

Sony Khemlani-Patel
Fugen Neziroglu

Advances in Psychotherapy –
Evidence-Based Practice

Body Dysmorphic Disorder



 hogrefe

Body Dysmorphic Disorder

About the Authors

Sony Khemlani-Patel, PhD, is a licensed psychologist with over 20 years of experience in the treatment of obsessive-compulsive related disorders. She is clinical director of the Bio Behavioral Institute in Great Neck, NY, on the scientific and clinical advisory board of the International Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Foundation, and vice president of OCD New York. She has presented and published extensively in the areas of body dysmorphic and obsessive-compulsive related disorders and has co-authored two self-help books.

Fugen Neziroglu, PhD, ABPP, ABBP, is a board-certified behavior and cognitive psychologist and leading researcher in obsessive-compulsive related disorders. She is the co-founder and executive director of the Bio Behavioral Institute in Great Neck, NY, as well as clinical assistant professor at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell. She has published and presented over 175 papers in scientific journals and is the author and co-author of fifteen books which have been translated into many languages. She is on the scientific and clinical advisory board of the International Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Foundation, on the scientific council of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, and president of OCD New York.

Advances in Psychotherapy – Evidence-Based Practice

Series Editor

Danny Wedding, PhD, MPH, Saybrook University, Oakland, CA

Associate Editors

Jonathan S. Comer, PhD, Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, Director of Mental Health Interventions and Technology (MINT) Program, Center for Children and Families, Florida International University, Miami, FL

J. Kim Penberthy, PhD, ABPP, Professor of Psychiatry & Neurobehavioral Sciences, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

Kenneth E. Freedland, PhD, Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO

Linda C. Sobell, PhD, ABPP, Professor, Center for Psychological Studies, Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

The basic objective of this series is to provide therapists with practical, evidence-based treatment guidance for the most common disorders seen in clinical practice – and to do so in a reader-friendly manner. Each book in the series is both a compact “how-to” reference on a particular disorder for use by professional clinicians in their daily work and an ideal educational resource for students as well as for practice-oriented continuing education.

The most important feature of the books is that they are practical and easy to use: All are structured similarly and all provide a compact and easy-to-follow guide to all aspects that are relevant in real-life practice. Tables, boxed clinical “pearls,” marginal notes, and summary boxes assist orientation, while checklists provide tools for use in daily practice.

Continuing Education Credits

Psychologists and other healthcare providers may earn five continuing education credits for reading the books in the *Advances in Psychotherapy* series and taking a multiple-choice exam. This continuing education program is a partnership of Hogrefe Publishing and the National Register of Health Service Psychologists. Details are available at <https://www.hogrefe.com/us/cenatreg>

The National Register of Health Service Psychologists is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The National Register maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Advances in Psychotherapy – Evidence-Based Practice, Volume 44

Body Dysmorphic Disorder

Sony Khemlani-Patel

Bio Behavioral Institute, Great Neck, NY

Fugen Neziroglu

Bio Behavioral Institute, Great Neck, NY, and

Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell, Hempstead, NY



This document is for personal use only. Reproduction or distribution is not permitted.

From S. Khemlani-Patel & F. Neziroglu: *Body Dysmorphic Disorder* (ISBN 9781616765002) © 2022 Hogrefe Publishing.

Library of Congress of Congress Cataloging in Publication information for the print version of this book is available via the Library of Congress Marc Database under the Library of Congress Control Number 2021948128

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Title: Body dysmorphic disorder / Sony Khemlani-Patel (Bio Behavioral Institute, Great Neck, NY), Fugen Neziroglu (Bio Behavioral Institute, Great Neck, NY, and Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell, Hempstead, NY)

Names: Khemlani-Patel, Sony, author. | Neziroglu, Fugen A., 1951- author.

Series: Advances in psychotherapy--evidence-based practice ; v. 4.

Description: Series statement: Advances in Psychotherapy--Evidence-Based Practice ; volume 44 | Includes bibliographical references.

Identifiers: Canadiana (print) 20210339470 | Canadiana (ebook) 20210339519 | ISBN 9780889375000 (softcover) | ISBN 9781616765002 (PDF) | ISBN 9781613345009 (EPUB)

Subjects: LCSH: Body dysmorphic disorder. | LCSH: Body dysmorphic disorder—Treatment.

