

# Continuum of Human Sexuality

## PASSIVE SELF-ESTEEM

Passive self-esteem occurs when there is little or no ownership of sensuality, sexual power, sexual feelings or pleasure due to repression. The person with passive self-esteem may have an undeveloped sexuality because their family, cultural or religious rules and beliefs did not permit or encourage sexual development or integration.

Which of the numbered statements below best reflect your present thoughts and feelings about human sexuality? There are three options to consider:

**Y = YES**, I always feel or think this way.

**N = NO**, I never feel or think this way.

**S = SOMETIMES**, I occasionally think or feel this way.

### Primary Sexuality (Feelings about my body as a man or woman)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I feel awkward and uncomfortable with my body.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I feel inadequate around people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I usually feel embarrassed and awkward around someone of the opposite sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I do not feel attractive as a man or woman.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am not sure what sexual integration really means.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I think and feel that my body is ugly compared to other people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I am fearful of most touching.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I have a lot of unanswered questions about how my body functions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I spend little time caring for my body.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I overindulge in at least one of the following: food, alcohol, recreational drugs, spending money, pornography, masturbation, anonymous sex.

### Genital Sexuality (Genital aspect of sexuality)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I am afraid of sexual stirrings, urges and desires.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I do not allow myself or I am unaware of any physical sexual reactions I may have.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am insecure about exploring my sexuality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I masturbate frequently and feel bad about myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I believe that genital sex with another person is just another form of recreation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have no experience of talking about sex with my parents.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have frequent thoughts about sex and feel dirty because of them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I am uncertain of my sexual orientation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I am embarrassed when I see the naked body in art.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Another person has touched me inappropriately. That is why I am afraid of sex.

## Handout 10 continued

### **Affective Sexuality** (ability to feel close and express closeness; ability to touch and be touched)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I do not or cannot express my emotions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I do not receive the affections of others well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I have a small list of feelings and emotions that I experience daily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I feel devoid of inner warmth and feel dead inside.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I would not let most people see me cry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have been told that I seem cold and emotionally distant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have learned that if I want something, I do it myself and do not rely on others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I use manipulation to get what I want from others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I allow others to use me and take advantage of me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I have poor boundaries and get into unhealthy relationships.

**Yes** = 3 points      **Sometimes** = 2 points      **No** = 1 point

#### **Score:**

90–81    Very high level of passive self-esteem

80–51    High level of passive self-esteem

50–31    Average level of passive self-esteem

30        Little or no passive self-esteem

## HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM

If you are aware of your personal power, feel comfortable with your sexuality and can demonstrate your values, beliefs and confidence, then you have healthy self-esteem. Self-esteem is the energy we use to feed and nurture our over all well-being. The choices we make for self-responsibility and self-care begin to reflect our capacity for healthy self-esteem. Rate each numbered statement below with Y, N, or S, as done previously.

### **Primary Sexuality** (feelings about my body as a man or woman)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I feel comfortable with my body as it is.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I believe that I can be an attractive person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I enjoy being a man or woman.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I dress appropriately and choose clothing that fits my expectations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I enjoy the company of my good friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I exercise and take care of my health.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I eat three healthy meals a day and pride myself on eating healthy foods.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I am comfortable with myself and can share myself in relationship to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I can say NO and defend my decision.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I am aware of when others are trying to make me say/do things I don't agree with.

## Genital Sexuality (genital aspect of sexuality)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I am comfortable with my sexuality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can express my sexuality and exercise it appropriately within relationships.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I know how my genitals work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I am comfortable and can control my sexual urges, desires and reactions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I do not need pornography to feel sexual.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I do not struggle with frequent masturbation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I am aware of my sexual desires and can control them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I am certain of my sexual orientation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I feel confident in what I know about sex and sexuality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I have been able to express my sexuality without shame and guilt.

## Affective Sexuality (ability to feel close and express closeness; ability to touch and be touched)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I can be warm and caring with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I have the ability to express my feelings and emotions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am able to demonstrate my feelings with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I am aware that most of my relationships are interdependent. We take turns caring and being cared for.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I can express my affections through touch and other gestures of affection.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I feel that I have good boundaries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I can share those moments of laughter and tears without embarrassment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I can ask for help especially when I feel weak and inadequate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I can own my boundaries and be assertive when I need to defend them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I have a good menu of feelings and emotions that I can experience daily.

**Yes** = 3 points      **Sometimes** = 2 points      **No** = 1 point

### Score:

- 90–81      Very high level of healthy self-esteem
- 80–51      High level of healthy self-esteem
- 50–31      Average level of healthy self-esteem
- 30          Little or no healthy self-esteem

## AGGRESSIVE SELF-ESTEEM

People who have aggressive self-esteem are typically preoccupied by issues of power and control over others. They will misuse their position, status or title to dominate others and avoid any semblance of mutuality or taking turns. Their use of aggression can be demonstrated in their tone of voice (cold, monotone, loud, demanding), posture (staring, arms crossed, leaning toward another person, moving too close to another, touching without permission or consent), vocabulary (cursing, suggestive words, sexualized words, put-downs, and vulgar stories), and gestures (finger pointing, pushing, hitting, pulling hair, acting-out gestures of violence, vulgar and sexualized gestures). Rate each numbered statement below with Y, N, or S, as done previously.

### Primary Sexuality (feelings about my body as man or woman)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I tend to be preoccupied with my own body and body symptoms.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I spend time sexualizing other people's bodies or body parts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I put other people down who are not like me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I compare my body parts against other people's.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I like to flaunt my physical attractiveness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have been told that I can dress provocatively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have strong, angry feelings for people whose sexuality is unlike mine.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I tend to overreact before I think.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I use a lot of sexual jokes and sexual words.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I am not comfortable talking about sex or sexuality.

### Genital Sexuality (genital aspect of sexuality)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I find it stimulating to flaunt my sexuality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I have exploited others to get my sexual needs met.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I have seduced someone who was more insecure than I.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I need pornography to manage my sex drive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I frequently masturbate or stimulate myself so that I can feel relieved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I see no problem in dominating another person when I want sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I like to admire my genitals and compare them to others of my own sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I have provocative sexual pictures in my room so I can imagine being like those people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I believe that sex is just a form of social recreation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I'm more interested in the function of sex than the emotions/relationship attached to sex.

## **Affective Sexuality** (ability to feel close and express closeness; ability to touch and be touched)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I have been told to stop touching another person but I wasn't able to do so.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Being aggressive with another turns me on.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. People have told me that I can be mean and cruel to my friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I spend a lot of time alone or by myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I daydream a lot and fantasize about what I want in a relationship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I do not trust people enough to let my guard down and get vulnerable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Intimacy is something I know little about.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The only time I feel close to someone is when I am having sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I dominate most of my friends and relationships. I tend to be possessive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Most people would not feel safe in touching me.

**Yes** = 3 points      **Sometimes** = 2 points      **No** = 1 point

### **Score:**

- 90–81    Very high level of aggressive self-esteem
- 80–51    High level of aggressive self-esteem
- 50–31    Average level of aggressive self-esteem
- 30        Little or no aggressive self-esteem