

# **THE IMPACT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON MEN & BOYS**

Lenny Hayes, MA

Tate Topa Consulting, LLC

[tatetopaconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:tatetopaconsulting@gmail.com)

[www.tatetopa.com](http://www.tatetopa.com)

651-447-8672



# WHO AM I?



- Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate of the northeast corner of South Dakota
- Mental and Chemical Health Therapist/Consultant Specializing in Marriage Family Therapy
- Owner/Operator of Tate Topa Consulting, LLC
- Educator
- Advocate
- Motivational Speaker
- Dakota Two-Spirit (“Winkta”)
- Survivor of Adult and Child Sexual Abuse
- Survivor of the Foster Care System



# RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS

- 1 in 4 American Indian/Alaska Native men have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.
- More than 1 in 10 have experienced sexual violence with penetration
- Overall, more than 475,00 American Indian and Alaska Native men have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime (National Institute of Justice Research Report: Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men. 2010 Findings from the National Intimate Partner Sexual Violence Survey, Andre B. Rosay, Ph.D.).

# WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

- **Rape or Sexual Assault:** When a person uses tricks, power, threats, or violence to have sexual contact with another adult.
- **Incest:** When the individual is a victim of a relative.
- **Child Molestation:** When the child is a victim of an adult.



# WHAT IS SEXUAL ABUSE?

- Sexual abuse is sexual contact without consent (Child or adult).
- Children DO NOT consent because they often do what adults tell them to do.



# TYPES OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- An adult sexually touching the child; male or female
- Having the child touch the adult sexually; male or female
- Photographing the child for sexual purposes
- Sexualized talk
- Showing the child pornographic material or making them available
- Exposing genitals to the child
- Masturbation or otherwise being sexual in front of the child
- Voyeurism
- Verbal and emotional abuse of sexual nature
- Engaging the child in prostitution
- Witnessing others being sexually abused



# **COMMON FORMS OF SEXUAL TOUCHING OF A CHILD**

- Touching or fondling of the child's genitals, or other erotic areas, such as the buttocks, anus, or nipples.
- Touching can also come in the form of sexual hugs or rubbing, where the adult rubs her or his body against the child.
- This also includes clothing on the child and adult.



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Boys are more reluctant to disclose than girls.
- Children who are victims of a family perpetrator often delay disclosure longer than a non-family member.



# **A CHILD IS AFFECTED BY SEXUAL ABUSE WHEN:**

- He may question his ability to defend himself or may not trust his body to function in times of crisis.
- He may question his body and say “What did I do to invite this?”
- He may begin to hate his body.
- He may begin to not respect his body or the surroundings around him; often will begin to use alcohol, drugs, over-under eating, and smoking as a teen.



# **A CHILD IS AFFECTED BY SEXUAL ABUSE WHEN:**

- **Dissociates** as a child due to memories or triggers of abuse.
- Even after the abuse stops **the child may feel he is ineffective, powerless, and worthless** ( He has learned from being abused that what he does, wants, feels, or thinks makes no difference).
- He will **continue** to question himself “**Why did this happen?**” “**Why didn’t anyone stop it?**” “**Why didn’t I tell someone?**”

