



## SEX ADDICTION... TRAPPED IN JUDGEMENT

Our research explored the experience of self-identified sex-addicts and how sex addiction affects individuals' well-being and self-concept. Our aim is to help inform professionals working with this client group.

### Research Question:

"What was/is the impact of being a self-identified sex addict on our respondents' self-concept and their inter and intrapersonal well-being, and can this inform psychotherapeutic practice?"

We followed BACP guidelines for research in counselling and psychotherapy (Mitchels, 2018). Three respondents self-identifying as recovering addicts were audio-recorded during semi-structured interviews. This data was thematically analysed by phenomenological principles (Smith et al, 2009). The limitations of our research include a small sample size which may restrict generalisation of our findings (McLeod, 2003). Also, the research analysis was based on phenomenological principles and the findings may be considered subjective.

### Our Research Conclusions:

Sex-addiction has a negative impact on inter/intrapersonal relationships; it exacerbates existing negative self-concept and induces self-judgement and shame. The careful extension of empathy and non-judgement from counsellor to client appears critical in the psychotherapeutic relationship and greatly enhances the possibility of recovery for this client group.

The recovery from sexual addiction appears to be an on-going life-long process, needing long term support.

## "SEX ADDICTION"

This is a common term, but our research highlighted a lack of agreed definition, so we used "self-identified sex addict".

### Key Findings:

#### *Co-Morbid Addictions*

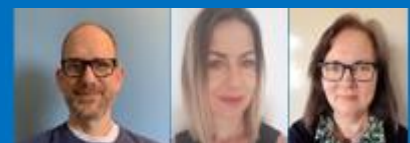
#### *Triggers for Identification & Recovery*

#### *Life-long Recovery*

#### *Negative Self-Concept*

#### *Awareness of Judgement*

#### *Therapeutic Impact of Non-Judgement*



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