Today’s Talk

- Sexuality Counseling vs Sex Therapy
- Introduce you to the Contextualized Sexuality Model
- Ethical Considerations
- Next Steps

Discussion

- What is sexuality?
- What is intimacy?
- To what extent does sexuality define people’s lives and intimate relationships?
Sexuality is “...a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.” (WHO, 2006)
Intimacy is:
- Cognitive/intellectual
- Experiential
- Emotional
- Sexual
# Contextualized Sexuality Model

## Human Sexuality

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Individual Mental Health</th>
<th>Gender ID/Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>Intimate Relationships</th>
<th>Cultural/Contextual Influences</th>
<th>Positive Sexuality</th>
<th>Physiology</th>
<th>Developmental Influences</th>
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Sexuality Counseling vs Sex Therapy

- Sexuality Counseling: short term, client-centered, focusing on immediate concern or problem.
  - Resolving concerns frequently through problem solving through communication strategies, providing accurate information, and exercises/techniques of expression

- Sex Therapy: licensed therapist, in-depth, generalized concerns
  - Comprehensive and intensive psychotherapy in addition to the immediate concerns
How Can I Incorporate

- This is merely:
  - Awareness
  - Education
  - Extension of inclusion efforts
  - Extension of safety and confidentiality
Ethics of Sexual Relationships

- From Darling & Mabe, 1989
  - Noncoercion
  - Nondeceit
  - People are not merely a means to an end
  - Respect for beliefs
Exercises 1.1 & 1.2

- Assessment of Current Level of Competence in Sexuality Counseling

- Guided Reflection Exercise: Barriers to Personal Comfort in Talking about Sexuality
Exercise 1.1

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT LEVEL OF COMPETENCE IN SEXUALITY COUNSELING?

Consider the following questions that reflect different aspects of competence in sexuality counseling. Circle “Yes” or “No” in response to each question. The questions for which you answered “No” are indicators of areas in which you may benefit from seeing additional training, experience, and/or information about local and national resources.

1. Are you comfortable talking about sexuality with clients? Yes/No
2. Do you understand the impact that common sexual health problems (e.g., STIs, infertility, sexual dysfunctions, relational conflict about sexual intimacy, and high-risk sexual behaviors) can have on clients? Yes/No
3. Are you knowledgeable about appropriate assessment strategies to assess the sexual health problems described in question 2? Yes/No
4. Are you knowledgeable about appropriate treatment strategies to use in counseling to address the sexual health problems described in question 2? Yes/No
5. Do you understand the basics of human anatomy and physiology related to sex and sexuality, such that you could describe these to clients? Yes/No
6. Do you have the training and experience to be competent to address related client concerns, such as body image and relationship issues? Yes/No
7. Are you knowledgeable of and connected to referral sources for clients whose sexuality-related concerns are beyond your competence? Yes/No
8. When addressing sexuality issues in counseling, are you able to maintain appropriate boundaries and address boundary crossings, such as a client expressing romantic interest in you? Yes/No
Exercise 1.2

GUIDED REFLECTION EXERCISE: BARRIERS TO PERSONAL COMFORT IN TALKING ABOUT SEXUALITY

Take time to consider your reactions to the following questions. You can write in a journal about your responses or discuss your responses with a trusted colleague or supervisor.

1. Growing up, how comfortable was your family in talking about sex and sexuality?

2. What messages did you receive when talking about sexuality when you were a child?

3. Thinking back to the earliest questions about sexuality that you asked adults during your childhood, what responses did you get to these questions?

4. With which types of clients do you believe you would be most and least comfortable talking about sexuality? What factors make you more or less comfortable with each population?

5. Which sexual practices might clients discuss that would be most shocking to you? How do you think you would respond if a client talked about his or her experiences with these practices?

6. Imagine if a client asked you to give him or her specific advice on sexual technique (e.g., how to make a partner orgasm or how to masturbate). What would your response be?

7. Think through the clinical, informal, and slang terms you know to describe sex and sexual parts of males’ and females’ bodies. What reactions do you have to these words? Now imagine saying those words to a client or supervisor. What emotional reactions might you have to saying those words?
Credentialing

- The American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT; www.aasect.org)
- Society for Sex Therapy and Research (SSTAR; www.sstarnet.org)
- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SEICUS; www.seicus.org)