



# **Using Forensic Compassion Focused Therapy to Help Adults with Sexual Interest in Children**

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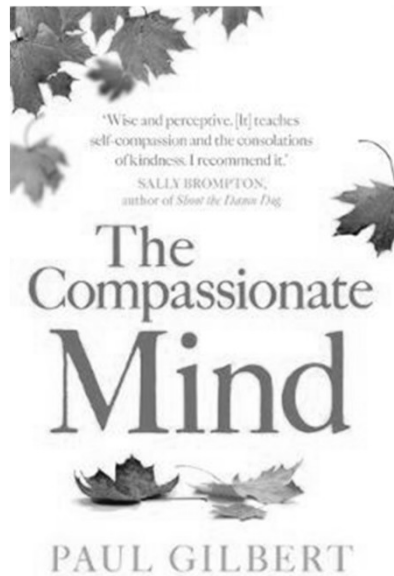
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Derbyshire Community Forensic Mental Health Team | Centre for Complex  
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## Group exercise

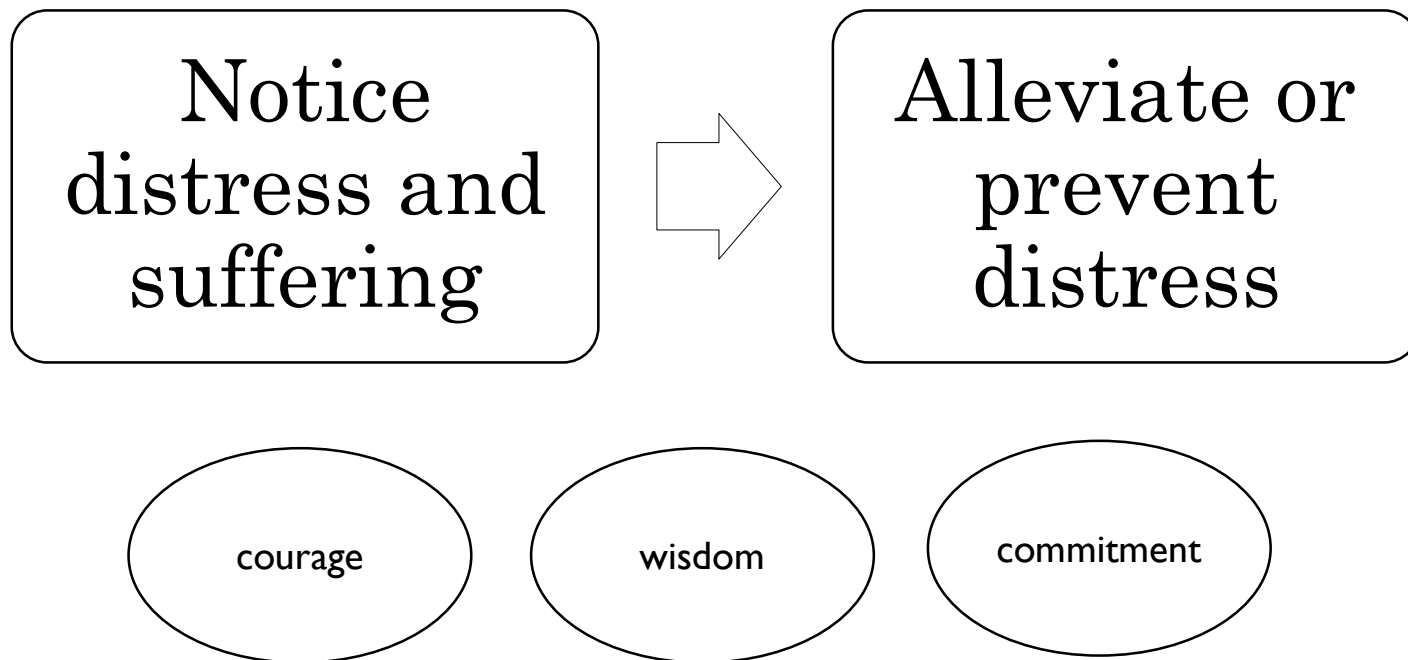
- How did you become aware of your sexuality?
- What social support was available as you faced your sexuality?
- What social systems embrace your sexuality now



# Compassion Focused Therapy

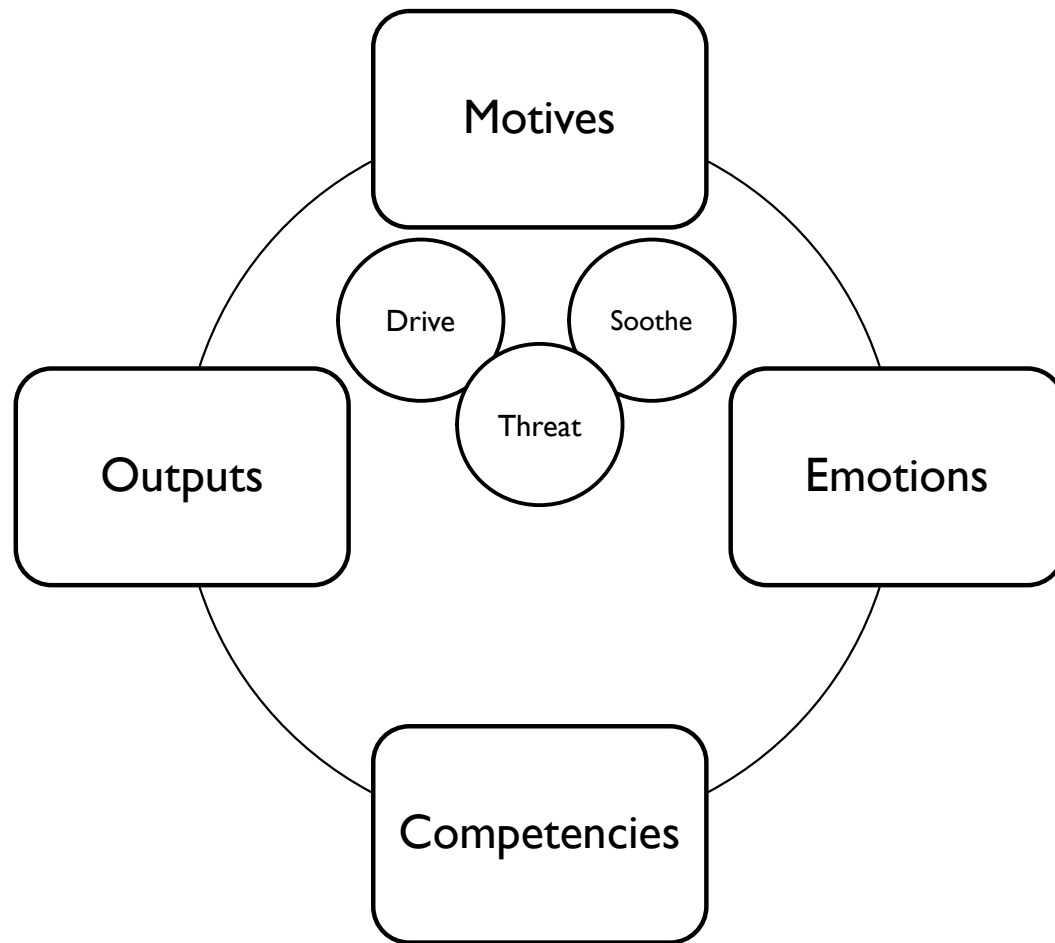
- Understand human nature
- Understand and alleviate the causes of suffering
- Draws on evolution science, psychology, anthropology, neuroscience, spiritual traditions ...

*Understands the nature of humanity and that humans are inherently harmful*



**Compassion as a motivation and not an emotion**





## FOUR CORE INTERACTING DOMAINS:

A MODEL OF **HUMAN**  
NATURE



**Competitive  
Mentality**

Down Rank	Up Rank
Submissive	Superior
Self-critical	Entitled
Shamed	Aggressive

## Switching motives

**Caring  
Mentality**



### **Affiliative**

Distress tolerant

Soothing

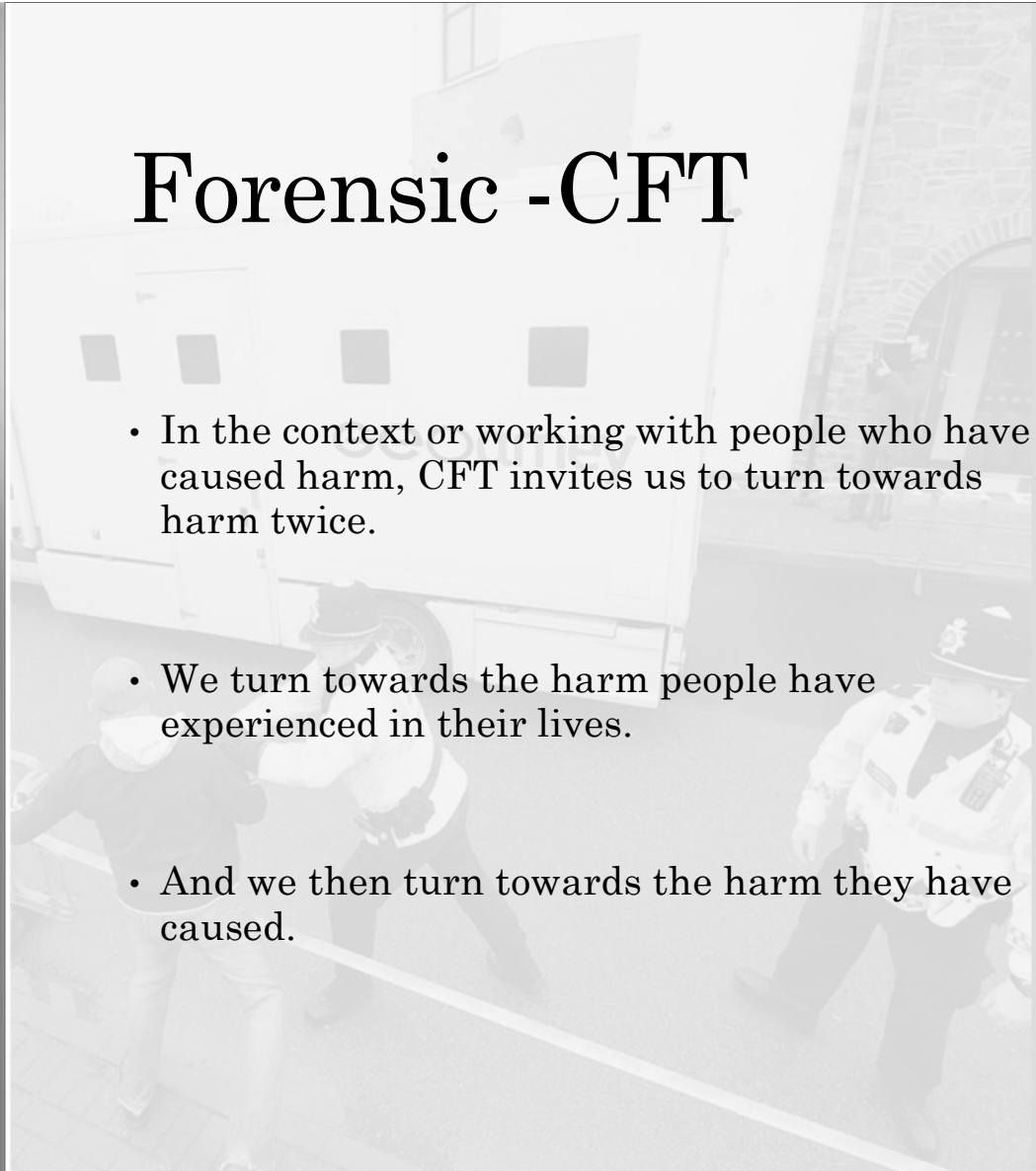
Empathic

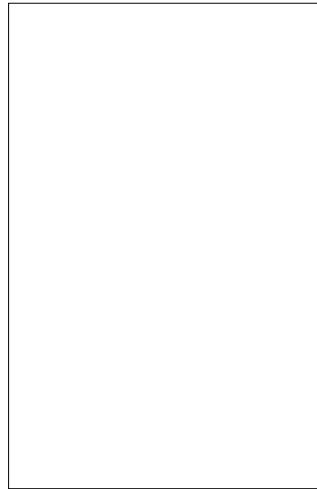
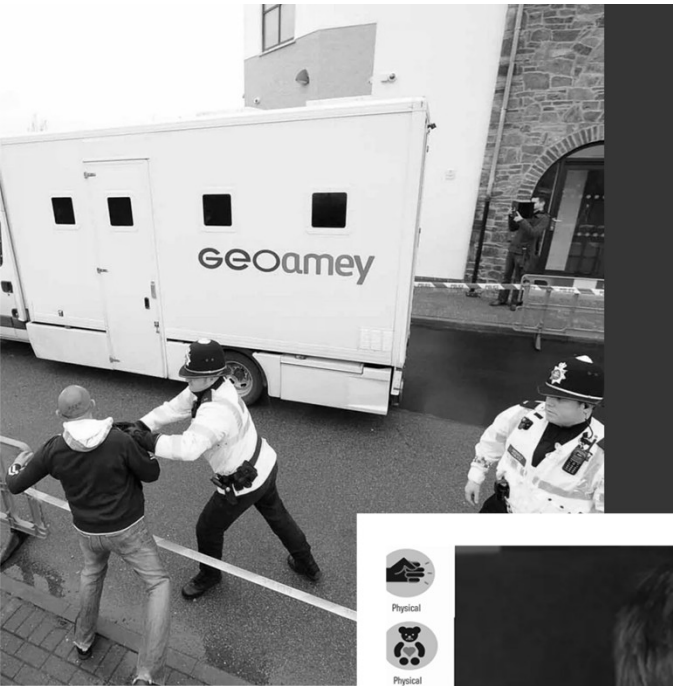
Striving to help



# Forensic -CFT

- In the context of working with people who have caused harm, CFT invites us to turn towards harm twice.
- We turn towards the harm people have experienced in their lives.
- And we then turn towards the harm they have caused.





