

DO YOU HAVE BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER?

Beauty shouldn't be about changing yourself to achieve an ideal or be more socially acceptable. Real beauty, the interesting, truly pleasing kind, is about honoring the beauty within you and without you. It's about knowing that someone else's definition of pretty has no hold over you." Golda Poretsky

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) is a disorder where a person has an excessive preoccupation with a perceived physical defect in appearance
- ❖ BDD is a type of somatoform disorder where people have symptoms of a medical illness but the symptoms cannot be explained by an actual physical disorder
- ❖ BDD has been referred to as "imagined ugliness" because the flaw may be so small that others don't even notice or do not see it as a flaw
- ❖ The perceived defect can be minor or imagined and can cause significant distress
- ❖ People with BDD can't control their negative thoughts about themselves and either minimize or do not believe others who tell them they are attractive
- ❖ On the average, preoccupations with appearance consume 3 to 8 hours a day
- ❖ BDD can cause severe emotional distress in people who may miss work, avoid social encounters, and seclude themselves from friends and family
- ❖ People with BDD wish they could improve or repair some aspect of their appearance even though they may be normally or highly attractive
- ❖ People with BDD believe that fixing their defect is the only way to feel attractive
- ❖ People with BDD often get tattoos and piercings to hide defects or undergo numerous surgeries to correct perceived imperfections but are never satisfied with the results
- ❖ People with BDD often find fault with their hair, stomach, nose, chest or skin
- ❖ BDD often develops in adolescents and affects men and women equally
- ❖ Causes of BDD include a genetic predisposition, neurobiological factors, personality traits, and certain life experiences such as being bullied or made fun of by others
- ❖ BDD is highly correlated with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- ❖ Certain behaviors used to improve flaws include: camouflaging, skin picking, excessive grooming, changing clothes frequently, avoiding mirrors, checking mirrors, excessive exercise and frequent plastic surgery
- ❖ BDD is often associated with fears of rejection, low self esteem, shame, embarrassment, unworthiness, and being unwanted and feeling unlovable
- ❖ BDD often occurs in conjunction with depression and because of this can be easily misdiagnosed
- ❖ BDD almost always causes impaired functioning and it is common for people to drop out of school, stop working, have suicidal ideation, and be hospitalized

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ If you think you may suffer from BDD, consider getting evaluated for medication
- ❖ Help others with BDD by providing education about the disorder and being supportive
- ❖ Encourage and participate with them in doing community service or charity work
- ❖ Encourage people with BDD to join a support group of others with BDD
- ❖ Encourage people with BDD to stay busy, not isolate, and be productive
- ❖ Encourage and participate with them in nonthreatening social activities
- ❖ If you have BDD, seek professional help to decrease isolation, change irrational thoughts about your appearance, and decrease feelings of anxiety and depression

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com

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