

Trauma Can Create A Template Which Feeds Sexual Addiction

Many clients ask professionals "Why have I been plagued with hyper-sexuality?" In other words, they were curious as to understand why they had become addicted to hyper-sexual behavior?' This question is often asked by drug and alcohol addicts who also wonder why they were plagued with the addiction gene when their siblings did not appear to have similar issues.

Although the field of sexual addiction is a relatively new one, we have research that shows that there are two pathways to sexual addiction. Often times children who have been traumatized as young kids, will in adolescence or adulthood reenact the trauma in the form of compulsive sexuality. One of the exercises that I give my clients is to look back in their childhoods and identify the small or the big events that traumatized them. That might look like a divorce or a parent's abandonment. That might be the result of a child walking in on his parents having sex. That may include a neighbor or family friend molesting him or her. These little "t" or big "t" traumas lay the ground work for the human psyche to continue to replay unconsciously, the scenario over and over again as an adult. It is if the brain becomes psychologically become stuck or locked in the brain as something familiar that creates compulsivity. The trauma results in the development of an arousal template that continues to light up as it is acted adult in adulthood. The good news is that psychologists believe that these behaviors that repetitiously manifest over and over again are opportunities to get the needed help as an adult that the child was unable to get as a child.

John was frequently punished as a child by his father. His father would beat him severely for even the slightest infractions. Despite the abuse and painful exchange of punishment, John became intrigued as an adult when he viewed sadistic and masochistic forms of internet pornography and began to unconsciously play out these fantasies in his sex life. Punishment and sexual excitement became fused together and became the only stimuli that effectively delivered arousal during times of sex. John shared his desires with his wife who was disgusted by the thought of using physical spankings in the bedroom therefore John became even more compulsive with his viewings on the internet. This behavior escalated further and eventually he was secretly going outside of the marriage to get his sexual needs met which added an extra element of secrecy and excitement to his sexual arousal template. In this scenario it is easy to see how John was reenacting the trauma of early childhood beatings into his sexual life. John said that the first time he ever viewed S & M pornography, he felt a familiarity that drew him back to the porn over and over again. It is likely that John experienced suppressed rage about his childhood abuse which he combined with erotica to produce the desire to reenact the trauma. Unfortunately a contributor to sexual addiction is eroticized rage.

A secondary contributor for arousal template development occurs when children's young minds get "brainlocked" after they have seen something that is curious, titillating or even disturbing. Young children who stumble on their parent's soft porn magazines, videos or internet sites may develop the compulsion to go back over the material frequently. Their brain development becomes altered when the reward center learns to light up after viewing this material. This material creates the arousal template that maps out sexual excitement in adulthood. With sexual addiction this behavior becomes compulsive

and like an addiction, the sex addict spends more and more time, money and energy finding new forms of this sexual material or experience.

If either of these scenarios sound like you it is important to seek help with a certified sexual addictions therapist (CSAT) who can assist you in calming down the brain, and managing the template while you undergo the process of retraining the brain towards healthy sexuality and break the chains of compulsivity and hyper-sexuality.

Neither trauma nor "brainlock" needs to lock you into compulsive behaviors that keep you from engaging in a normal or healthy life!