

# OCD & BDD

## Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

People with OCD experience upsetting and confusing thoughts and sensations that feel impossible to let go of, known as **obsessions**. These are usually around the topics of doubt, responsibility, or danger, and bring on intense anxiety and a need to feel completely certain. The automatic response, in an attempt to reduce the anxiety, will be a **compulsion** or behaviour, which can be physical or mental in nature. The person becomes stuck in performing these and will carry them out until they get relief or feel 'just right'.

"I just can't stop worrying"

"I know it's not rational, but..."

## Body Dysmorphic Disorder

**Obsessions** in BDD revolve around what the person sees as a major flaw in the way they look. Their concerns about appearance cause high levels of shame and anxiety. The distress is not about wanting to be beautiful, but rather a deep fear of what they see as ugliness, and the rejection they expect to experience because of it. They might spend hours per day and a lot of energy on **compulsions**, trying to change or hide their appearance, worrying about the way they look, or avoiding being seen.

"I'm sure it's all people can see"

"If I could just change this one thing..."

## Body-Focused Repetitive Behaviours

BFRB are also known as Habit Disorders, and these terms describe conditions in which the person repeatedly performs grooming behaviours like picking or biting at their body in response to anxiety or as self-soothing.

People who struggle with BFRB find it difficult or impossible to stop them, even though they find them frustrating and are distressed by the damage that results from them. These are not simply bad habits someone can just stop, but rather recognised and upsetting mental health conditions.

### Skin picking

*Also known as Dermatillomania or Excoriation, this involves picking at flaws or bumps in the skin, often causing bleeding and irritation*

### Hair pulling

*Also known as Trichotillomania, this involves pulling, plucking, or breaking hairs. This can often result in bald patches or damage to the skin*

## How OCD Action can help

OCD and related conditions are more common than you might think. They are also treatable! If you or someone in your life has OCD, our services can help you feel less alone and better understand what is happening. Most of all we can support you to access treatment.

### Forum

Connect with the community  
[ocdaction.org.uk/forum](https://ocdaction.org.uk/forum)

### Helpline

For information and a listening ear  
0300 636 5478  
[support@ocdaction.org.uk](mailto:support@ocdaction.org.uk)

### Support groups

A regular space to talk  
0303 040 1112  
[sign-up@ebtsupportgroups.co.uk](mailto:sign-up@ebtsupportgroups.co.uk)