Seattle Institute for Sex Therapy, **Education & Research:** 41 Years of **Community Organizing**

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New View Capstone Conference Critique

Resist

Transform

Oct. 7, 2016 Indiana University

Bloomington, IN

History

- Seattle Institute for Sex Therapy, Education & Research (S.I.S.T.E.R.)
- Non-profit organization (501c3)
- Founded in 1975
- Mission statement: Our purpose is to assist people to explore and discover their own sexuality and to support them in finding ways to meet their needs. We serve a diverse group of women and men of all sexual identities, orientations, and lifestyles. All fees are negotiable, based on ability to pay.
- <u>Founding principle</u>: Seattle Institute for Sex Therapy, Education, and Research operates on the principle that sexual energy is a positive expression of human life.

About the organization

Structure

Independent contractors/volunteers with diverse expertise

Activities

Educational:

Groups, workshops, phones

Clinical:

Individual and couple sex therapy and sexuality counseling

Current research:

Turning the New View into a clinical evaluation tool

A New View-based clinical evaluation tool

- Sexual Problems Self-Assessment Questionnaire
- Translates the New View into 74 polarized statements
- Online users score the subjective intensity of their answers on Likert scales
- http://www.sextx.com/SPSAQ/SPSAQ_SurveyH.htm

Sample items

I. SOCIO-CULTURAL, POLITICAL, OR ECONOMIC FACTORS

- K. I avoid having sex or experience distress during sex because I feel I don't live up to the ideals of my culture regarding sexuality or desirability.
- L. I feel anxiety or shame about my body, ... or sexual responses.
- M. I feel confusion or shame about my sexual orientation or identity.
- N. I feel confusion or shame about my sexual fantasies, desires, and preferences.
- R. I feel a lack of interest, fatigue, or lack of time for sex due to family, work, or other obligations.

II. RELATIONSHIPS

- F. In ANOTHER RELATIONSHIP, I have experienced sexual inhibition, avoidance, or distress arising from betrayal, dislike, fear or abuse.
- G. There are discrepancies between myself and my partner in frequency of desire
- H. There are discrepancies between myself and my partner in preferences for various sexual activities.

- L. My partner's health and/or sexual problems interfere with my sexual arousal, enjoyment, or spontaneity.
- Q. I experience sexual aversion, mistrust, or inhibition of sexual pleasure due to my partner's depression.

III. PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

- B. I avoid sexual activity or fail to experience sexual pleasure because of my fears about rejection.
- F. I experience sexual aversion, mistrust, or inhibition ... due to my depression.
- H. I experience sexual inhibition due to my fear of sexual acts or their possible consequences, for example, pain during intercourse, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, etc.

IV. PHYSICAL FACTORS

- A. I experience pain or lack of physical response during sexual activity due to medical condition(s) affecting my body.
- J. I experience pain during ... sexual contact for undiagnosed reasons.
- K. I take medication/substance(s) (prescribed, herbal, or illegal) to enhance my sexual experience.

Partner scores over course of tx

SPSAQ results Couple 1 - Showing spreadsheet rows for Relationships section only						
Partner 1 - 1st test	Partner 1 - 2nd test	Partner 1 - 3rd test		Partner 2 - 1st test	Partner 2 - 2nd test	Partner 2 - 3rd test
Feb 2014	Jun 2014	Dec 2014		Feb 2014	Jun 2014	Dec 2014
Response	Response	Response	Field Name	Response	Response	Response
			II. RELATIONSHIPS			
0	0	0	A. Inhibit Betrayal or Dislike	1	4	1
0	0	0	B. Inhibit Fear of Partner	0	9	0
0	0	0	C. Inhibit Partner Abuse	0	0	0
56	7	0	D. Inhibit Unequal Power	59	14	0
6	8	0	E. Inhibit Neg Communication	2	3	0
100	73	79	F. Inhibit Another Relationship	1	1	0
100	65	72	G. Discrepancy in Frequency	91	59	72
74	73	19	H. Discrepancy in Activities	50	50	50
14	6	0	I. Partner Sensitivity	24	19	1
0	0	12	J. Lost Interest from Mundania	0	1	0
0	65	0	K. Lost Interest from Trauma	0	0	0
6	9	13	L. Partner Health or Sex Probs	86	24	0
6	2	0	M. Aversion Partner Problem with Rejection	1	2	0
0	0	0	N. Aversion Partner Problem with Cooperation	3	2	0
27	11	0	O. Aversion Partner Problem with Closeness	69	10	0
0	3	0	P. Aversion Partner Criticalness	1	2	0
0	22	10	Q. Aversion Partner Depression	0	0	0
50	69	18	R. Aversion Partner Anxiety	59	0	4