# Forensic -CFT

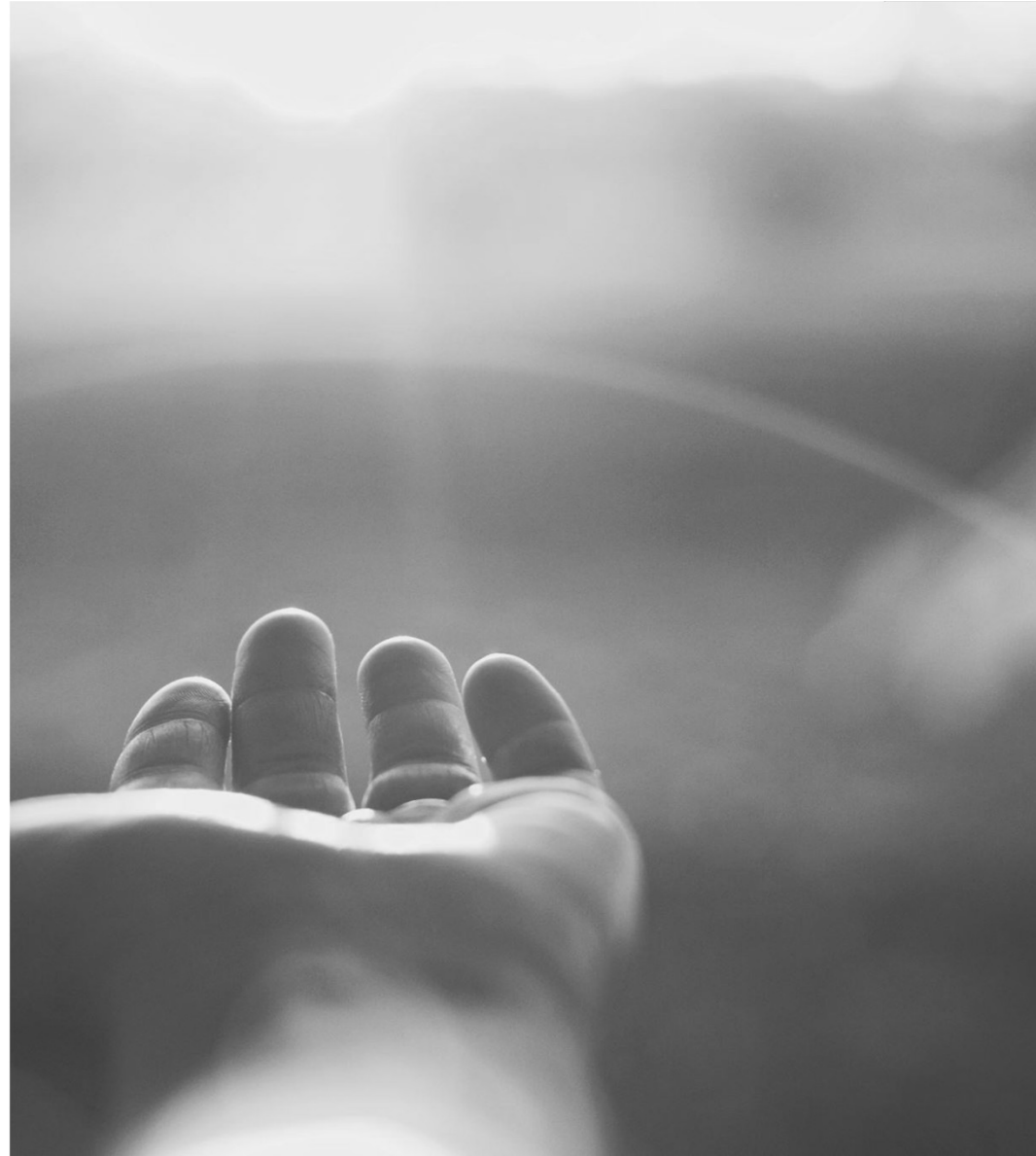
- In the context of working with people who have caused harm, CFT invites us to turn towards harm twice.
- CFT recognizes the importance of understanding the context(s) of people's lives
- F-CFT offers a functional analysis of the development of risk factors.
- F-CFT reconceptualizes criminogenic need/risk as learned/acquired ways of being



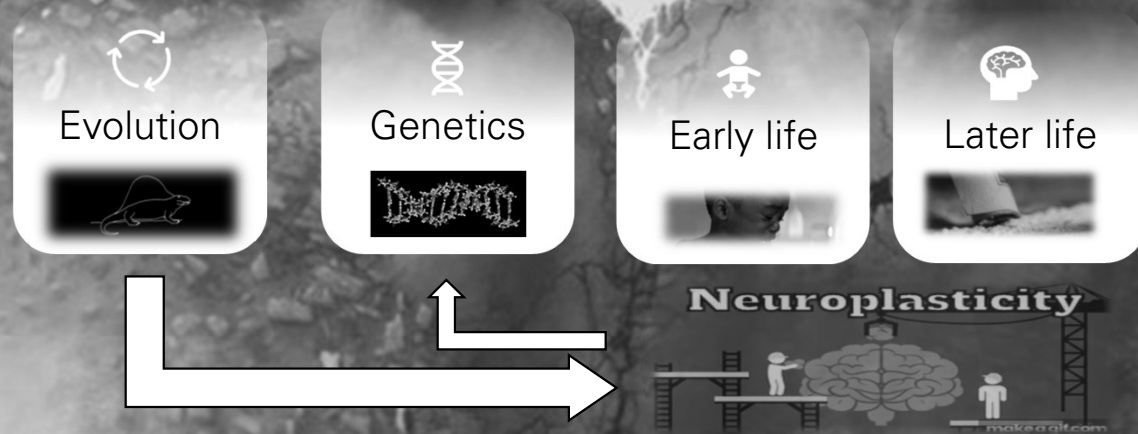
# People with sexual convictions

Forensic - CFT

- Understand human nature : understand human sexuality
- Turn towards suffering.
- Alleviate distress
- Turn towards suffering caused
- Commit to alleviating/preventing further distress



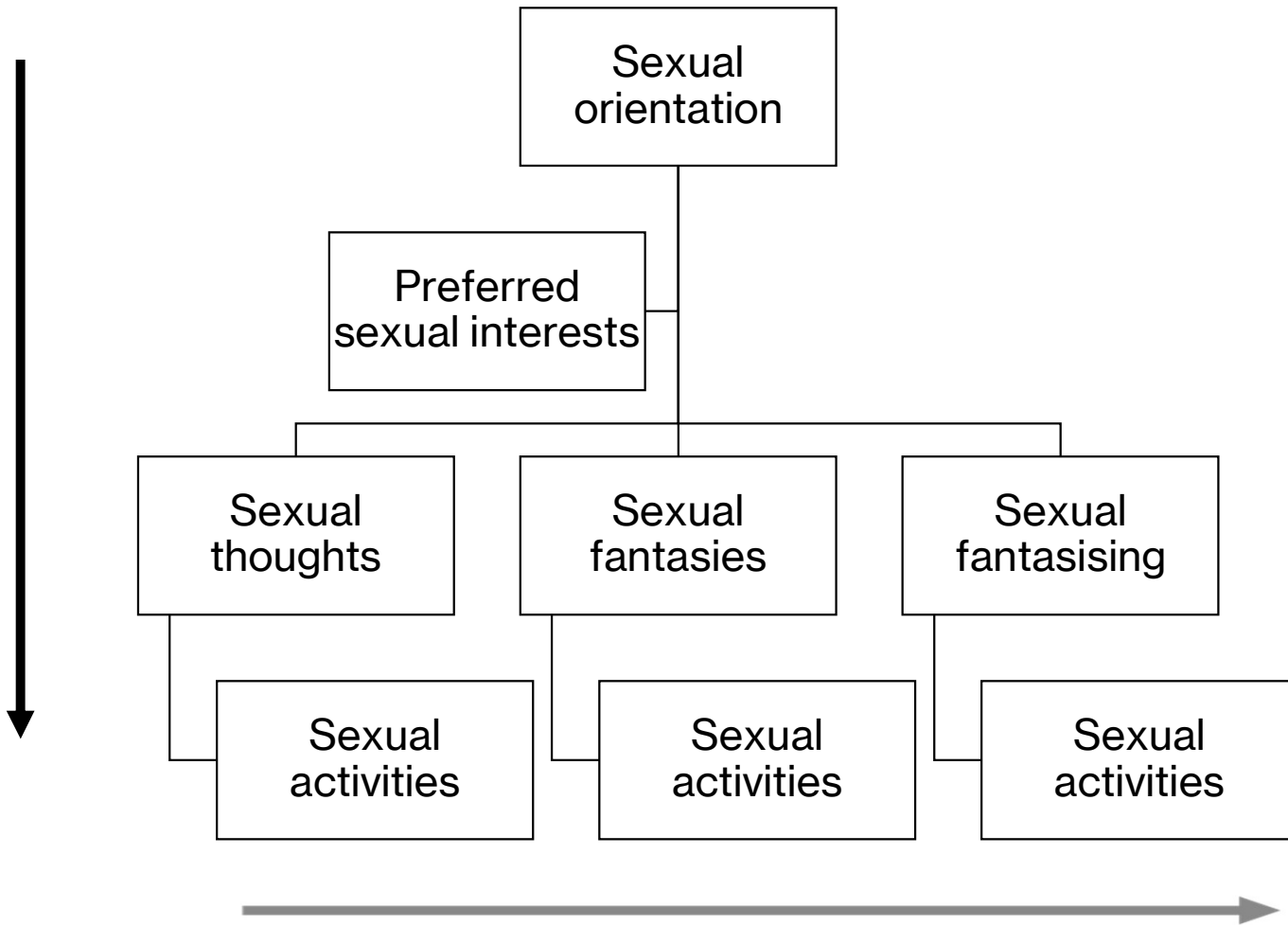
# Human Nature





# Human Sexuality



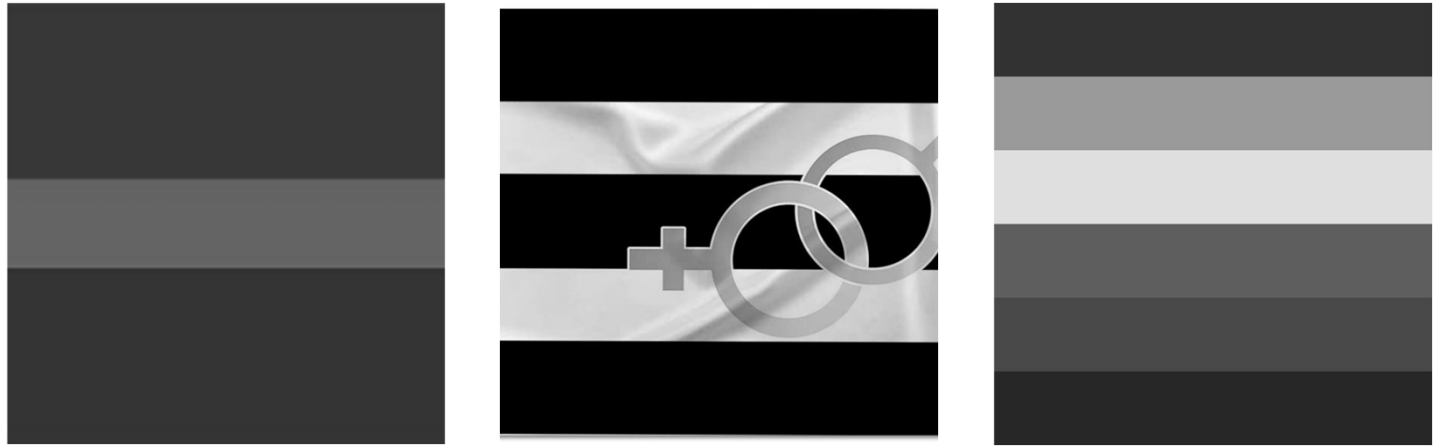


## Human Sexuality: a preoccupation?

- Porn sites receive more website traffic in the U.S. than Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Netflix, Pinterest, and Zoom.
- 1 out of every 8 porn titles shown to first-time visitors to porn sites described acts of sexual violence (Vera-Gray et al., 2021)
- In 2019 Pornhub had 42 *billion* visits: 1,120 visits a second, or 96.8 million a day.
- In 2018, 109,012,068,000 videos were viewed on porn hub. 14 videos for every person on the planet.
- More than 5,824,699,200 hours of porn were watched on Pornhub in 2019 alone: 665 centuries of content consumed in 1 year, on just one porn site.



