

Body Dysmorphic Disorder



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Introduction

Body dysmorphic disorder is anxiety disorder of the people related to their respective body images or the body appearances. This is serious anxiety concern and may compel people to make suicidal attempts.

This disorder also is called the “imagined ugliness” which is based on the perception of the people about their physical appearances. Previously, it used to be recognized as “Dysmorphophobia” where people are abnormally concerned about their distorted physical images. The mental disorder do not support people to control their negative thoughts regarding their physical appearance, even if others try to convince them regarding their good looks (Fang, Matheny, & Wilhelm, 2014). This disorder also impacts in a negative manner on the day to day life style. BDD may cause several other problems to the people as below:

Feeling of loneliness: Due to the effect of BDD, people feel the loneliness and feel that they are being avoided by others.

Feeling of shame: as they are not satisfied with their body parts and looks, as well as appearance, they feel ashamed to lead their normal flow of life in the society or feel ashamed to step out.

Depression and anxiety: the anxiety works inside them as they fail to mingle in the flow of the societal activities freely.

The idea of self-harm: Due to the effect of BDD, they try to abolish their image by hurting themselves.

Idea for suicidal attempt: feeling of being neglected, feeling of shame, and feeling of loneliness force themselves to make suicidal attempts.

Misuse of drugs: they get intoxicated by using drugs and to remain far away from the societal activities, they prefer to be reliant on drugs and alcoholic products.

Isolation for others: Isolated from society and from all of their friends, families, and neighbors due to the low self-esteem, they prefer to remain in solitude (Phillips, 2015)

It is a serious concern that BDD patients should be treated positively to offer the support so that they can get back to their normal life with the help of proper treatment. Thus, this essay has highlighted the importance of the study of BDD along with the process of its treatment to be offered to the affected people.



Description of the disorder

The people affected with BDD perceive themselves in different form than what others feel about them. BDD experience is unique for everyone, but still there are few general obsessions related with the experience of all BDD affected people, as in like, they have a disproportionate body, and are flawed. The people affected by BDD have typical behaviors of comparing their physical images with others, spending long time in front of the mirror, however they sometimes stay aloof from the mirror too, becomes distressed about a particular part of their body (most commonly the face and head), staying aloof from the social get together due to shame, and looking for medical support for the perceived distorted body parts (Sarwer, 2016).

The reason for BDD in people is not clear. But the recent researches have revealed the fact that BDD takes place in people either due to genetic fact or due to imbalance of the chemicals in their brain. At the same time, the past negative life experience also can be blamed as the reason for BDD occurrence. BDD most often get developed in teenagers and the adolescents. Both men

and women equally get affected by this BDD syndrome. Research has revealed the fact that approximately one percent of the U.S population is affected by this disorder.

The disorder has some specific symptoms that help in identifying the affected person. In the people suffering from BDD, the obsession can last from a span of one hour to the entire part of the day. They struggle with the maintenance of perfection in the activities they perform as they cannot control their daily tasks and lacks dedication towards their completion. BDD compel people towards a state of low self-esteem, and also creates problems that reflect low morale value towards the completion of their tasks at school, college or at their respective work places (NHS, 2017). The sufferers of BDD may reflect some compulsive behaviors which are actually an attempt to hide their BDD perception and their perceived flaws about themselves. The compulsive behaviors in general have been listed as doing the comparison of their different body parts with others, intending to go for the surgery of fatty body parts to get back in perfect shape, viewing their body gestures in mirror repeatedly, picking the skin, and sometimes avoiding the mirror as well. The resultant status of BDD end up with Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), or social anxiety disorder and as well as depression and eating disorder.

Significance of the disorder

It is important to take some proper steps to help the sufferers through BDD to get improvements or else gradually they will become patients with mental disorder and will not be able to execute their daily activities in accordance to their flow of life, stuck as they would be in a state of low self-esteem. BDD puts a lot of strain on those who live with the disorder (Bddfoundation, 2017). The depression and anxiety that BDD sufferers are going through will force them towards suicidal attempts, which will have a negative impact on their social value. The production level of the employees suffering from BDD will reduce the overall opportunity to

meet the goal of the definite business. Based on these negative facts, it is important to give a serious attention for the full recovery of BDD affected people to help them be a part of the normal daily life flow.

The treatment dimension of the disorder

To offer the accurate treatment plan to the people suffering from BDD, it is crucial to access the level of BDD by understanding the perception of the affected people about their body appearances. A trained clinical professional scan and diagnose the degree of the disorder to offer the correct treatment plan. After consulting with professionals, they sometimes prefer to offer self-test for BDD, but, diagnosis may not be correct always. There are two broader aspects of treatment plan to be offered to BDD affected people. They are: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), and Antidepressant medication. As per CBT procedure, professionals teach the affected people to identify the irrational thoughts and also influence them to change their negative thoughts to the positive one by continuous counseling. On the other hand, antidepressant medications can help the recovery from the obsessive as well as the compulsive symptoms of BDD in an effective manner.

A good example of BDD can be termed as “Martina, 18, is over concerned about the size of her head. When she goes out, she uses the camouflage over his head and also wears the glasses. She feels that others at public are watching her with irritation. As a result, she has become distressed and has started to avoid socialization as required to keep the normal flow of life. In such case, the CBT treatment can be offered to her. The CBT treatment is the first line of treatment and also is known as “Exposure and response prevention” (ADAA, 2016). But, in some cases, BDD affected people fail to respond to the CBT treatment plan. In case of Martina, the ACT (Acceptance and commitment therapy) can be justified to be implemented. This

treatment focuses on tolerating the negative thoughts rather than changing the thoughts. This process teaches BDD affected people to tolerate the anxiety rather than changing the perception. The three core concepts involved in this ACT process to be applied to Martina are act of mindfulness, act of acceptance, and act of value based living.

The act of mindfulness is based on the development of the ability to be present with the moment that Martina is living with. The act teaches that “I have big head, and I am not lovable to others”. This thought can reduce down the depression level and will help Martina to concentrate on her tasks by accepting the situation. The silent walk, observing the thoughts can be good mind exercises. The act of acceptance refers to the ability to draw the comparison between the pain and sufferings and also to accept them. It teaches and develops the ability of the sufferers to respond to the negative thoughts like: “I am Depressed” Vs. “I have the thought that I am depressed” (ADAA, 2017). This process helps the people to have a thought about their perceptions. The last aspect is value based living. Through this act, the practitioners help the affected people to identify the other values in their life rather than focusing on the aspect of distorted body appearance. The value classification exercises will offer the supportive value for Martina in this case. To offer these treatment plans, there is a BDD foundation mainly based in UK with an international exposure (Bddfoundation, 2017).

Conclusion

From the entire discussion, it has been identified that BDD is the serious concern to focus as 1 percent U.S population is suffering through this body disorder. Two broader treatment plans are good enough to be offered to BDD affected people as per their requirement. The case of Martina has been cited to show the perfect implications of the treatment plan. It has become the

most serious concern in the international market to be controlled with the effective intervention of the clinical professionals.



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