

# Thursday Meeting: Special Focus Introduction

This OSPA meeting has been set up to share experience strength and hope around body dysmorphia. For some of us, body dysmorphic obsession can be a particularly stubborn part of our skin picking disorder. We may have found it persisting even when we are abstinent from picking. Yet, if we remain unrecovered in our dysmorphic obsession, we leave the door open for a skin picking relapse.

You do not have to have any kind of formal diagnosis to attend this meeting. We are simply a group of people who wish to stop obsessing about how our body looks and start living our lives in line with our Higher Powers will. Our experiences are many. Some common features of body dysmorphia in skin pickers may include:

- Engaging in obsessive checking or scanning behaviours centred on how we look.
- Convincing ourselves that that our picking would stop, if only our skin were perfect.
- Finding ourselves in constant debates about whether we do or do not look ok; sometimes drawing others into these debates through reassurance seeking. Yet the answers do not satisfy us, we never feel reassured.

Some of us find that we have dysmorphia that is broader than, or perhaps not even focussed on our skin – we can still recognise this perfectionism and self-criticism as part of the disease of skin picking.

The Big book of Alcoholics' anonymous tells us to '*cease fighting everyone and everything, even alcohol*'. To recover from dysmorphic obsession with our skin, we stop trying to settle the debate about our self worth through focussing on how we look. Rather, the solution is spiritual – through the steps, traditions and the fellowship we learn that we are ok, regardless of how our skin or other body parts look. With gentleness, we can abstain from behaviours that encourage the obsession one day at a time.

While this is a special interest meeting, *all* OSPA members are welcome.