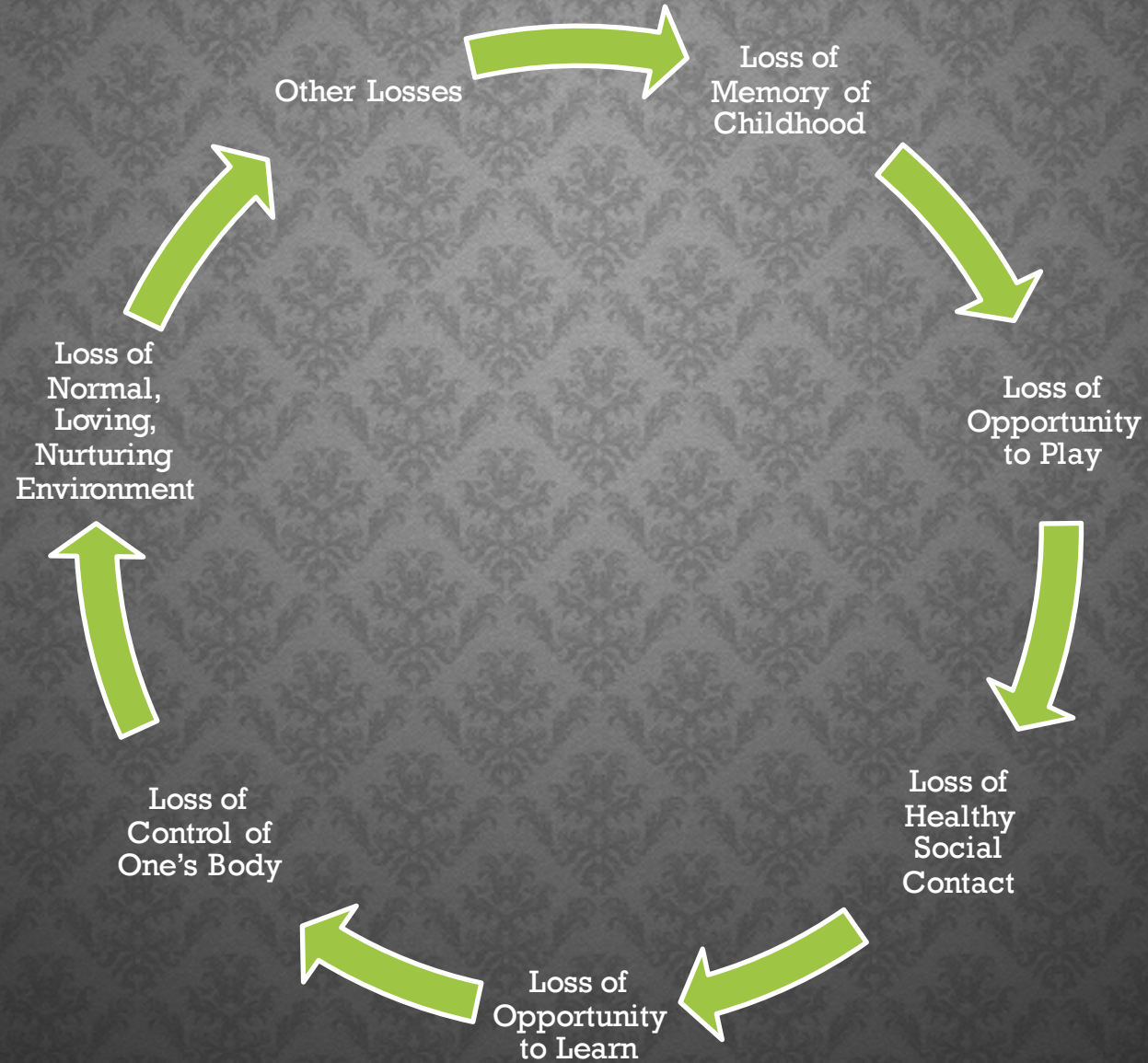


# A CHILD IS AFFECTED BY SEXUAL ABUSE WHEN:

- Mental/emotional; The child believes that he had a choice but in reality the abuse was inflicted on him.
- A boy faces confusion and isolation when he is sexually abused by a woman.
- A boy who talks about being abused by a woman is often greeted by disbelief, denial, trivializing, and romancing his story. Faced with society's perception; he may try to fit in and begins to brag or joke about it. He will try to fit in.
- If any of the experience felt good, he was not abused. If he did enjoy it, he must be homosexual.



# WHAT **PIECES** OF CHILDHOOD DOES THE SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILD **LOSE**?





# DID YOU KNOW?

- “The **losses** that boys and men experience in their early years leave lifelong scars and pain.”
- Boys who do not fit the “traditional macho image” are marginalized, ostracized, harassed, and physically punished. **Bullying results in trauma.**
- The trauma that males experience is lethal, large, and hard to work through. **(It is possible)**
- Many men who have hurt others may have been hurt themselves.



# FACTS

- 75-95% of offenders are known and may be related to the child
- In developmental terms, young children cannot make up explicit sexual information; they must be exposed to it and speak their own experiences. Sometimes parents will try to get the child to lie.
- Most child sexual abuse is perpetrated by men who are heterosexual and do not find sex with other men at all attractive.
- Children generally do not question the behavior of adults. They are often coerced by bribes, threats, and use of authority.
- Child abuse is an act of power by which an adult uses a child. Abuse is abuse. A woman abusing a child is still a child abuser.
- In a recent study of convicted child molesters, 80% were found to have committed their first offense before the age of 30.
- A portion of abused boys go on to abuse children (**Abused Boys: The Neglected Victim of Sexual Abuse, Mic Hunter**).



# As Adult Males; The Impact of Child Sexual Abuse



# WHY DO MEN WAIT TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?

- The abuse could still be too fresh.
- It may not yet been defined as abuse.
- The perpetrator may still got you “to keep silent.”
- Fear (Even though the abuse may be over, it can still feel dangerous; even a dead perpetrator’s presence can be felt strongly).
- The time and place may not be right to disclose.
- The individual may not know he has options.
- Feelings of being weak, battered, and hopeless to take action.
- Self-blame (may keep individual from seeking professional help).
- Shame (Why did this happen to me?)