Pornhub will have recorded more than 200,000 visits since this slide came on screen and almost 16 million by the time I shut up...



**Sexual Orientation: biological sex**

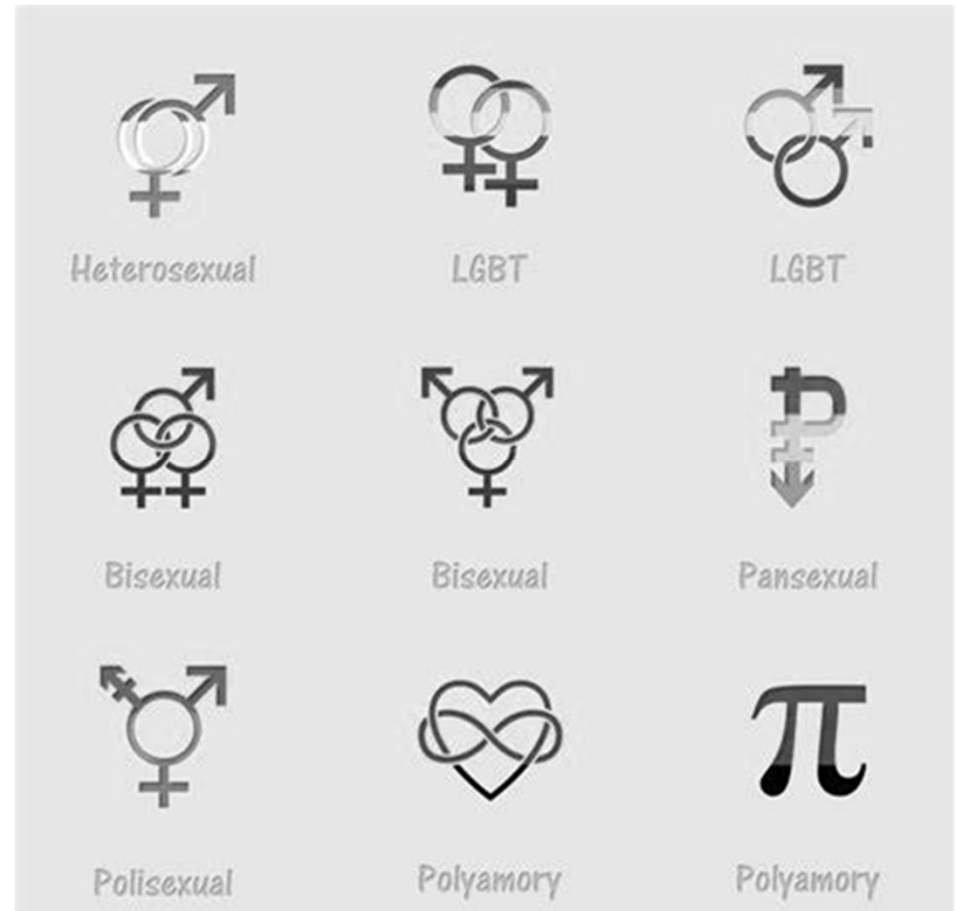
# Sexual Interests in Children

- Pedo-/hebephilia best conceptualised as a sexual orientation in men (Grundmann et al., 2016).
- Individuals who commit sexual offences against children do not always meet criteria for paedophilia (Gerwinn et al, 2018).
- People with SO/SIIC do not necessarily offend against children (Gerwinn et al 2018, Jahnke 2018).
- Self-report data from Dunkfield project suggest sexual fantasies are stable (Grundmann et al., 2016).



# Sexual orientation

- Human beings do not choose their sexual orientation.
- Human beings do not choose the interests that stimulate arousal.
- Some human beings find themselves with sexual interest/orientations that can cause harm.
- Some human beings are robbed of the potential for intimacy.
- Human beings do choose their sexual practices (including fantasizing and behaviours)



# Sexual interests, fantasies and fantasising

## Sexual Interests

- An evaluative construct regarding the sexual appeal of a particular target category or behaviour category
- Bartels, 2021

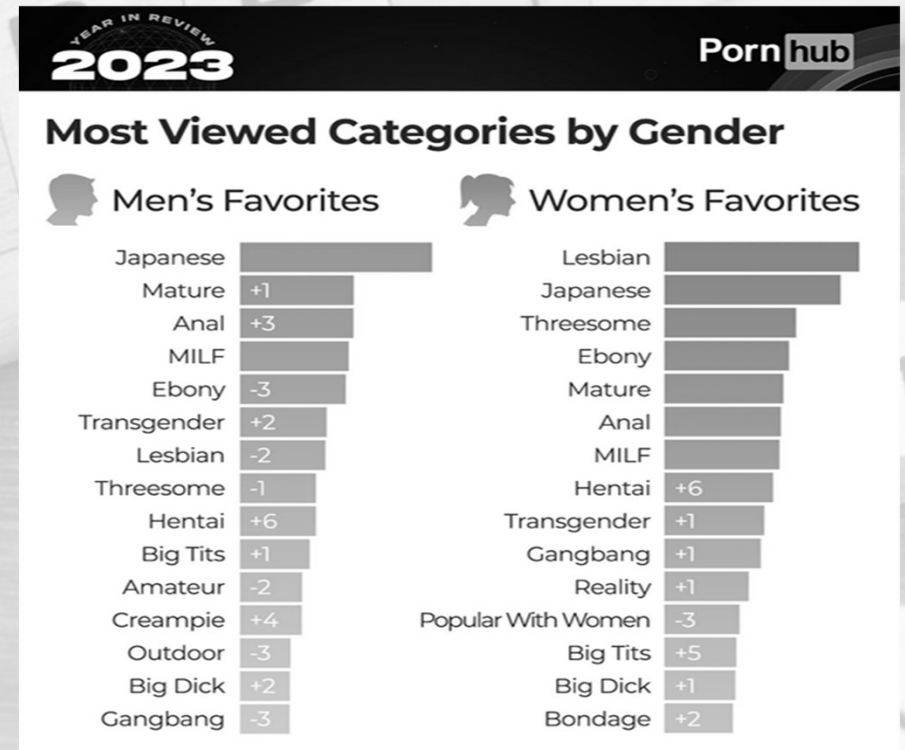
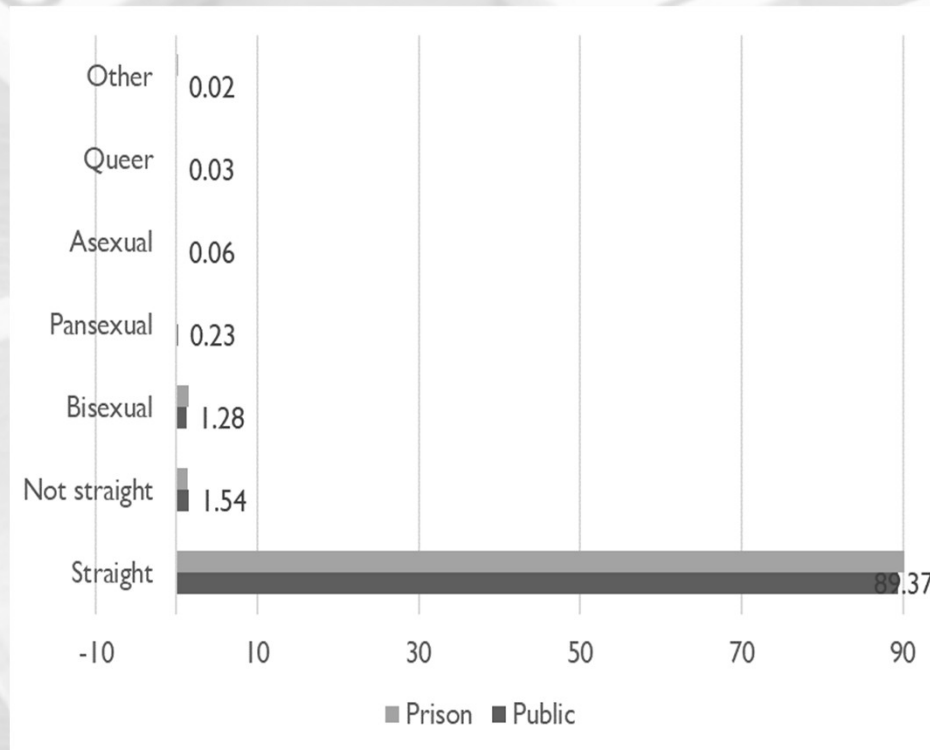
## Sexual fantasies

- Mental imagery that is sexually arousing or erotic
- Leitenberg & Henning, 1995

## Fantasizing

- The degree to which an individual may engage with a fantasy
- Bartels & Beech, 2017

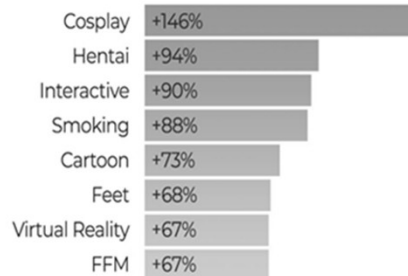
# Sexual orientation to sexual interests: Consistency vs diversity



