Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) in the Treatment of Unwanted Pornography Viewing

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Presentation Description

A one day training for mental health clinicians who work with clients who present with sexual compulsions, primarily unwanted pornography viewing.

Expected Learning Outcomes and Program Benefits

At the end of the training, clinicians will be able to:

1. Understand the significant elements of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness practice. These include
   a. Help clients orient away from an outcome to a process view of their problem
   b. Motivate clients through “creative helplessness” metaphors and activities
   c. Identify and experience therapeutic acceptance
   d. Become more aware of emotions and arousal patterns
   e. Diffuse repetitive, unhelpful meanings around the use of pornography
   f. Assist clients to access mindful ways to process emotions and impulses
   g. Help clients more clearly identify their values and motives for change
   h. Commit to action toward valued goals rather than emotional avoidance

2. Be able to apply these concepts in the context of clinical work with people who struggle with compulsive pornography use.
3. Utilize at least 5 metaphors and several exercises which guide therapy and help clients make connections to concepts.
4. Learn numerous clinical exercises to help clients have real experiences in concordance with treatment goals.
5. Learn 2 meditations which strengthen mindful awareness of emotions and impulses.
6. Be able to apply these principles in individual or group therapy.

Treatment handouts will be provided to each participant. Evaluations will also be given at the end.
Registration: 7:45am-8:00am

Session 1 8:00 am to 12:00 (including 15 minute break)
Introduction to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Initial Metaphors

1. Research Controversy on Sex Addiction
2. Review evidence supporting Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) as an effective treatment.
3. Redefining the Problem as Experiential Avoidance
4. *Session 1: Person in the Hole Metaphor*
   a. Why obvious solutions fail and potentially add to the problem
   b. “Creative Hopelessness”
5. *Session 2: Paradox of Control*
   a. Inside/Outside Rule
   b. Nervous system as internal polygraph machine

Lunch 12:00-1:00 (On your own)

Session 2 1:00pm to 4:30pm (including 15 minute break)

6. *Session 3: Willingness*
   a. Our Mind the Problem Solver
   b. Urges vs Willingness
7. *Session 4: Our Language Problem*
   a. Tug of War with the Word Monster
   b. The Lottery Question
   c. Description vs Evaluation
   d. Defusion of problematic language
8. *Session 5: Self as Context*
   a. Passengers on the bus
   b. Revisit Crew Chief Problem Solving Mind
9. *Session 6: Emotions*
   a. Parking Lot: starting over
   b. Emotional Awareness
10. *Session 7: Values*
    a. Clarifying Values
    b. Acting on Values
11. *Session 8: The ACT Matrix*
    a. Joe: Willingness in action
    b. The ACT Matrix as your guide
12. Final Questions and Discussion