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Is Sex Addiction a Mental Disorder?

The term addition refers to the tendency of a person of being psychologically and physically unable to stop or leave a chemical, drug, substance or activity, even though it is causing physical and physiological harm to the user (Lindesmith). There is a huge difference between addiction and mental disorder. Not all individuals who are addicted to some activity, substance or drug are also a patient of some mental disorder but it has been a usual observation that almost all the people, who suffer from some sort of mental disorder are usually addicted to some sort of abuse.

According to psychology, addiction may be of many kinds, for example, addiction to some kind of substance like drugs, medicines, alcohol and even chocolates. It can even be of some activity like shopping, gaming, spending time on Facebook and even sex. It is still a topic of debate in the circles of psychology that whether sex is an addiction or mental disorder. Majority of the psychologists agree that sex is an addiction, rather than a mental disorder. It is almost similar to the other addictions as it includes the craving for the activity, i.e. sexual intimacy (Young). The only difference lies in the way of fulfillment of the addiction, where normally, a partner is required for the accomplishment of the desire. Its treatment is also similar to the way other activity addictions are treated. Normally individual and group sessions are conducted with professional and well-trained psychologists to get rid of the addiction.

American Psychiatric Association has published a manual for the detection and treatment of various types of mental disorders, titled as Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Kirk). Its latest version released on May 18, 2013, does not include hypersexual disorder in as a mental disorder but it should be included as a psychological disorder in DSM VI as it is a compulsive behavior and needs treatment.

Works Cited

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