# Sexual interests: generational differences

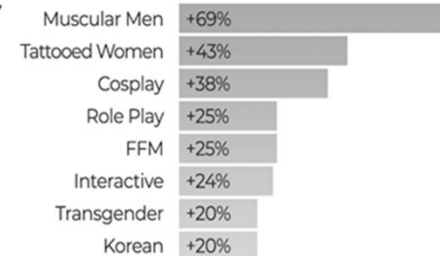
## Gen Z

18-24



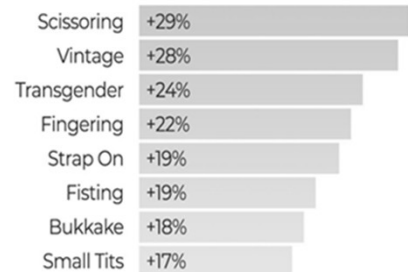
## Gen Y

25-34



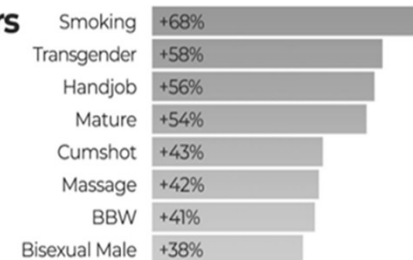
## Gen X

35-54



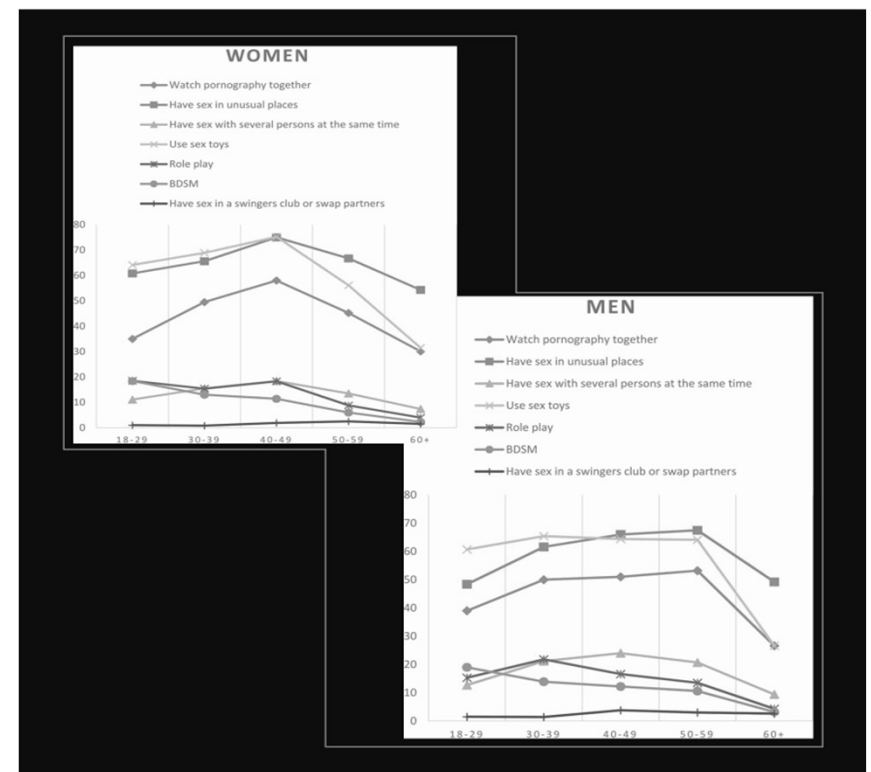
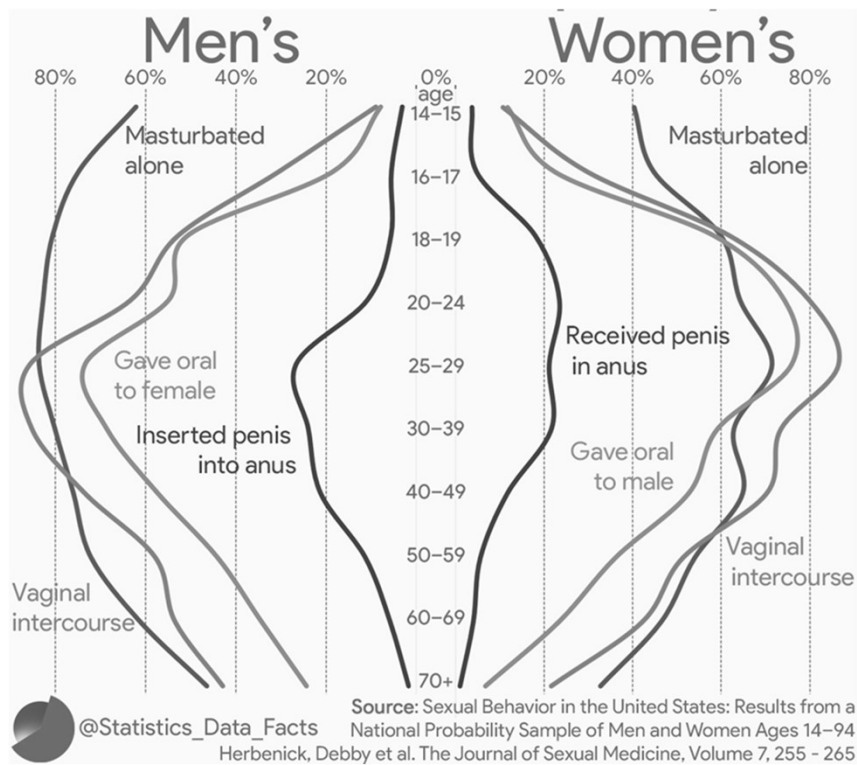
## Boomers