# **MEN WHO ARE **VIOLENT** ARE OFTEN SENT THE MESSAGE AS A CHILD:**

- Be strong
- Be sexually active
- Be straight
- Be independent
- Don't ask for help
- Don't cry and show vulnerability
- Take control
- Be dominant



# **FREQUENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY ADULT SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL CHILD ABUSE**

- Anxiety and/or confusion
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Shame and guilt
- Inability to trust themselves or others
- Fear of feelings (a need to control feelings and behaviors, their own or others)
- Compulsive caretaking
- Nightmares and flashbacks
- Insomnia
- Amnesia (memory loss or forgetting large pieces of childhood)
- Violence; or fear of violence
- Discomfort with being touched
- Compulsive sexual activity
- Sexual dysfunction



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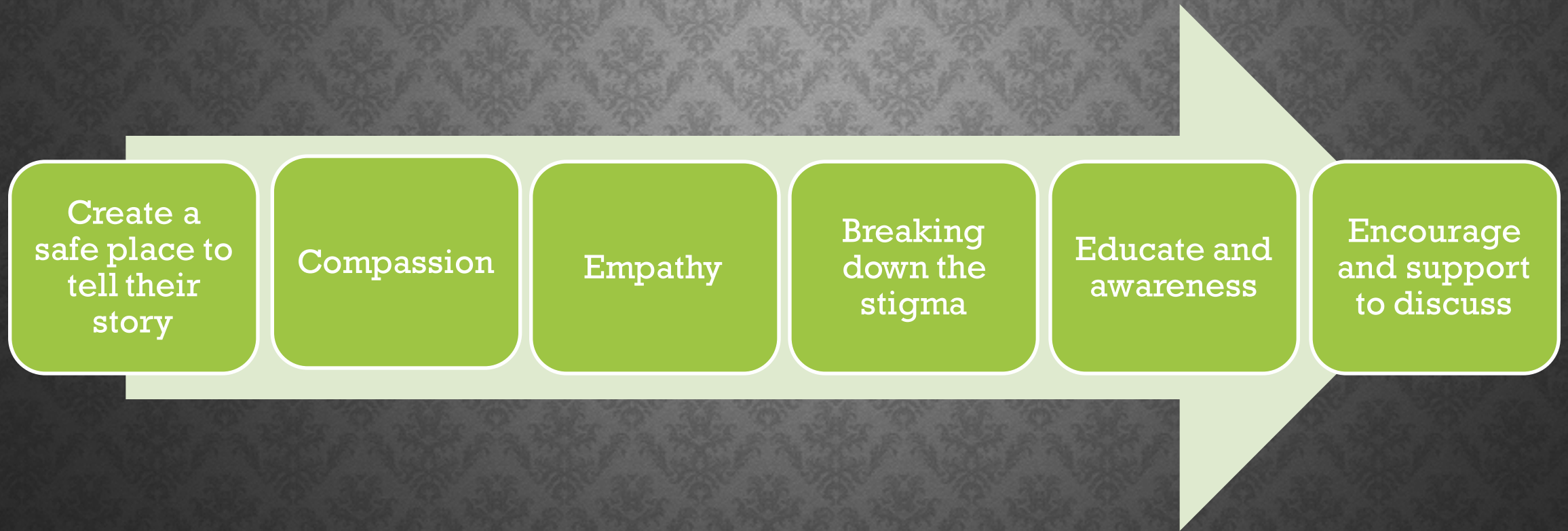
- Hypervigilance; extreme startle response
- Social alienation (feeling isolated or alone)
- Inability to sustain intimacy in relationships and/or entering abusive relationships
- Overachievement and/or underachievement
- As adults, becoming abusers and/or protectors
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- Sex Addiction
- Compulsive behaviors
- Unrealistic and negative body image
- Feeling like a frightened child
- Hyperconsciousness of body and appearance



# MOST COMMON MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

- **Dysthymia**; A chronic depressed mood
- **Major Depression**; much more severe than Dysthymia
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**; distressing thoughts and dreams of the abuse, flashbacks, avoids thoughts, feelings, and situations associated with abuse, a sense of detachment from others, sleep disturbances, outbursts, and overly vigilant for signs of danger.

# HOW DO WE **HELP** MEN AND BOYS **HEAL**?





# HOW DO WE **HELP** MEN AND BOYS **HEAL**?

Change the way  
we talk and think  
about individuals  
who experienced  
child sexual  
abuse

Not all victims of  
child sexual  
abuse become  
abusers

Sweat Lodge

Support Groups

Talking with  
elders

# IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER....

- That not all issues and problems are the same with all adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Each individual is different with similarities.



# RESOURCES

- **Abused Boys: The Neglected Victim of Sexual Abuse, Mic Hunter**
- Victims No Longer: The Classic Guide for Men Recovering from Sexual Child Abuse, Mike Lew
- Understanding Male Sexual Abuse: Why Male Victims Remain Silent, O'Brien Dennis
- The Cries of Men, O'Brien Dennis
- Beyond Betrayal: Taking Charge of Your Life After Boyhood Sexual Abuse, Richard B. Gartner
- Betrayed as Boys: Psychodynamic Treatment of Sexually Abused Men, Richard B. Gartner
- Understanding the Sexual Betrayal of Boys and Men: The Trauma of Sexual Abuse, Richard M. Gartner
- Father's Touch, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Donald D'Haene, Forward by Mike Lew