Classification: LCC RC569.5.B64 K54 2021 | DDC 616.85/2—dc23

© 2022 by Hogrefe Publishing

www.hogrefe.com

The authors and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information contained in this text is in accord with the current state of scientific knowledge, recommendations, and practice at the time of publication. In spite of this diligence, errors cannot be completely excluded. Also, due to changing regulations and continuing research, information may become outdated at any point. The authors and publisher disclaim any responsibility for any consequences which may follow from the use of information presented in this book.

Registered trademarks are not noted specifically as such in this publication. The use of descriptive names, registered names, and trademarks does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The cover image is an agency photo depicting models. Use of the photo on this publication does not imply any connection between the content of this publication and any person depicted in the cover image.

Cover image: © stock_colors – iStock.com

PUBLISHING OFFICES

USA: Hogrefe Publishing Corporation, 361 Newbury Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02115
Phone (857) 880-2002; E-mail customerservice@hogrefe.com

EUROPE: Hogrefe Publishing GmbH, Merkelstr. 3, 37085 Göttingen, Germany
Phone +49 551 99950-0, Fax +49 551 99950-111; E-mail publishing@hogrefe.com

SALES & DISTRIBUTION

USA: Hogrefe Publishing, Customer Services Department,
30 Amberwood Parkway, Ashland, OH 44805
Phone (800) 228-3749, Fax (419) 281-6883; E-mail customerservice@hogrefe.com

UK: Hogrefe Publishing, c/o Marston Book Services Ltd., 160 Eastern Ave.,
Milton Park, Abingdon, OX14 4SB
Phone +44 1235 465577, Fax +44 1235 465556; E-mail direct.orders@marston.co.uk

EUROPE: Hogrefe Publishing, Merkelstr. 3, 37085 Göttingen, Germany
Phone +49 551 99950-0, Fax +49 551 99950-111; E-mail publishing@hogrefe.com

OTHER OFFICES

CANADA: Hogrefe Publishing Corporation, 82 Laird Drive, East York, Ontario M4G 3V1

SWITZERLAND: Hogrefe Publishing, Länggass-Strasse 76, 3012 Bern

Copyright Information

The e-book, including all its individual chapters, is protected under international copyright law. The unauthorized use or distribution of copyrighted or proprietary content is illegal and could subject the purchaser to substantial damages. The user agrees to recognize and uphold the copyright.

License Agreement

The purchaser is granted a single, nontransferable license for the personal use of the e-book and all related files.

Making copies or printouts and storing a backup copy of the e-book on another device is permitted for private, personal use only.

Other than as stated in this License Agreement, you may not copy, print, modify, remove, delete, augment, add to, publish, transmit, sell, resell, create derivative works from, or in any way exploit any of the e-book's content, in whole or in part, and you may not aid or permit others to do so. You shall not: (1) rent, assign, timeshare, distribute, or transfer all or part of the e-book or any rights granted by this License Agreement to any other person; (2) duplicate the e-book, except for reasonable backup copies; (3) remove any proprietary or copyright notices, digital watermarks, labels, or other marks from the e-book or its contents; (4) transfer or sublicense title to the e-book to any other party.

These conditions are also applicable to any audio or other files belonging to the e-book. Should the print edition of this book include electronic supplementary material then all this material (e.g., audio, video, pdf files) is also available in the e-book edition.

Format: PDF

ISBN 978-0-88937-500-0 (print) • ISBN 978-1-61676-500-2 (PDF) • ISBN 978-1-61334-500-9 (EPUB)

<https://doi.org/10.1027/00500-000>

This document is for personal use only. Reproduction or distribution is not permitted.

From S. Khemlani-Patel & F. Neziroglu: *Body Dysmorphic Disorder* (ISBN 9781616765002) © 2022 Hogrefe Publishing.

