

The Etiology and Development of Sexually Abusive Behavior: An Evidence-Based Practice Approach

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In order to help clients develop resiliency from historical risk factors in support of relapse prevention as well as resistance to developing new forms of harmful behavior, it is important for them to understand the basic factors involved in the etiology and development of their sexual behavior problems. A key responsibility in Social Responsibility Therapy (SRT) is helping clients learn to understand their sexually abusive behavior through the Abuse Development Triad. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an evidence-based practice approach to the basic understanding of sexually abusive behavior from the SRT perspective. The presentation will follow the same structured framework that is used with SRT clients in the Abuse Development Triad portion of their treatment designed to help them discover how their abusive behavior was acquired (i.e., through the *risk factor chain*); (2) what maintained it (i.e., in the *stress-relapse cycle*); and (3) how it generalized to other life areas (i.e., through the *harmful behavior anatomy*).

Participants will learn:

1. The evidence-base support for each of the factors in the *risk factor chain* along with the use of this structured framework to help clients discover how their sexually abusive behavior was acquired.
2. The evidence-base support for each of the phases in the *stress-relapse cycle* along with the use of this structured framework to help clients discover how their sexually abusive behavior was maintained.
3. The evidence-base support for each of the components in the *harmful behavior anatomy* along with the use of this structured framework to help clients discover how their harmful behavior generalized to other life areas.

Examples of the cognitive-behavioral therapy interventions that are integrated throughout the Abuse Development Triad work on understanding the etiology and development of sexually abusive behavior will be described. A case example will be provided to illustrate the factors contributing to how sexually abusive behavior was acquired, how it was maintained and how it generalized to other areas. This presentation addresses the conference focus on “the etiology, development and prevention of sexual offending behavior” and the illustrations/figures included make discussion of this material equally effective in the workshop or poster session format.