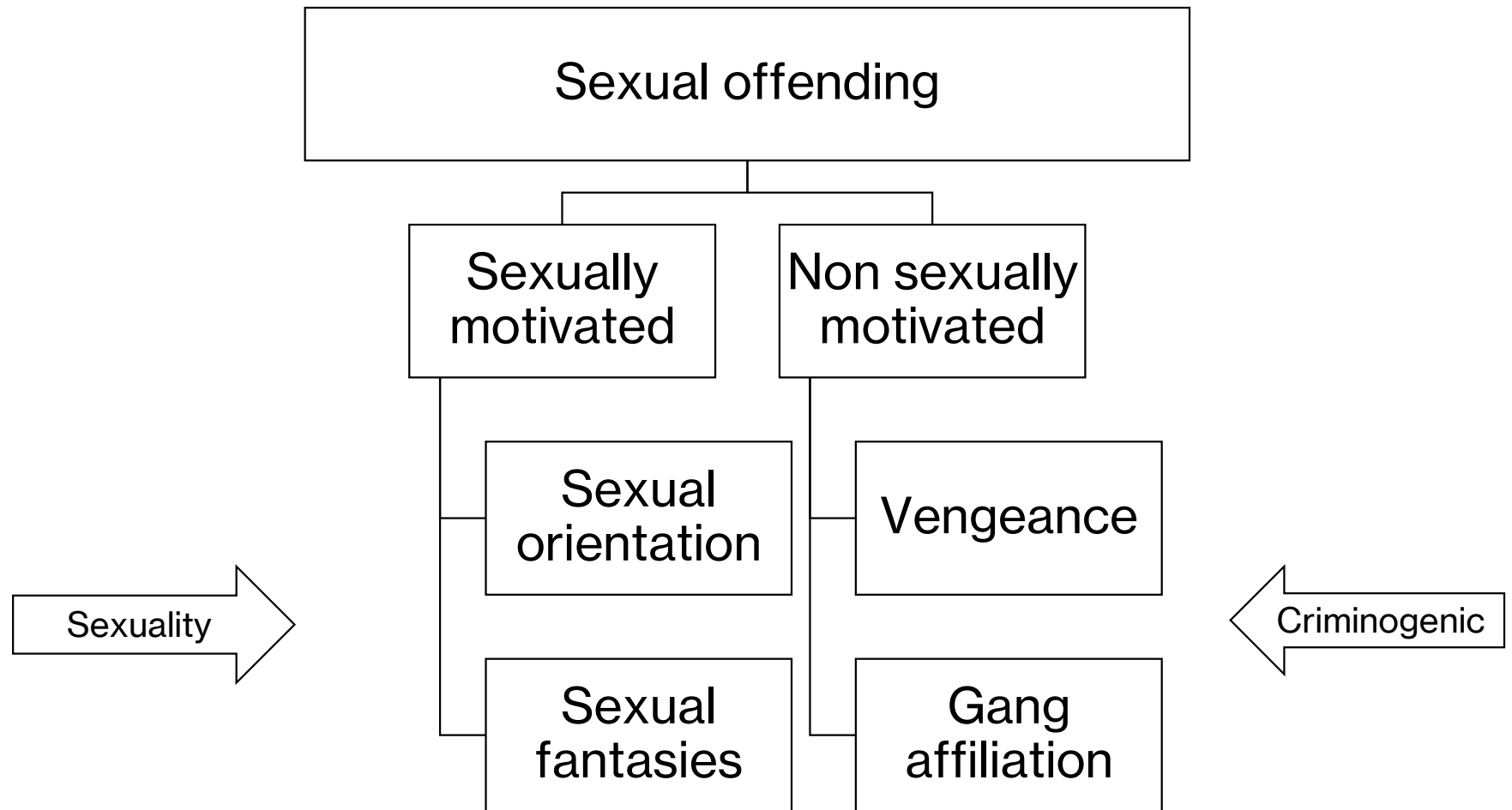
55+



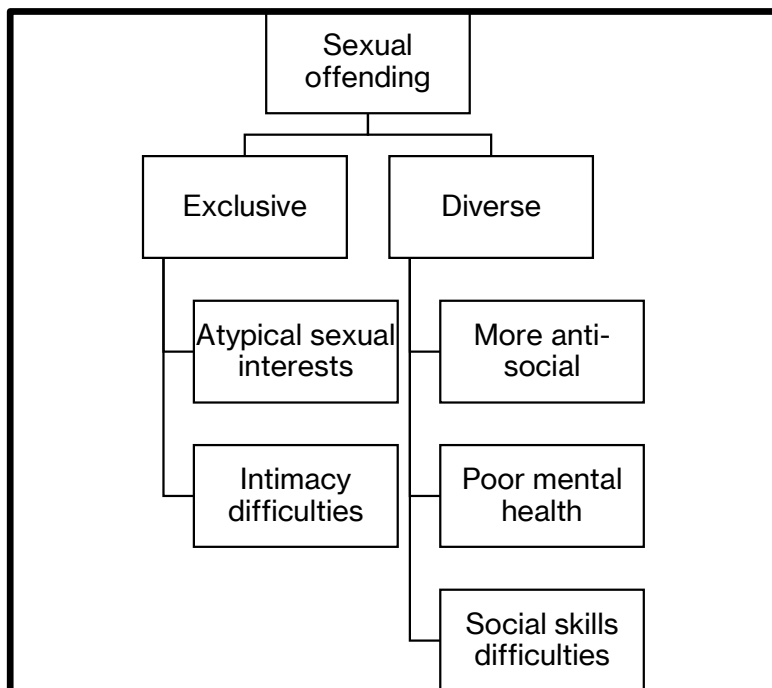


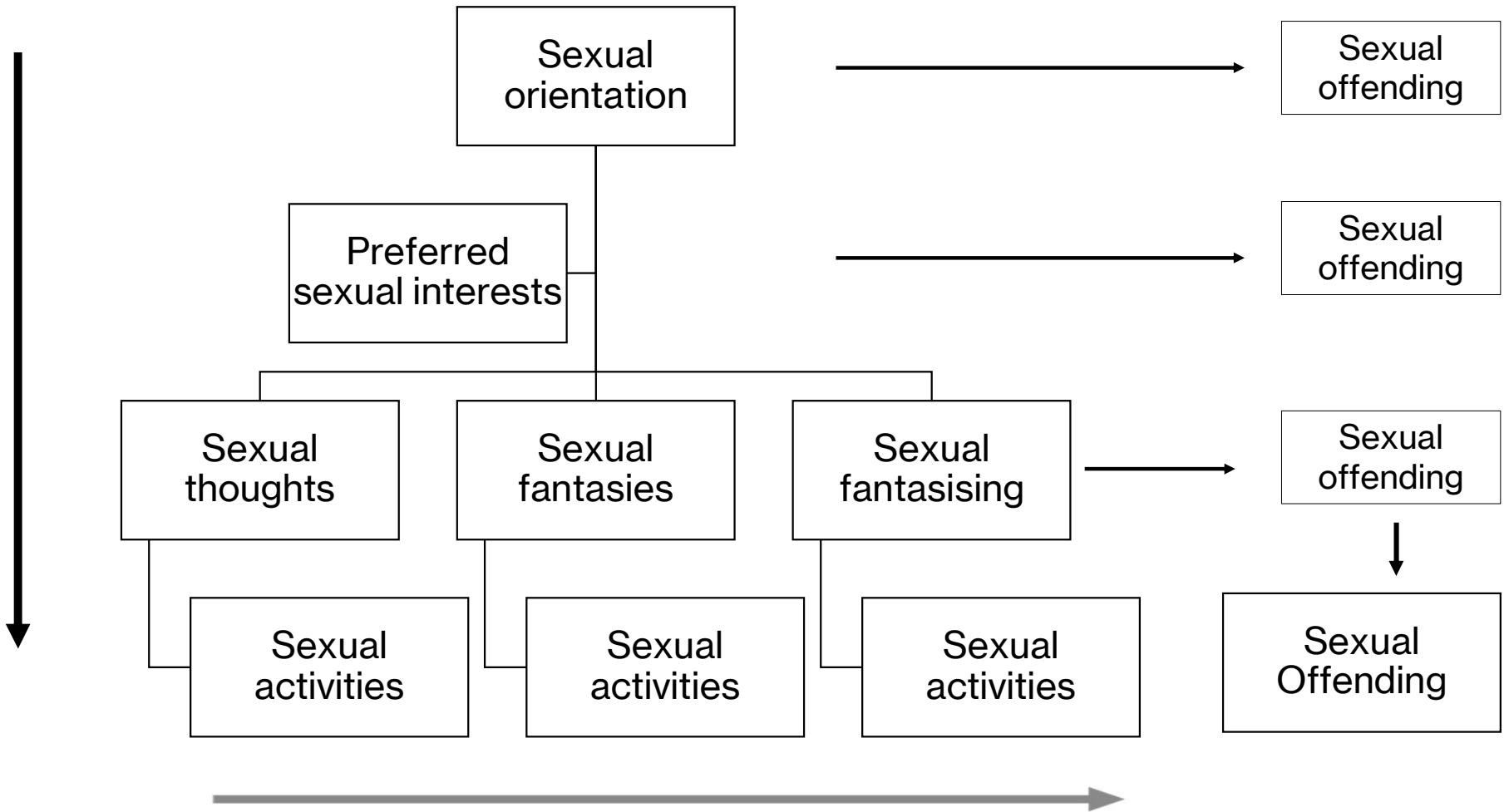
# Sexual behaviour





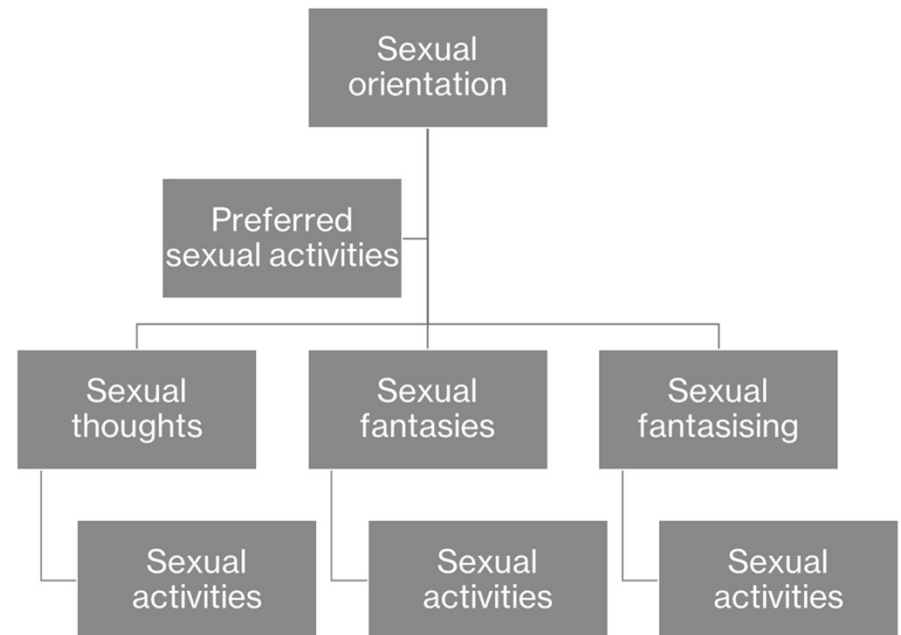
(Butler & Seto, 2002)



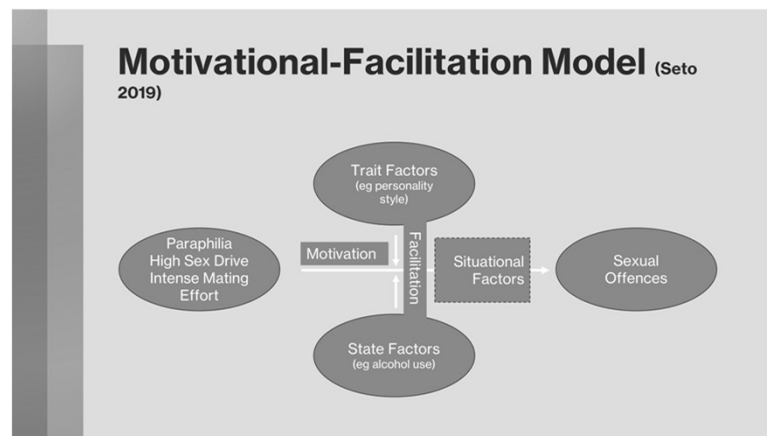


# Interventions for people with sexual convictions

	Need to establish which aspect of human sexuality drives the behaviour (if it is sexually motivated).
	Interventions will need to accommodate the level of sexuality that drives behaviour.
	Offending driven by sexual orientation will need a different treatment focus.

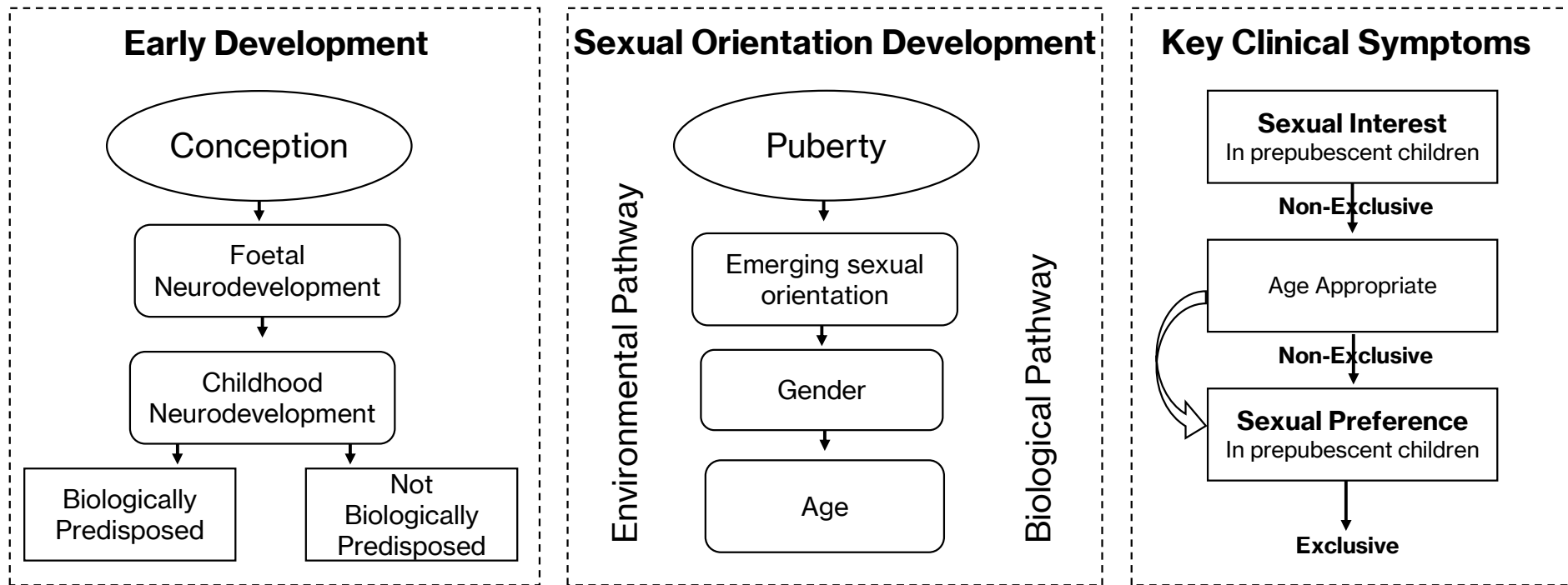


# Models of Sexual Offending



# Compositional Theory of Pedophilia

(Gannon, 2021)



# -Sigmund Freud-

0-5

Family influential  
Relational play  
Curiosity re body

Ego  
development

5-9

Superego  
development

Increasing peer contact  
Experimental genital touching  
Relational curiosity  
More aware of privacy  
Language incorporating ref to  
body parts

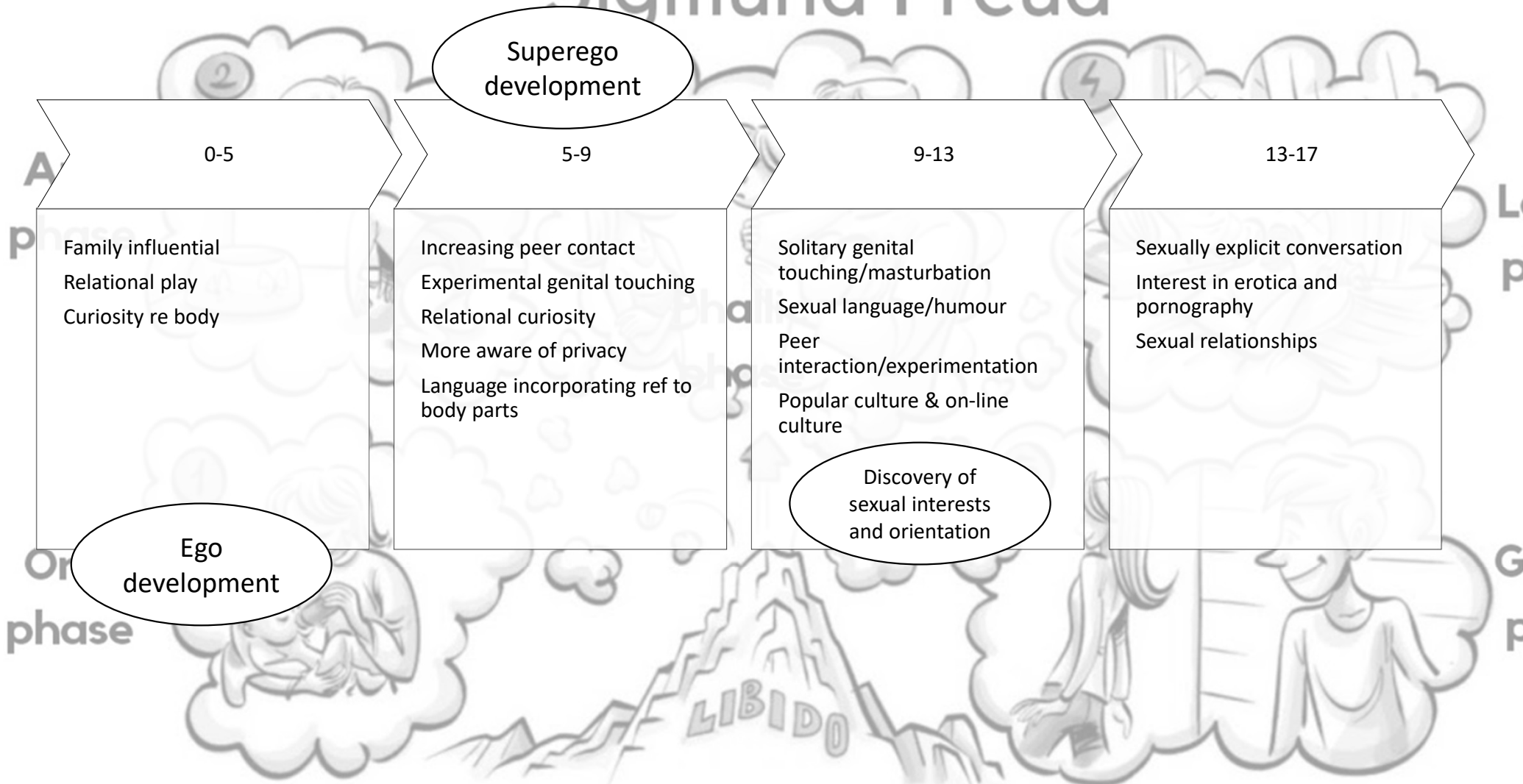
9-13

Solitary genital  
touching/masturbation  
Sexual language/humour  
Peer  
interaction/experimentation  
Popular culture & on-line  
culture

Discovery of  
sexual interests  
and orientation

13-17

Sexually explicit conversation  
Interest in erotica and  
pornography  
Sexual relationships





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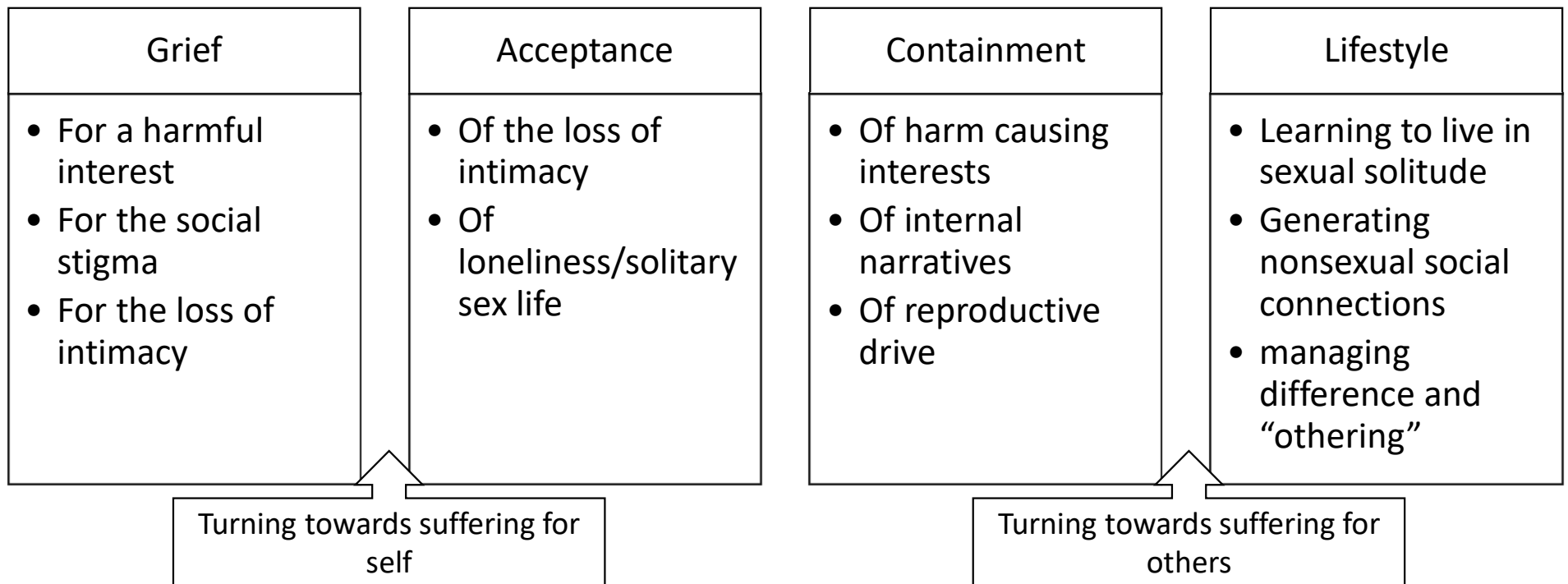
Some people will discover that they have an exclusive sexual attraction towards pre-pubescent children.

