OCD Brain Scams: Spot & Bust Your Thinking Traps Worksheet

Hey, Scam Buster—Why This Worksheet? OCD's favorite trick? Convincing you your brain's "What ifs" are ironclad facts, via sneaky cognitive distortions we call "OCD Brain Scams." These are twisted thinking patterns—like catastrophizing a doorknob touch into plague-level doom—that amp up anxiety and fuel compulsions. Spotting them is your superpower: It creates space to question, laugh off the hype, and respond with reality. This worksheet helps you ID common scams in your OCD (e.g., contamination, harm fears), rate how often they pop up, and practice busting 'em. Take 10-15 mins—think of it as auditing your brain's shady deals. You're the boss; let's reclaim the narrative!

Quick Scam-Hunt Guide

- Read each "Scam" description + OCD example.
- Rate how often it tricks you (0-10: 0=Never, 10=Daily Drama).
- Jot a personal example & bust it with a reality check.
- Reflect at the end—celebrate your detective skills!

Your OCD Brain Scams Checklist

Here are 8 top scams OCD pulls. Check 'em out:

1. Catastrophizing: "One Slip = Total Ruin"

Scam Alert: Blowing a tiny doubt into world-ending disaster (e.g., "If I don't wash 10 times, I'll kill my family with germs!"). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: What's the most likely outcome? (e.g., "Hands get a bit dirty—no plague party.") _____

2. Overestimation of Threat: "Danger Lurks Everywhere"

Scam Alert: Assuming low-probability bad stuff is super likely (e.g., "That shadow? Definitely a burglar—must check locks 20x!"). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: Real odds? (e.g., "Burglars prefer unlocked doors—mine's fine.") _____

3. Intolerance of Uncertainty: "I Must KNOW Now!"

Scam Alert: Freaking out over "maybe" instead of rolling with it (e.g., "What if I hit someone driving? Need to confess every swerve."). Frequency (0-10): _____

Your Example: _____
Bust It: Embrace the gray: ”Uncertainty’s life’s spice—not poison.” _____

4. Thought-Action Fusion: ”Think It, Do It?”

Scam Alert: Believing thoughts = actions or proof (e.g., ”Imagining harm means I’ll do it—I’m a monster!”). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: Thoughts are just brain farts—not prophecies. _____

5. All-or-Nothing Thinking: ”Perfect or Perish”

Scam Alert: Black/white extremes (e.g., ”One impure thought? I’m fully sinful forever.”). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: Add nuance: ”Mostly good with a side of oops—still worthy.” _____

6. Mind-Reading: ”They Know My Dark Secrets”

Scam Alert: Assuming others judge your ”bad” thoughts (e.g., ”Coworker smiled weird— they sense my OCD shame!”). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: Ask or assume neutral: ”Probably thinking about lunch, not my brain.” .

7. Emotional Reasoning: ”Feel Bad = Am Bad”

Scam Alert: Letting feelings dictate facts (e.g., ”Guilt means I did something wrong—must atone!”). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: Feelings are signals, not verdicts: ”Anxious? Normal. Not truth.” _____

8. Should Statements: ”I Must Be Flawless”

Scam Alert: Harsh ”shoulds” breeding guilt (e.g., ”Good people don’t doubt—I’m defective!”). Frequency (0-10): _____
Your Example: _____
Bust It: Swap to ”could”: ”I could be kinder to myself—starting now.” _____

Scam-Busting Reflection

Top 3 Scams in Your Life: 1. _____2. _____3. _____
One Win Today (e.g., ”Caught Catastrophizing mid-spin—busted!”): _____
How Can You Spot ’Em Faster Next Time? _____

Pro Tip: Treat scams like pop-up ads—annoying, but ignorable. Journal daily, therapy-up if needed. You’re scam-proofing your brain—one laugh at a time!