

Glossary of Terms Related to Sex Offense and Sex Addiction

This glossary provides definitions for common terms used in the field of sex offense and sex addiction therapy. Attorneys may find this resource helpful when working with clients who are struggling with these issues, as it can aid in understanding the complexities of treatment and recovery, and the language commonly used in therapeutic settings.

- **12-Step Groups:** Support groups based on a 12-step program, providing fellowship and guidance for recovery from addiction.
- **Accountability Partner:** A person who provides support and encouragement in recovery, holding the individual accountable for their actions.
- **Certified Sex Addiction Therapist (CSAT):** A mental health professional with specialized training and certification in treating sex addiction.
- **Chem-Sex Addiction:** The combination of drug use and sexual activity to intensify the experience, often leading to risky behaviors.
- **Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM):** Any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor (person under 18 years old).
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** A type of therapy that focuses on changing negative thought patterns and behaviors.
- **Cognitive Distortions (Offense-Related):** Biased or irrational ways of thinking that individuals use to justify, minimize, or rationalize their sexually harmful behavior (e.g., blaming victims, entitlement).
- **Comorbidity:** The simultaneous presence of two or more medical or psychiatric conditions (e.g., sex addiction co-occurring with depression, anxiety, or substance use disorder).
- **Compulsive Sexual Behavior Disorder (CSBD) / Hypersexuality:** Terms often used (CSBD is in ICD-11) to describe patterns of intense, repetitive sexual urges or behaviors resulting in significant distress or impairment in functioning (related to, but distinct from, the non-diagnostic term "Sex Addiction").
- **Containment Model:** An approach often used in community supervision involving collaboration between therapists, probation/parole officers, and polygraph examiners to manage risk and monitor behavior.
- **Coping Tools:** Strategies and techniques to manage stress, triggers, and cravings, promoting healthy behaviors.
- **Denial / Minimization:** Defense mechanisms where individuals refuse to acknowledge the reality or severity of their problematic sexual behavior or offenses.
- **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT):** A type of therapy that teaches behavioral skills to help people manage their emotions and improve their relationships.
- **Dynamic Risk Factors:** Changeable factors associated with sexual re-offense risk that can be targeted in treatment (e.g., attitudes tolerant of sexual offending, intimacy deficits, substance abuse, access to victims).
- **Empathy Development:** A common treatment goal aimed at increasing an individual's understanding and appreciation of the emotional and physical impact of their behavior on victims.
- **Exhibitionism:** Exhibitionism is the compulsive behavior of exposing one's genitals to unsuspecting strangers, typically in public, to achieve sexual arousal or shock.
- **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR):** A psychotherapy approach that uses bilateral stimulation, like guided eye movements, while focusing on distressing memories to help the brain reprocess them and reduce their emotional impact.
- **Good Lives Model (GLM):** A strengths-based rehabilitation framework focusing on helping individuals build capabilities and achieve basic human goods (like relationships, mastery, autonomy) in pro-social ways, as an alternative to offending pathways.
- **Grooming:** The predatory process perpetrators use to build trust, manipulate, and isolate a potential victim (often a child) to facilitate sexual abuse.
- **Group Therapy:** A form of therapy where individuals with similar issues meet and share their experiences in a supportive environment.
- **Incel:** An incel, short for "involuntary celibate," identifies as someone unable to find a romantic or sexual partner despite desiring one, often associated with specific online communities.
- **Individual Therapy:** A form of therapy where an individual works one-on-one with a therapist to address their specific needs.
- **Internet Filtering and Accountability Programs:** Software tools to restrict access to explicit content and monitor online activity, aiding in recovery from sex addiction.
- **Lewd Act:** A lewd act involves indecent exposure or offensive sexual touching, particularly in public or involving a minor.
- **Limits of Confidentiality:** The legal and ethical exceptions to patient confidentiality in therapy, such as the duty to warn or protect potential victims or mandatory reporting of child abuse.



Glossary of Terms Related to Sex Offense and Sex Addiction (*continued*)

- **Mindfulness Practices:** Techniques to increase awareness and focus on the present moment, often used in addiction recovery.
- **Offense Cycle / Offense Mapping:** A therapeutic technique where individuals identify the sequence of thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and situational factors leading up to their offending behavior, used to develop interruption strategies.
- **Paraphilia / Paraphilic Disorder:** Recurrent, intense, sexually arousing fantasies, urges, or behaviors involving unusual objects, activities, or situations (Paraphilia); becomes a Disorder when it causes distress, impairment, or involves harm/risk of harm to non-consenting others.
- **Polygraph Testing (PCSOT):** Post-Conviction Sex Offender Testing; use of polygraph examinations, often mandated during probation or parole, to monitor compliance with supervision terms, verify sexual history, and assess ongoing risk (note: admissibility and use vary significantly).
- **Porn Addiction:** A compulsive and excessive use of pornography, leading to negative impacts on life and relationships.
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** A mental health condition triggered by experiencing or witnessing a terrifying event, 1 causing symptoms such as intrusive memories, avoidance of related stimuli, negative changes in mood and thinking, and altered physical and emotional reactions.
- **Protective Factors:** Strengths or resources that may reduce an individual's likelihood of reoffending (e.g., strong social support, stable employment, engagement in treatment).
- **Psychosexual Evaluation/Assessment:** A comprehensive evaluation conducted by a qualified professional to assess an individual's sexual development, interests, attitudes, behaviors, risk factors, and treatment needs, often used in legal contexts.
- **Relapse Prevention:** Strategies and techniques to prevent individuals from returning to addictive behaviors. (Often involves creating a specific Relapse Prevention Plan).
- **Risk Assessment:** The process of evaluating an individual's likelihood of reoffending sexually, often using specific tools and considering various factors.
- **Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model:** A widely used framework in correctional rehabilitation stating that treatment intensity should match risk level (Risk), interventions should target dynamic risk factors (Need), and treatment should be tailored to the individual's learning style, motivation, and abilities (Responsivity).
- **Seeking Safety:** An evidence-based, present-focused psychotherapy model specifically designed to help people attain safety from trauma (particularly PTSD) and substance abuse simultaneously.
- **Sex Addiction:** A compulsive and unhealthy dependence on sexual activity, despite negative consequences. (See also: Compulsive Sexual Behavior Disorder).
- **Sex Offending Behavior:** Illegal sexual acts, including but not limited to sexual assault, child molestation, and rape.
- **Sexting:** Sexting is the act of sending or receiving sexually explicit messages, photographs, or videos electronically, primarily between mobile phones or other digital devices.
- **Shame Reduction:** The process of addressing and overcoming feelings of shame, often associated with addiction and trauma.
- **Sober Living Environment:** A structured and supportive living space for individuals recovering from addiction, promoting abstinence and healthy habits.
- **Somatic Experiencing Practitioner:** A therapist who uses a body-oriented approach to help people heal from trauma and other stress-related disorders.
- **Static Risk Factors:** Historical, unchangeable factors associated with sexual reoffense risk (e.g., prior offenses, age at first offense).
- **Trauma-Informed Therapy:** A therapeutic approach that recognizes the impact of trauma and incorporates it into treatment.
- **Treatment Amenability:** An assessment of an individual's capacity and willingness to engage in and benefit from therapy.
- **Voyeurism:** Voyeurism is secretly observing unsuspecting individuals, typically in private situations like undressing or sexual activity, for the purpose of sexual gratification.

