



SEXUAL TRAPS FROM CHILDHOOD

originating in shame-based, addicted families

- 1. Sexualized Rage**
This is an anger beyond reason, usually directed at the opposite sex, whose members are blamed for all relationship failures (e.g., "Women always..."; "Men always...").
- 2. Sexualized Conflicts**
Sex becomes a way to counter hurts and resentments or to reduce tension without resolving conflict, as in alternating cycles of sex and fighting.
- 3. Sexualized Needs**
As a result of patterns developed in childhood, adults feel intensely sexual when they feel lonely, hurt, or depleted. Yet, sexual relationships involve inequality or isolation and typically do not result in intimacy or increased emotional closeness.
- 4. Sexual Shame**
This means feeling profoundly ashamed for having sexual feelings and believing that a person is bad for having such feelings.
- 5. Sexual Exploitation**
A person is deceptive, manipulative, or seductive because of the belief that sexual needs will not be met otherwise. Examples range from acting as if you have no sexual interest while working to turn others on, to picking partners who are vulnerable because of their pain, naïveté, or neediness. Many of the behaviors dehumanize others, making them into objects. Sex objects are easier to exploit, allow for greater risks, and do not disrupt an addict's sexual trance by requiring a response.
- 6. Sexual Double Bind**
If you are good, you can't be sexual. If you feel sexual, you can't be good. So if sex makes you feel good, you wind up feeling bad about feeling good. Sex is dirty, so save it for someone you love!
- 7. Sexual Self-Destruction**
People may be caught in a pattern, usually learned in the family, of using sex to set themselves up for disaster--for example, continually setting up sexual situations that result in abuse or abandonment. Dangerous, risky, and illicit behaviors generate fear. Excitement and arousal are directly related to how much fear exists.
- 8. Gender Shame**
This is a profound embarrassment and feeling of vulnerability about one's own sex, especially in relations to the opposite sex; for example, men may feel inadequate about expressing their feelings to women, who seem so much more skilled at this.
- 9. Sexual Perfectionism/Dissatisfaction**
Feeling compulsive about "doing it right" leads to immobilization and inability to do anything at all - or in despair, yet wanting more.. A typical example of sexual perfectionism is needing to achieve the "right" orgasm. This dissatisfaction stems partly from the lack of meaning inherent in impersonal sexual contact and partly from the fact that sexual pleasure only anesthetizes the pain, without ever healing it.
- 10. Body Shame**
This is a deep embarrassment about one's body or about certain aspects of one's body. People who feel body shame tend to continually compare themselves with others, who are slimmer, better developed, or more attractive.