Ultimate goal

Transform the definition(s) of success in sex therapy

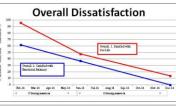
Evaluating Presenting Problems and Treatment Effectiveness in Couple Sex Therapy: A Case Study Demonstrating the Sexual Problems Self-Assessment Questionnaire

A New View of Sexuality as a Bio-Psycho-Social Phenomenon



Partner 1

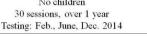
Caucasian American Female Age 38-39 Bachelor's degree Raised Catholic, currently Buddhist



Socio-Cultural Issues

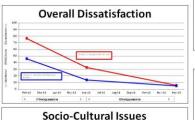
About the Couple

10-year relationship Had not had sex for 5 years No children 30 sessions, over 1 year





Caucasian American Male Age 49 Master's degree No religion previously or currently



Relationship Issues

Psychological Issues

What aspects of treatment were most helpful?

Partner 1

- "Permission to find my own pattern, as opposed to rules"
- "Books and movies"

Treatment Modalities

Communication

awareness

knowledge

mindfulness

· Couple homework focused on

Cognitive and somatic self-

Access to books, movies, therapist

Touch and intimacy

Training in goal-setting &

- "A structure for relationship intimacy"
- "The pace at which treatment progressed"

Partner 2

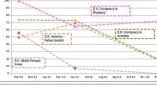
- "Resolving distrust of my wife & uncertainty about boundaries"
- "Learning to see some stuff as not a big
- "The movies, though they were uncomfortable at first'
- "Mindfulness practice"

Online Questionnaire

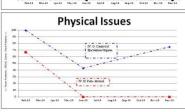
http://www.sextx.com/SPSAQ/SPSAQ SurveyH.htm

- 74 items in 4 domains Socio-cultural Relationship Psychological Physical
- 101-item Likert scale
- Guide individual interviews to important factors
- Display couple scores on Excel spreadsheet
- Evaluate ongoing treatment effectiveness
- Examine details of change in successful treatment

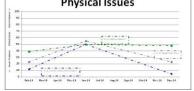
Relationship Issues

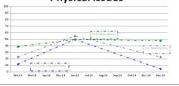






Physical Issues





. Seattle Institute's "Sexual Problems Self-Assessment Questionnaire" ... was a real eye-opener. It was easier to use and more informative than I had expected. It really is the only comprehensive assessment screener that provides information on ALL the factors contributing to sexual satisfaction physical, psychological, relationship, sociocultural and political. The first 3 of those are commonly assessed in a typical "sexual history," but where else will you get information about whether a client feels she has "vocabulary adequate to describe subjective or physical sexual experience" or "I avoid having sex because I feel I don't live up to the ideals of my culture regarding sexuality or desirability"? The relationship questions are subtle and far-ranging, e.a., "I experience sexual aversion, mistrust, or inhibition of sexual pleasure due to my partner's problem with co-operation." ... the client is ... actually given new vocabulary.

-- Leonore Tiefer, PhD, Dec. 2016

To use the SPSAQ in your practice

- · Free to clinicians and clients
- Opt in: Contact questionnaire@sextx.com
- Receive client scores by email
- Client identity coded for confidentiality

References: Please see handout

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Satisfaction scores are subjective

No interpersonal comparisons

Cautions

Contact information: Elizabeth Rae Larson, MS, DHS, LMHC, FAACS

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Thanks for technical assistance:
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