Contents

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Description | 1 |
| 1.1 | Terminology | 1 |
| 1.2 | History | 1 |
| 1.3 | Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders | 2 |
| 1.4 | Definition | 2 |
| 1.4.1 | Specifiers | 2 |
| 1.4.2 | Insight | 2 |
| 1.5 | Normal Concerns Versus BDD | 3 |
| 1.6 | Symptomatology | 3 |
| 1.7 | Epidemiology | 5 |
| 1.8 | Gender Differences | 5 |
| 1.9 | Onset, Course, and Prognosis | 6 |
| 1.10 | Functional Impairment | 6 |
| 1.11 | Suicidality | 6 |
| 1.12 | Quality of Life | 7 |
| 1.13 | Comorbidity and Differential Diagnosis | 7 |
| 1.13.1 | Depression | 7 |
| 1.13.2 | Social Anxiety | 7 |
| 1.13.3 | Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder | 8 |
| 1.13.4 | Personality Disorders | 8 |
| 1.13.5 | Anorexia Nervosa | 9 |
| 1.13.6 | Excoriation Disorder (Skin Picking) | 9 |
| 1.13.7 | Olfactory Reference Syndrome | 10 |
| 1.14 | Teasing and Bullying | 10 |
| 1.15 | History of Abuse | 10 |
| 1.16 | Diagnostic Procedures and Documentation | 11 |
| 1.16.1 | Diagnostic Interviews | 11 |
| 1.16.2 | Symptom Severity Measures | 11 |
| 1.16.3 | Insight Measures | 12 |
| 1.17 | Summary | 12 |
| 2 | Theories and Models | 14 |
| 2.1 | Biological Theories | 14 |
| 2.1.1 | Neurochemical Theories | 14 |
| 2.1.2 | Neuroanatomical Theories | 15 |
| 2.1.3 | Neuropsychological Models | 16 |
| 2.2 | Psychological Theories | 16 |
| 2.2.1 | Evolutionary Theory | 16 |
| 2.2.2 | Learning Theory | 17 |
| 2.2.3 | Cognitive Behavior Model Based on Social Learning | 17 |
| 2.2.4 | The Self as an Aesthetic Object | 21 |
| 2.3 | Summary | 23 |

| | | |
|----------|---|----|
| 3 | Diagnosis and Treatment Indications | 24 |
| 3.1 | Therapist Variables in Initial Sessions | 24 |
| 3.2 | Diagnostic Assessment | 25 |
| 3.2.1 | Connection Between Preoccupation and Compulsive and Avoidance Behaviors | 26 |
| 3.2.2 | Typical Day | 26 |
| 3.3 | Factors That Influence Treatment | 27 |
| 3.3.1 | Overvalued Ideation | 27 |
| 3.3.2 | Demographic Variables | 27 |
| 3.3.3 | Comorbidity | 28 |
| 3.3.4 | Previous Treatment Experience | 28 |
| 3.4 | Addressing Need for Cosmetic Surgery | 28 |
| 3.5 | Establishing Treatment Goals | 29 |
| 3.6 | Identifying the Appropriate Treatment | 30 |
| 3.6.1 | Medication for BDD | 30 |
| 3.6.2 | Cognitive Behavior Therapy for BDD | 31 |
| 3.7 | Summary | 31 |
| 4 | Treatment | 32 |
| 4.1 | Methods of Treatment | 32 |
| 4.1.1 | Assessment | 32 |
| 4.1.2 | Psychoeducation | 35 |
| 4.1.3 | Treatment Orientation and Engagement | 36 |
| 4.1.4 | Cognitive Therapy | 38 |
| 4.1.5 | Exposure and Response Prevention | 40 |
| 4.1.6 | Perceptual Retraining | 45 |
| 4.2 | Mechanisms of Action | 47 |
| 4.3 | Efficacy and Prognosis | 48 |
| 4.4 | Variations and Combinations of Methods | 48 |
| 4.4.1 | Attentional Training Technique and Task Concentration | 49 |
| 4.4.2 | Cognitive Remediation | 51 |
| 4.4.3 | Third Wave Therapies | 52 |
| 4.4.4 | Addressing Trauma and Loss | 53 |
| 4.4.5 | Addressing Skin Picking and Hair Pulling | 55 |
| 4.4.6 | Self-Surgery | 57 |
| 4.4.7 | Addressing Poor Quality of Life | 57 |
| 4.4.8 | Maintenance and Relapse Prevention | 57 |
| 4.5 | Problems Carrying Out the Treatments | 58 |
| 4.5.1 | Addressing Desire for Cosmetic Surgery | 58 |
| 4.5.2 | Addressing Suicidality | 60 |
| 4.5.3 | Nonadherence to Treatment | 60 |
| 4.5.4 | Family Involvement and Accommodation | 61 |
| 4.6 | Multicultural Issues in Treatment | 61 |
| 4.7 | Summary | 62 |

| | | |
|----------|---|----|
| 5 | Case Vignettes | 63 |
| 5.1 | Case Vignette 1: Post Accident Preoccupation With Nose | 63 |
| 5.2 | Case Vignette 2: Preoccupation With Facial Shape and Muscle Dysmorphia | 68 |
| 5.3 | Case Vignette 3: Preoccupation With Skin Accompanied by Skin Picking | 73 |
| 6 | Further Reading | 78 |
| 7 | References | 79 |
| 8 | Appendix: Tools and Resources | 90 |

Description

1.1 Terminology

Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), previously considered a somatoform disorder, was incorporated into the newly established *obsessive-compulsive and related disorders* (OCRDs) in the 5th edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). This category consists of disorders characterized by intrusive thoughts (obsessions) or repetitive behaviors (compulsions) (see Section 1.3).

