

Beating BDD Episode 8 – Omari Eccleston-Brown, part 1

Omari had so much great stuff to share that we've split his interview into two. In the first half, he describes what recovery means to him and how BDD affected his life, including his romantic relationships.

"I tell people that my BDD is about my eyes because it means I have control over it, it doesn't have control over me – and that gives me a great sense of freedom."

What does recovery mean to him?

[00:00.45] Recovery is about whether he's still doing the behaviours and to what extent he feels a sense of peace.

[00:02.26]. He thinks about what the motivation is for doing something – for example, putting his glasses on.

[00:03.22] The next step after awareness is action – and it can take a long time.

[00:04.30] Awareness has to come with compassion.

When did Omari's BDD appear and how did it manifest itself?

[00:05.36] BDD first appeared when he was 15 and an aspiring model. His dad bought him a photoshoot for his 16th birthday and he became obsessed by his eyes.

[00:10.45] The symptoms then disappeared until he went to university interviews.

[00:12.45] Things got worse when he developed a dry eye condition. He started to carry out safety behaviours, like hiding his eyes behind glasses.

[00:21.17] He used to let the pressure out by screaming and punching walls. He also started to wear contact lenses under his glasses which made it hard to see.

How did BDD affect his relationships?

[00:12.45] Omari hid his symptoms and loneliness behind a veneer of popularity.

[00:16.26] He had his first relationship at 20 but didn't tell his girlfriend about his feelings.

[00:18.45] Being in a relationship is a double-edge sword for someone with the disorder.

How does he deal with his feelings now?

[00:24.24] Omari talks to people more now and tells them when he feels vulnerable.

[00:26.41] It's important to share at your own pace, and choose someone you trust.

[00:27.38] For a while he would tell people he had BDD but not say what his specific concern was. Now, he tells people and it's made a huge difference.

Resources

- The BDD Foundation: bddfoundation.org