



CHILDHOOD INTERPERSONAL TRAUMA AND SEXUAL SATISFACTION

Studies show that people with childhood interpersonal trauma (ex. sexual abuse, neglect, psychological violence) tend to report lower sexual satisfaction.



Our studies suggested that the link between childhood interpersonal trauma and sexual dissatisfaction may be attributed to:

- Attachment insecurities
- Lower mindfulness skills
- Increased psychological distress

INSECURE ATTACHMENT

1

Avoidant attachment

internalized negative perception of others, discomfort toward intimacy, and a heightened need for independence.


2


Anxious attachment

internalized negative representations of the self as unworthy of love, fear of being abandoned or rejected by one's partner

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is the self-regulation of consciousness and the non-judgmental acceptance of one's immediate experiences.




 Mindfulness can help halt intrusive thoughts and reduce tendencies to evaluate or judge oneself or experience negatively.

SEXUAL MINDFULNESS

Sexual mindfulness is the ability to remain mindful during sexual encounters and to be self-aware and nonjudgmental of oneself during sexual experiences.

Practicing sexual mindfulness could be particularly useful for people with attachment insecurities or childhood interpersonal trauma.



THE INFLUENCE OF INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS ON SEXUAL SATISFACTION



Survivors of abuse in childhood and people with attachment insecurities tend to have a **lower disposition to be mindful**, which in turn, may maintain or exacerbate psychological distress and bring lower sexual satisfaction.

Regular mindfulness practice can lead to increased dispositional and sexual mindfulness

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS TO FOSTER SEXUAL SATISFACTION



HOW TO CULTIVATE SEXUAL MINDFULNESS

- Remain mindful of the **present moments'** erotic experiences, rather than sexual performance expectations.
- Pay attention to your **breath** during sexual interactions.
- Focus on your own feelings and bodily sensations.
- **Slow down** to feel the moment-by-moment sensations.
- Notice **sensations** arising with each movement and each touch.
- Develop an **attitude of awareness, acceptance** and non-judgment of thoughts and feelings in sexual contexts.
- Prioritize **strong connection** with your sexual partner(s).
- Strengthen your ability to be **fully present** through a regular practice of mindfulness.



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To learn more:

Godbout, N., Bakhos, G., Dussault, E., & Hébert, M. (2020). *Childhood interpersonal trauma and sexual satisfaction in patients seeking sex therapy: Examining mindfulness and psychological distress as mediators*. Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy, 46(1), 43-56. doi: 10.1080/0092623X.2019.1626309. Accès libre (Open Access)

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