1.2 History

BDD (referred to then as “dysmorphophobia”) first appeared in the DSM in the 3rd edition (DSM-III; American Psychiatric Association, 1980) as an “atypical somatoform disorder.” Diagnostic criteria were not included, resulting in minimal attention in the psychiatric literature.

With the publication of the DSM-III-R (American Psychiatric Association, 1987), BDD was established with diagnostic criteria as a “somatoform disorder,” and the term was changed to “body dysmorphic disorder.” No changes occurred in the publication of DSM-IV and DSM-IV-TR. The current DSM-5 diagnostic criteria are more detailed, reflecting the increase in recognition and research. The criteria include specifiers including insight levels.

BDD first appeared in the psychiatric literature in 1891, with the publication of a paper by an Italian psychiatrist Enrico Morselli. He coined the term “dysmorphophobia,” noting the desperation and intensity of the fear and thoughts (Morselli, 1891). Other European psychiatrists, including Pierre Janet, Emil Kraepelin, and most famously Sigmund Freud, have published case histories of BDD patients. Freud’s Wolf Man was a Russian aristocrat who had a preoccupation with the shape of his nose, accompanied by frequent mirror checking. He carried a small mirror in his pocket, checked for pores, and powdered his nose multiple times a day. His nickname came from recurrent dreams of wolves staring at him. He was later treated by one of Freud’s protégées, Ruth Brunswick, who published a paper in 1928 describing his symptoms in detail (Brunswick, 1928).

The disorder was largely unknown until the *OCD spectrum* of related disorders became a model for conceptualization and treatment, leading to the official classification of obsessive-compulsive and related disorders in 2013.

1.3 Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders

The *obsessive-compulsive and related disorders* (OCRDs) category was established with the 2013 publication of the DSM-5. This category designates disorders characterized by obsessions and/or compulsions. Obsessions are defined as intrusive, repetitive, and persistent thoughts that cause distress. Compulsions are repetitive behaviors or mental acts that are excessive, ritualistic, and repetitive. In addition to *obsessive-compulsive disorder* (OCD), BDD, and *trichotillomania*, this category includes the newly established *hoarding disorder* and *excoriation disorder* (skin picking).

BDD is an obsessive-compulsive and related disorder

The existing literature had established overlapping features, referring to this cluster as the “obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorders.” Similarities in symptom profile, treatment response, and comorbidity supported the categorization (Hollander et al., 2007).

1.4 Definition

BDD is characterized by a preoccupation with one or more perceived defects or flaws in physical appearance that are not observable to others or may appear slight to others. At some point the individual with BDD has engaged in repetitive behaviors, such as mirror checking, excessive grooming, skin picking, or seeking reassurance from others, or mental acts such as comparing appearance to that of others.

1.4.1 Specifiers

DSM-5 describes *muscle dysmorphia* as a specifier for BDD. This form of BDD is a preoccupation with the idea that one’s “body build is too small or insufficiently muscular” (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 243). Higher percentages of men than women are found to suffer from muscle dysmorphia. Common compulsions include excessive use of natural supplements and protein shakes to enhance exercise for muscle building, excessive exercising, use of steroids, seeking medical procedures to enhance body build, and specialized diets or food regimes. Clothing to either hide or enhance muscles is commonly seen.

1.4.2 Insight

BDD individuals typically demonstrate poor insight

Insight as a further BDD specifier includes three categories: good or fair, with poor insight, or absent insight/delusional beliefs. Much research supports the fact that individuals with BDD demonstrate poorer insight than those with OCD (de Leon et al., 1989; Eisen et al., 2004; McKenna, 1984; Phillips et al., 2012; Vitiello & de Leon, 1990). In fact, appearance-related beliefs appear delusional at times, with up to 75% of patients showing lifetime prevalence of delusions. Referential thinking is frequently observed – believing that others