort trying to find answers to your obsessive concerns. (Spending hours on the internet researching symptoms of illnesses or side effects of medications, monitoring yourself carefully to see if you’re sexually aroused in “perverse” ways.)
- \_\_\_ 62. Touching, tapping, or rubbing things excessively or ritualistically. (Touching surfaces, objects, parts of yourself or other people.)
- \_\_\_ 63. Taking excessive measures (other than checking) to prevent harm coming to others or terrible consequences from happening. (Avoiding sharp or breakable objects, such as knives and fragile glass.)
- \_\_\_ 64. Having ritualized eating behaviors. (Arranging your food or utensils in a particular order before eating, not letting foods touch each other, following other strict rules when eating.)
- \_\_\_ 65. Engaging in superstitious behaviors. (Not taking a bus or train if its number is “unlucky,” not parking your car if the odometer reads a particular number, throwing away clothes you wore while passing a cemetery, returning goods to a store if you hear a siren on the way home.)
- \_\_\_ 66. Pulling your hair out (trichotillomania). (Pulling hair from your scalp, eyelids, eyelashes, or any other body area; playing with, nibbling on, or eating the hairs.)
- \_\_\_ 67. Other rituals, compulsive behavior, or compulsive avoidance: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Please go back over the symptom checklist and put an asterisk (\*) next to the symptoms that are bothering you most or interfering with your life most right now. In other words, if you could achieve significant improvement in any of these areas, which ones would result in the most improvement in your quality of life? Consider all areas of your life, such as home, work, school, and relationships.***

The following two questions are adapted from YBOCS experimental questions by Goodman, Rasmussen, et al. (used with permission).

#### ASSESSING THE STRENGTH OF YOUR BELIEF IN YOUR OBSESSIONS AND COMPULSIONS:

Do you think your obsessions or compulsions are reasonable or rational? Would there be anything besides anxiety to worry about if you resisted them? Do you think something bad would really happen?

- 0 = I think my obsessions or compulsions are unreasonable or excessive.
- 1 = I think my obsessions or compulsions are unreasonable or excessive, but I'm not completely convinced that they aren't necessary.
- 2 = I think my obsessions or compulsions may be unreasonable or excessive.
- 3 = I don't think my obsessions or compulsions are unreasonable or excessive.
- 4 = I am sure my obsessions or compulsions are reasonable, no matter what anyone says.

#### ASSESSING AVOIDANCE DUE TO OCD:

Have you been avoiding doing anything, going anyplace, or being with anyone because of your obsessional thoughts or because you were afraid you would perform compulsions? Check the one statement that best describes how many things you have avoided in the past week.

- 0 = I haven't been avoiding anything because of OCD.
- 1 = I have been avoiding a few unimportant things because of OCD.
- 2 = I have been avoiding some important things because of OCD.
- 3 = I have been avoiding many important things because of OCD.
- 4 = I have been avoiding almost everything because of OCD.

#### ASSESSING DEPRESSION:

The last two questions are from the Beck Depression Inventory (used with permission of the Psychological Corporation). For each question, carefully read each of the four choices. Check the one statement that best describes the way you've been feeling over the past week.

1.  0 = I do not feel sad.  
 1 = I feel sad.  
 2 = I am sad all the time and I can't snap out of it.  
 3 = I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it.
  
2.  0 = I don't have any thoughts of killing myself.  
 1 = I have thoughts of killing myself, but I would not carry them out.  
 2 = I would like to kill myself.  
 3 = I would kill myself if I had the chance.