Hypersexuality

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Seminar in Contemporary Trends: Addictions
What is hypersexuality?

“Sexually arousing fantasies, urges, or activities that are culturally sanctioned aspects of normative sexual arousal and activity but which increase in frequency or intensity (for greater than 6 months duration) so as to preclude or significantly interfere with the capacity for reciprocal affectionate activity.” (Kafka and Hennen, 1999)
Proposed DSM V Diagnosis
Criteria for Hypersexual Disorder

Criterion A-
Lasting over a period of 6 months or more, reoccurring intense sexual fantasies, sexual urges, and sexual behaviors along with four or more of the following criteria:
• A lot of time is spent consumed by fantasies and urges, as well as planning and engaging in sexual behaviors.
• Repeated participation in sexual fantasies, urges, and behaviors because of a distressed mood state. (anxiety, depression, boredom, irritability)
• Repeated participation in sexual fantasies, urges, and behaviors because of stressful life events.
• Repeated and unsuccessful attempts at stopping or reducing sexual fantasies, urges, and behaviors.
• Repeating participation in sexual behaviors despite knowledge of risking physical or emotional harm towards self, or others.

(Kafka, 2010)
Criterion B-
There is significant evidence that social, occupational, and other areas of day to day life are negatively effected by the severity of fantasies, urges, or behaviors.

Criterion C-
Sexual fantasies, urges, or behaviors are not caused by the use of a substance. (drug abuse or medication)

Specify if: masturbation, pornography, sexual behavior with consenting adults, cyber sex, telephone sex, or strip clubs.

• (Kafka, 2010)
Potential Causes

- A study by Leedes (1999) found that sexual addicts in adult relationships have a 95% rate of insecure attachment styles. Since sexual addicts are more insecure, they are at a higher risk for experiencing trouble within adult relationships. (Zapf, Greiner, and Carroll, 2008)

- Evidence that shows troubled childhood experiences (sexual abuse, physical abuse) and how the child responds to the traumatic event is important to understanding unusual sexual behaviors. (Zapf, Greiner, and Carroll, 2008)
Affects an estimated 3-6% in the United States

Majority of people who seek treatment are male. In an anonymous research study, of 36 people (self identified with hypersexual behavior), 28(78%) were male and 8(22%) were female.

Comparing men and women mentioned in previous research study: Significant difference in the mean number of sexual partners within the last 5 years.

Men- average 59.3 sexual partners within the last 5 years/Women- average 8 sexual partners within the last 5 years. (Kaplan and Krueger, 2010)
Statistics, cont.

- Comorbidity- Black et al. (1997) 36 participants with hypersexual disorder were recruited, of the 36 participants: 39% had a history of major depression, 64% had a history of substance abuse, and 42% had a history of phobic disorder. Of the 36 participants, 7 had previously been diagnosed with a type of paraphilic disorder.

- (Kaplan and Krueger, 2010)
Treatment

-Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment: Relapse Prevention
Teaches individuals struggling with hypersexual disorder how to gain control, make life style changes to prevent, and provide alternative coping strategies for situations that may trigger a relapse.

-Twelve Step or Addiction Counseling: Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous
Helps individuals be open and honest with themselves and others struggling with hypersexual disorder. Focused on helping individuals stop or control their behavior and learning new coping strategies.

• (Kaplan and Krueger, 2010)
Confessions of a Sex Addict

- http://youtu.be/zhfIXFwm1pQ
Risks

- Low self esteem
- Anxiety
- Depression
- STD’s/STI’s
- HIV/AIDS
- Greater risk for violence
- (about.com/men’s health)
The Cycle of Addiction

The addiction starts as a fantasy, turns into a ritual, which leads to acting out, and may result in feeling shame or guilt. Then the cycle repeats.
Addiction or not?

Based off of what I have learned in class this semester, I do believe that hypersexuality should be considered an addiction. I view it as an addiction because the behavior is excessive, it provides some short term psychological gain for the person to keep participating in the activity, the behavior has high risks and negative consequences associated with it, the behavior is continued even after the individual is aware of the negative consequences, the individual will be distressed if he/she can not participate in the activity, the individual feels the “need” to participate in the activity, and he/she experiences pleasure while participating in the activity.

(Week 1 Lecture Notes: The Nature of Addiction)
References

- Week 1 Lecture Notes: The Nature of Addiction