Some people will discover that they are attracted to a range of other people but have an interest in young children.

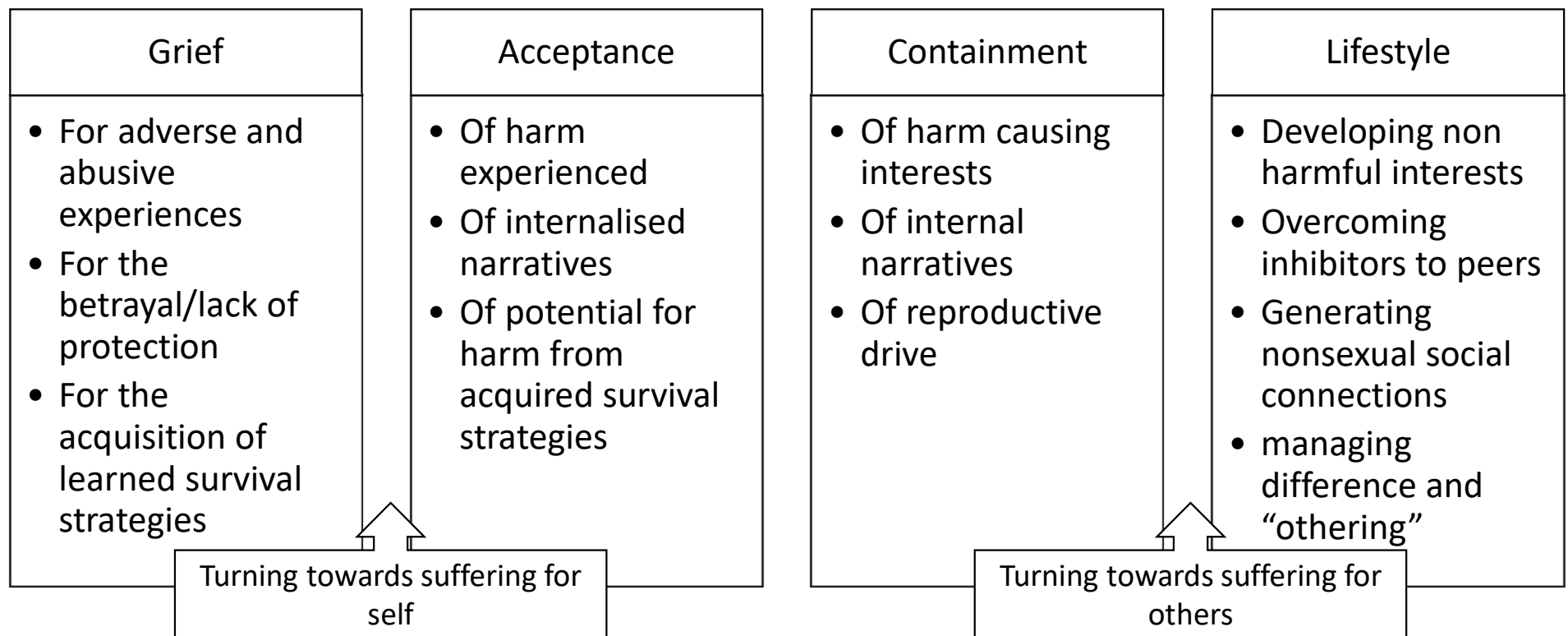
Some people will discover that they are attracted to peers but experience greater arousal when their peers are in distress



# Framework for working with harmful sexual orientation



# Framework for working with harmful sexual interests



# Sexual orientation



Grief

## : Sexual orientation

- Process of discovery;
  - Early sexual excitement/masturbation
  - Development of sexual scripts/narratives
- Loss of intimacy and relationship opportunities
- Social stigma and experience of othering



# Discovery



Noticing early arousal patterns



Reactions to self



Attempts to conceal (from self and others)

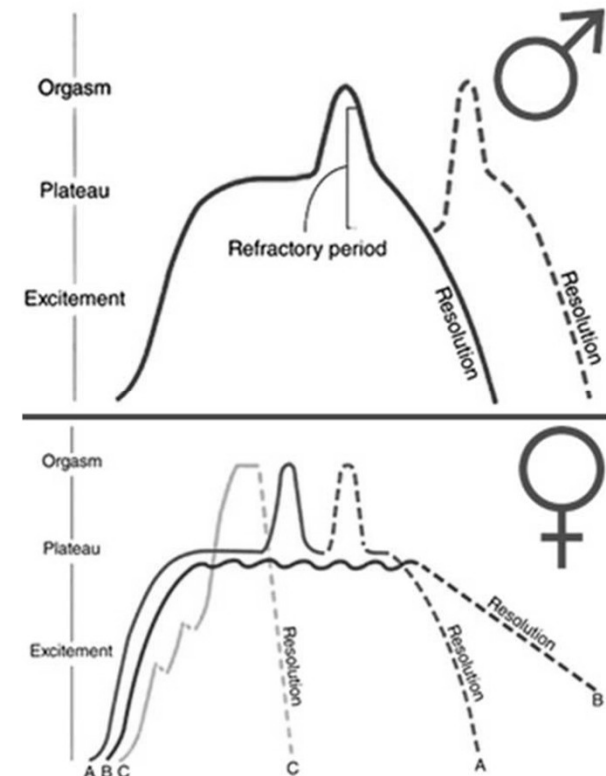


Developing social script/presentation to blend in



# Early sexual excitement

- Teach the physiology
- Managing physiological response to stimulation
  - Attention orientated to sexually arousing stimuli.
  - Psychological reaction stimulates sexual arousal.
  - Intrinsic pleasure associated with arousal reinforces attention bias and sexual orientation.
  - Masturbatory habits provide pleasure and sexual satisfaction.





***EROTICA***

# Development of sexual narratives

- Physiological signals legitimize the orientation.
- Development of narratives around physiological response (what stories do I tell, images do I run in response to arousal?).
- Absence of social rituals and stories to develop sexual narratives.
- Offence supportive narratives or physiologically driven scripts?



## Acceptance : Sexual orientation



Exploring the impact of sexual embargo



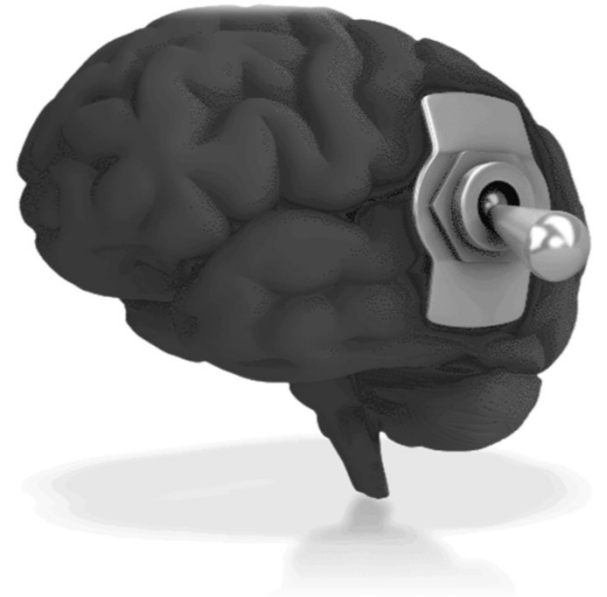
Preparing (sustaining) asexual adult life



Implications for social inclusion



I didn't choose my sexuality. But it is my responsibility to manage it



Containment

## : Sexual orientation

- Of harm causing interests:
  - Develop regulation skills
  - Develop peer relationships (undermine emotional congruence with younger)
- Of internal narratives:
  - Validate internalised scripts (around physiology)
  - Explore impact of scripts on intimacy development (abuse)
- Of reproductive drive:
  - Masturbatory practices

Lifestyle

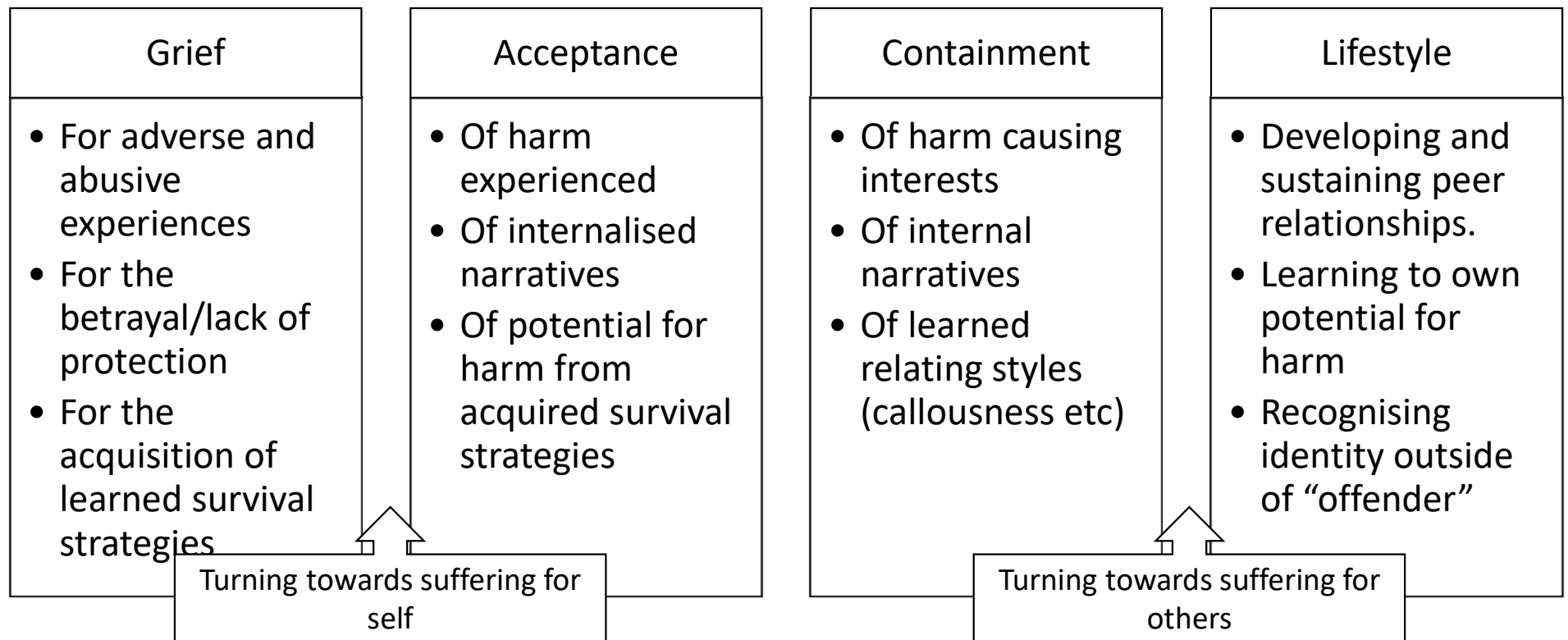
: Sexual orientation

- Learning to live in sexual solitude
- Generating nonsexual social connections
- Managing difference and “othering”
- Developing valued social roles



Sexual interests

# Framework for working with harmful sexual interests



# Grief:

- Experiences of sexual abuse; sexual conditioning
- Internalisation of perpetrator justifications
- Betrayal trauma (trusted adult)
- Responses to disclosure

## Neurobiological Impact



# Childhood adversity

- Robs a child of experience-expectant potential.
- Stimulates experience-dependent neurological development (in response to adversity).
- Stimulates a cocktails of neurochemicals that undermine stress resilience.
- Promotes a range of survival motivated behaviours that become embodied and encoded.



