

Sexual functioning/dysfunctions: point of view of a sexologist

Training Course in Sexual Health Research
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Outline

- Alexithymia
- Narcissism
- Shyness & Impotence
- Afraid of intimacy
- Bisexuality
- Masochism

- The biological basis of erection can be influenced by psychological factors, which can improve a man's sexuality (desire, erection, ejaculation), or induce impotence. Treating erectile dysfunction does not always mean curing impotence.

Alexithymia

- Persons with alexithymia can not experience or even express their emotions and may consult for erectile problems.
- In this case pharmacological treatment can be effective.

Case 1

- Marco, 35 year old

Sent because Cialis[®] was not effective

Marco had already consulted 3 urologists for what he called “impotence” in satisfying a woman.

Marco never linked his pedophile experience with his sexual difficulties.

But since that he found himself as a bisexual man therefore, desiring a woman was reduced to a “normal behavior, socially acceptable”.

Case 2

- A businessman with dominant character, said to me: there is an anachronistic thing in this 21' century: why the penis does not react to the highest human functions: intelligence and willingness?

The narcissistic personality

- These men experience failure in every field of their life, especially in sexuality
- For them, erectile dysfunction could be a destructive factor of their self confidence.
- Case: Architect. Need to seduce in order to verify his own virility. But when he succeeded, he hoped that women would refuse because he was worried about his erectile capacity.
- For these men, Cialis® and analogues can effectively reconstruct the connection between their existential (perceived) virility and their genital virility.
- They want to delay ageing and often, the sexological consultation is therefore a way to hide their fear of ageing, and the gap between the image of themselves and their real age.

The shy and impotent man

- He has doubts about himself and about his erection, he needs to overcome the social phobia which he was hiding during adolescence behind acne.
- In this case, pharmaceutical treatment, combined with psychotherapy can be used
- Behind shyness a schizotypal personality who sees others as a threat may appear. Some of these men think that a woman has two faces, a good and a dangerous one.

Patients afraid of intimacy

- They consult for erectile dysfunction but, as a sexologist, you have to assess the affective capacity and sexual fantasy of the person.

The most common fantasies are:

- The **SPIDER WOMEN** who steal the man's genital and monetary substance
- The **MODERN WOMEN** who can have more sexual desire than a man
- The **BEAUTIFUL WOMEN** who are like sirens, using their seduction to capture men and leading them more to death than to life.
- The **ACTIVE WOMEN** (Amazon) who see sex as a war

The bisexual person

- Some men have sexual fantasies with homosexual or paraphilic content, which can inhibit their erection. They ask for a control of erection independent from their mind.
- Sometimes they can satisfy their paraphilic desire with a prostitute but are impotent with their wife.
- Case: company director who presented himself as impotent with his wife, but who had no erectile problems with prostitutes, even if his bodyguard was at the door. He thought his sperm was similar to urine and so he was able to soil a woman he considers already dirty, like prostitutes, but not the mother of his children.

The masochist

- These men suffer more from an “existential” impotence than a sexual one. Some men have an “impotent” relation with everything in their life. So a sexologist’s answer is only useful after addressing the global impotence, as in the professional field for example.

Case:

- Carlo is a 38 year old married man with ED. His wife, complaining of being abandoned and sexually unsatisfied, has had 2 extramarital affairs.

10 years ago he had had a motorcycle accident that he experienced as a "castration": he spent a long period at the hospital and was temporarily hemiplegic. Since then, his self-esteem remains low, affecting in his general and sexual behavior.

He felt inferior to his brothers since childhood, which affected him all his life.

- We have, during this presentation, moved from micro to macro interpretations of the ED, from the penis to the man.
- We will now make another methodological step by taking into account of the relationship of the impotent man. The woman in a relationship with him can be a victim of that, but some women can also induce the man's impotence: i.e.
- The **"castrating women"** who have a behavior that can inhibit the contemporary male.
- The **"mother"**: overprotective wives who, at the end, loose any interest in the erotic part of the relationship.
- The **"indiscreet"**: who like to explain friends and family all their marital problems. In this, they enter in a vicious cycle which worsens the situation.

Conclusion

- Pharmaceutical treatment may be indicated in some cases.
- Behavioral therapy can improve the effectiveness of pharmacological treatment.
- A co-etiology of psychogenic ED can be identified in some cases.