# Grief: sexual conditioning

- Many people (young and old) need someone to witness their abuse.
- Emotional responses to abuse need validating and processing
- Sexualisation and sexual preoccupation (masturbation to dilute abuse memories or masturbation over abuse memories)
- Cognitive appraisals may need to shift (you are not responsible)
- Trauma memories and flashbacks
- Impact on sense of self.





# Grief: Internalising perpetrator narratives

- **Internalised dialogue**

- Offence supportive beliefs

- **Witness the abuse dialogue**

- Challenging “distortions”
  - Potential to generate shame.

- **Validate the internalisation**

- Creates sense of faulty self (from powerful others)

- **Externalise the abuse**

- Reduces agency
  - Increases resistance to change



# Grief: Betrayal trauma

- When the abuser is in a position of care giver/protector



# Grief: Disclosure response

- How did disclosure come about?
- Who was told
- How did they react?
- Professional responses
  - Delusion
  - Misdirection



# Acceptance: sexual interests and harmful survival strategies

- Owning (not projecting) presence of harmful interests
- Understanding the internalized narrative
- Recognising trajectory of inter-personal repertoire



# Containment of harmful sexual interests

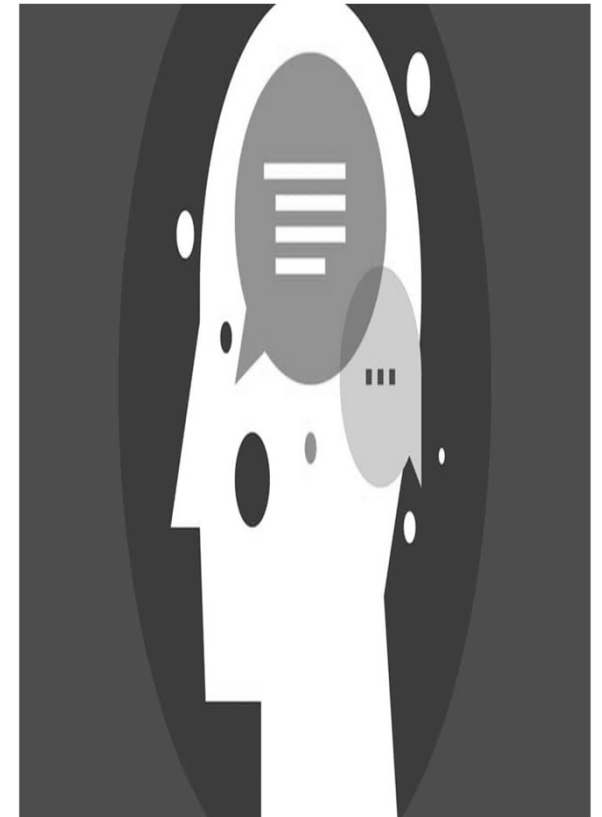
- Exploring opportunities for sexual activity (range of orientations, solo sex).
- Developing regulation skills



Containment:

Learned  
narratives

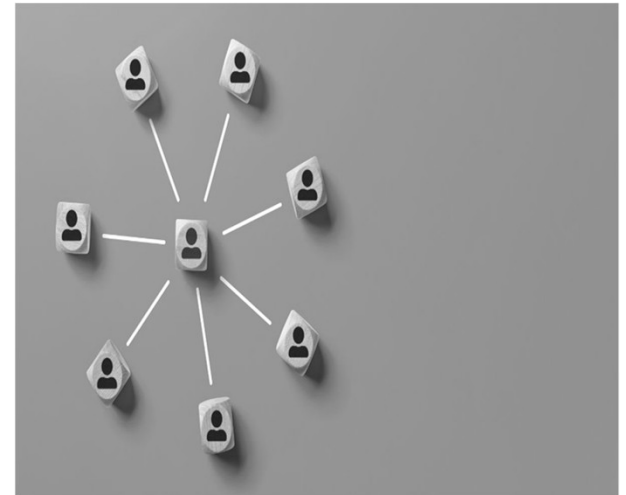
- Offence supportive beliefs (internalized)
- Responsibility shifting beliefs (internalized)
- Denial of harm beliefs (internalized)



Containment:

Or relating  
styles

- Emotional congruence with young people.
- Callousness



## Lifestyle

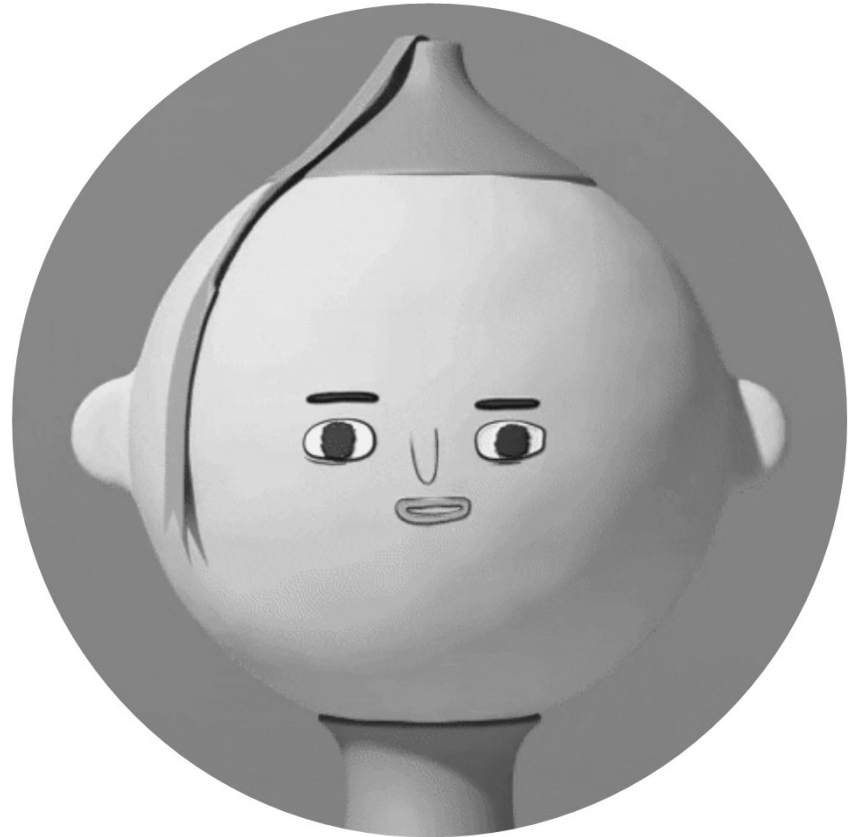
- Exploring and validating courage and commitment to manage sexual interests.
- Developing Social connections (build congruence with peers)





## Lifestyle: Alleviate | Hold others in mind

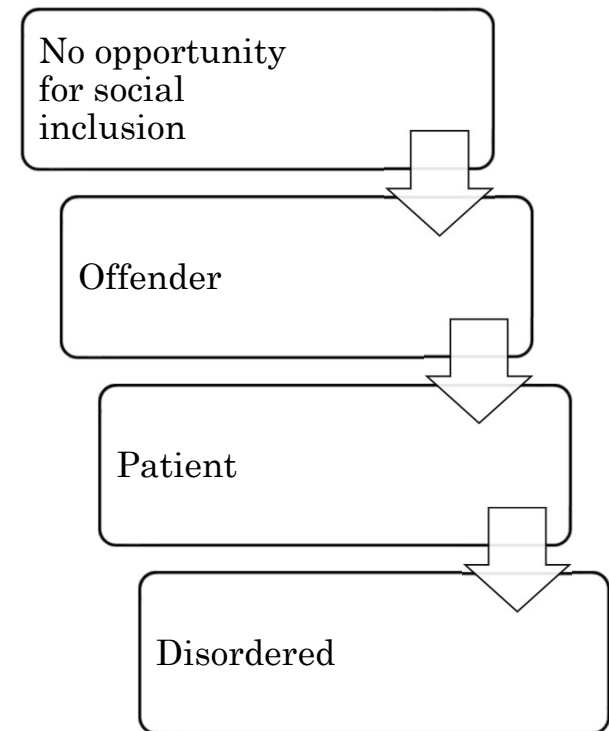
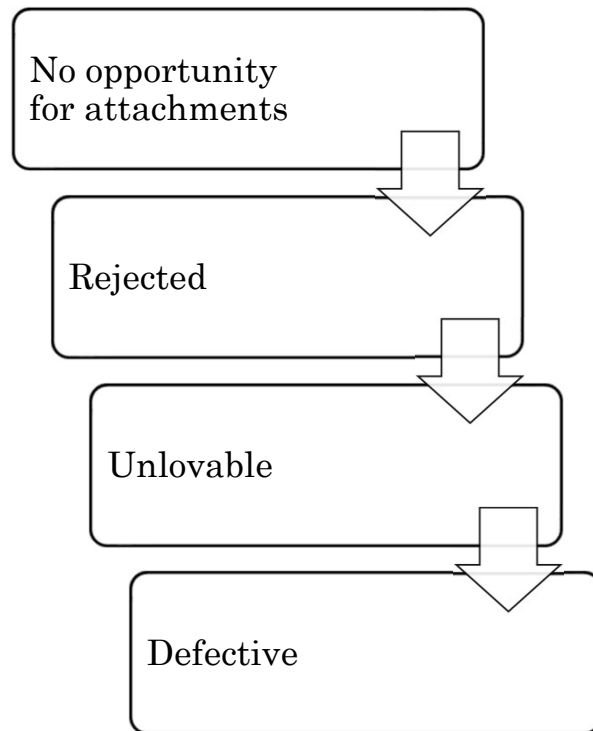
- Understanding sexual state(s) of mind (and body)
- Identifying and harnessing alternative states of mind
- Shaping non harmful sexual states
- Interrupting the usual process of courtship
  - Creating opportunities to meet
  - Increasing intimacy
- Reflecting on harm prevention

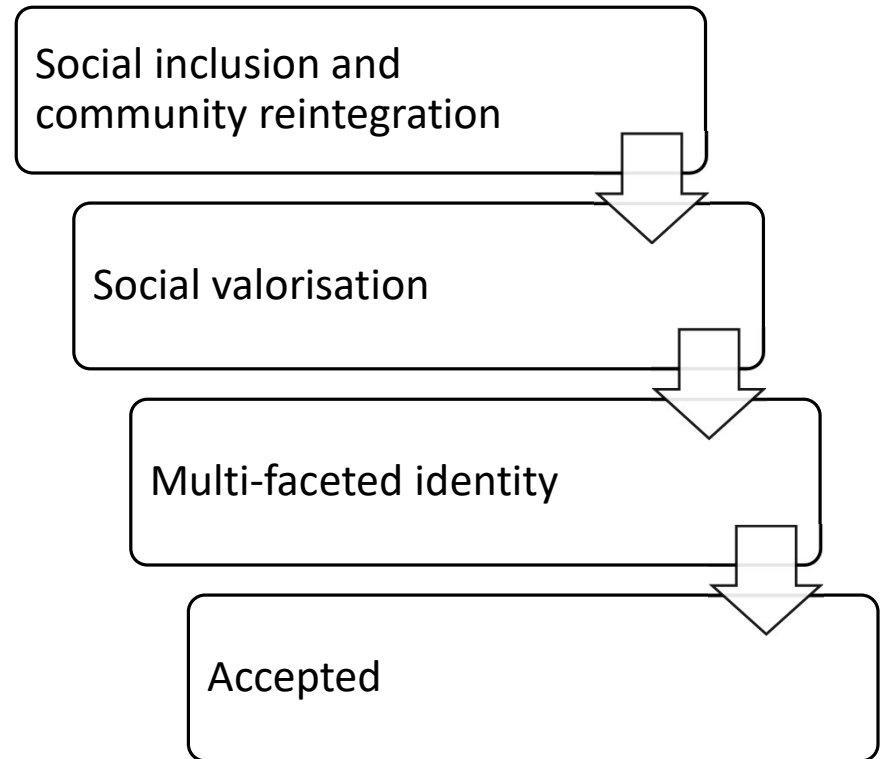
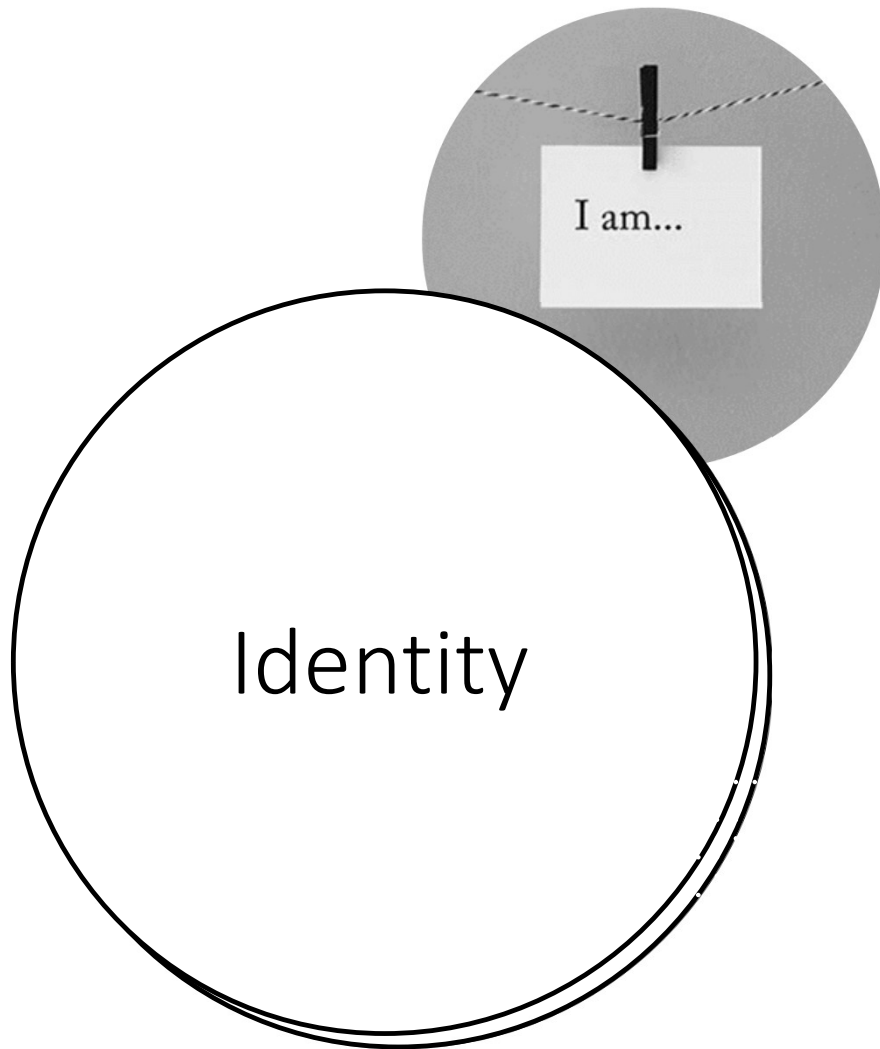






# Identity







## Restoration

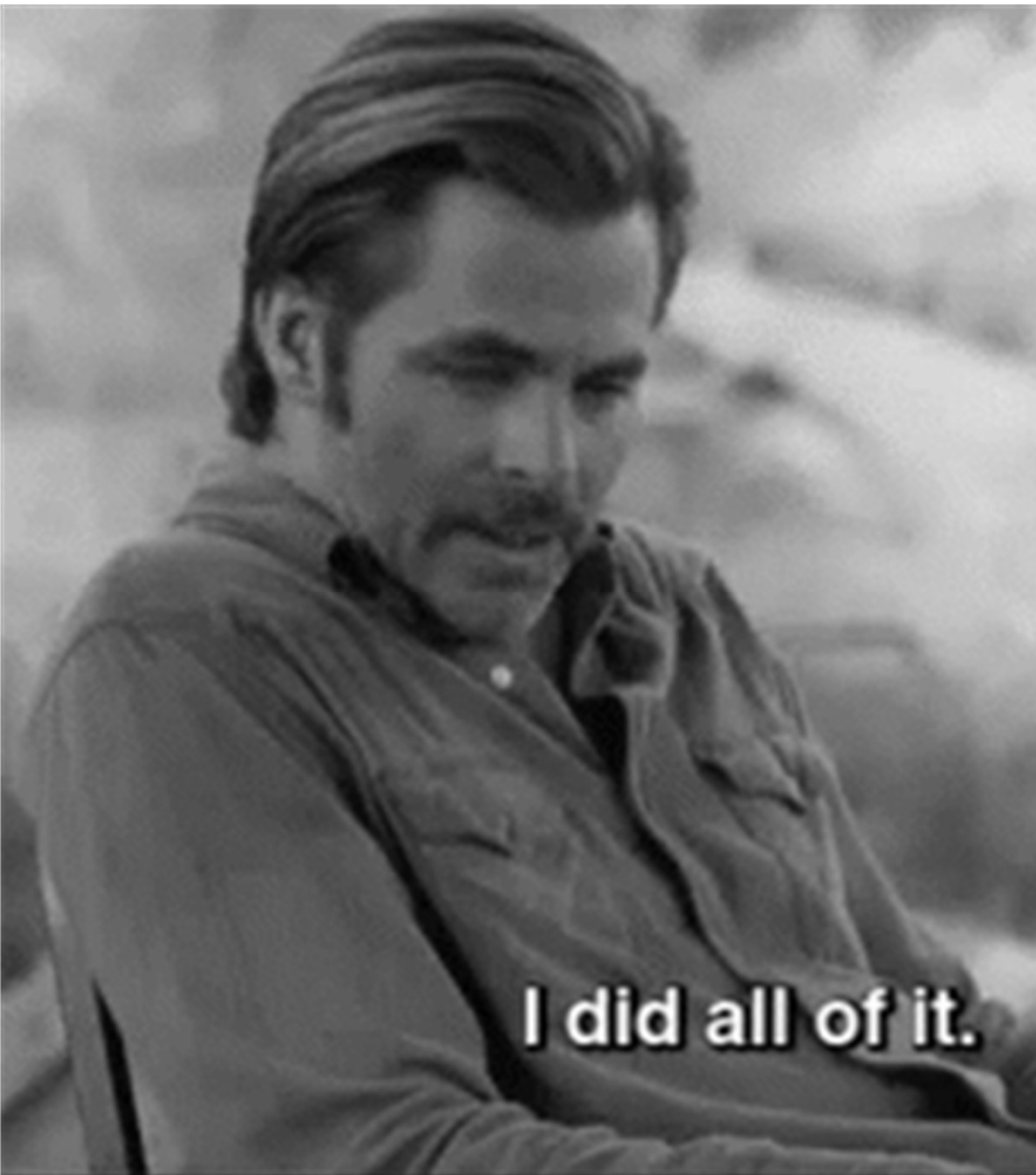
- Guilt includes a behavioral component to repair
- Barriers to repair can push back into shame and humiliation
- Develop commitments to wider community restoration

# Suffering | turning towards others

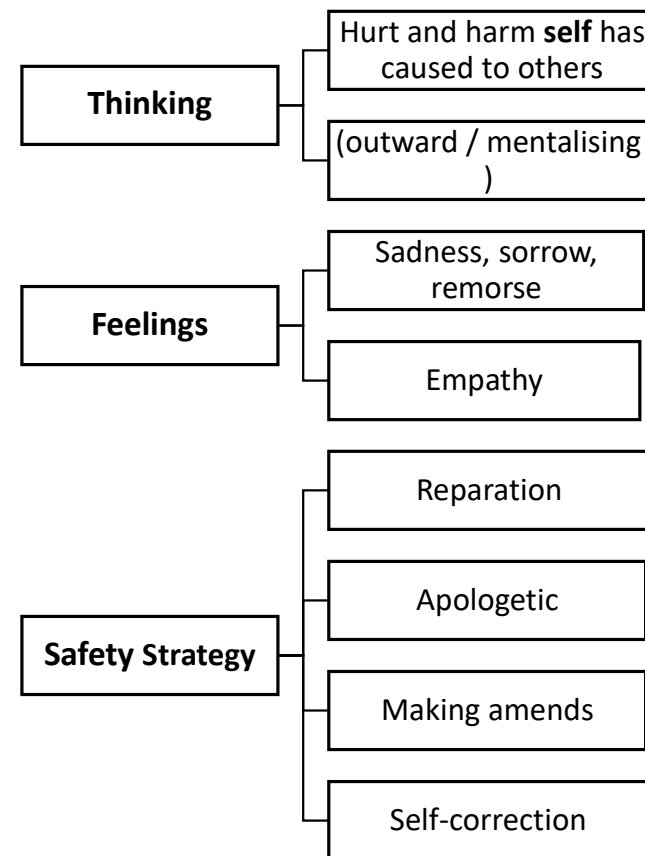
- Having processed your own grief...
- Turn towards suffering in others
- Commit to alleviate/prevent suffering

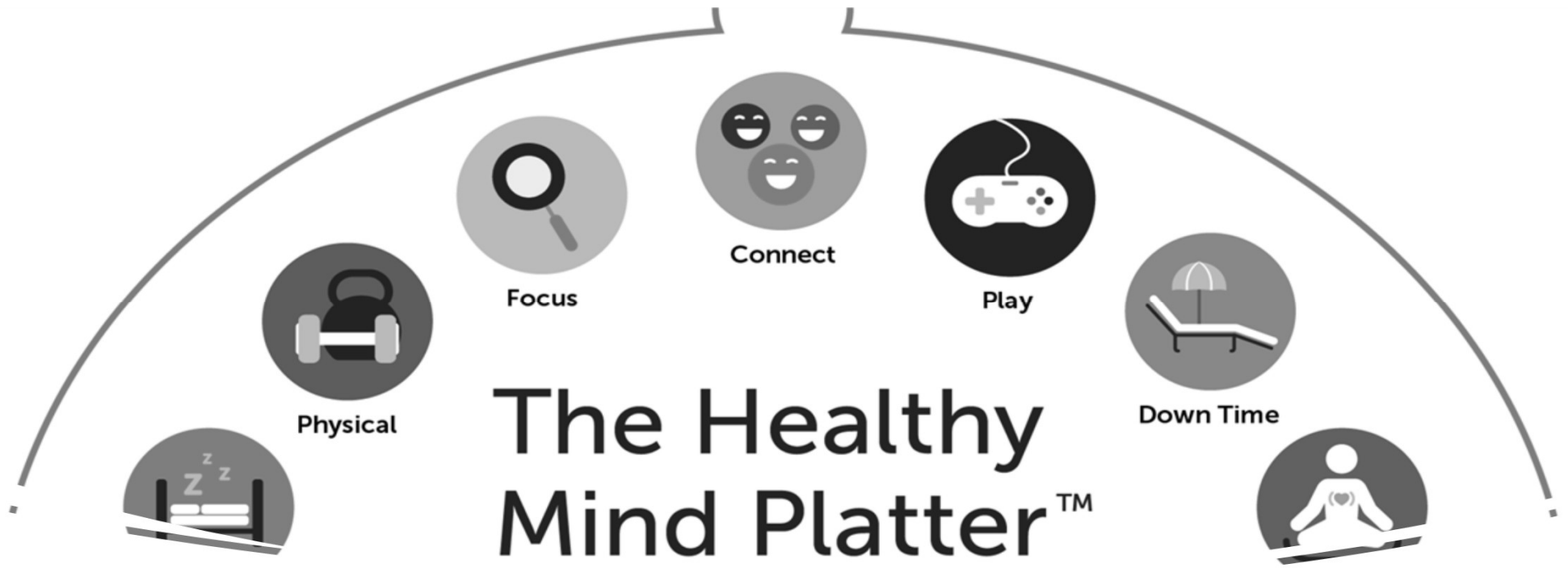
**STOP  
CHILD ABUSE**





Facilitating Guilt: *Compassion for others when we are the source of their distress*





## Interventions

- If people have an extensive history of trauma, we should allow opportunities to process this before we approach offence related work.
- Support people to understand their sexuality and human sexuality.
- Allow people to grieve for the loss of intimacy.
- Build commitments to offence free life-style (including motivations, emotions, thoughts, acts, rituals and routine practices)