

BWRT Level 2 Case Study

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Identifying Particulars

AGE	53
GENDER	Male
HOME LANGUAGE	English
RACE	White
OCCUPATION	Employed; previously in defence force
DATE OF FIRST SESSION	28-07-2017
DATE OF MOST RECENT SESSION	04-12-2017
NUMBER OF SESSIONS	17

Presenting Problem and Level 1 Work

Patient was initially referred by a GP with uncontrolled blood pressure (on medication) and depressive symptoms. At that point the patient had been restarted on Effexor which he had used in the past for a number of years. Patient mentioned a number of traumas from his past.

The presenting problem addressed in the Level 2 work was only mentioned during the second session. Patient reported an addiction to pornography which spanned nearly 4 decades. Although the patient had stopped using porn for periods over the years (the longest period of abstinence was the present one) and had not watched any porn in the last 3 or 4 years, he felt the urge was always there and that it was still a continual struggle for him.

Sessions 1-4 was information gathering. The patient wanted to recount his life in great detail and found the process of finally unburdening himself cathartic. He had had psychotherapy before, but for a number of reasons, had not felt that he could be fully honest about certain aspects of his life at the time.

In sessions 5, 7, 8, and 9 level 1 work was done. Issues that were addressed was an incident of domestic violence between his parents that the patient had witnessed as a young child; combat situations from his time in the defence force; an incident of childhood sexual abuse and a guilty secret. The guilty secret was something the patient felt deep shame over and had never told anyone. He chose to disclose certain details about it in the session, but felt comfortable enough after the virtual world protocol to tell me about the entire incident. All of these sessions were very successful, with the final PAL scores being either 0 or 1. Pt was very happy with the outcome of sessions and was noticing changes in himself.

Session 10 and 11 was used for reflection on his life and the therapeutic process; cultivating new positive coping skills and social relationships and treatment planning to address the pornography addiction from session 12 onwards.

Level 2 Work – Sessions 12 – 15

Session 12: 01/11/2017

Due to the strong therapeutic alliance that existed at this point and the pt's high level of trust in this therapeutic modality, only the broadest outline was given of what would happen in the next sessions. The pt indicated eagerness and urgency to resolve the problem a.s.a.p. As he was leaving the country for a two week period on the 20th of November, we decided to adjust the time frame slightly and have the next session the following day.

The Level 1 or Level 2 questionnaire (Form 1) was done to confirm that it was indeed level 2 work that was needed. The pre-questionnaire Questions (Form 2) was also completed in this session. We also explored the first vs worst memory; with pt reporting that he remembered the first contact with porn very vividly. We also discussed triggers for porn use with the pt realizing that his triggers were feeling that were often triggered externally by interactions with others. Pt flagged feeling rejected; feelings of loneliness and feeling bad about himself as his three main triggers. Also discussed his history with pornography and previous treatments in more detail.

Session 13: 02/11/2017

Unlock Questionnaire completed. Worksheet 1 given as homework and the importance of completing the homework emphasized.

Session 14: 08/11/2017

Homework checked. Do Unlock Routine. Run through it twice and do interactive reinforcement. PAL 1 drops to 1/10 and PAL 2 remains at 10/10. Explain second homework sheet.

Session 15: 14/11/2017

Homework checked. Pt reports that he has felt good and even slept better over the last week. Mentions that he feels that he has found himself acting differently in difficult social situations (more in line with ideal self). Mentions that he felt "free" the whole week and he now views himself differently and also wants to behave differently. Do reboot routine using first image and add 3 trigger guards related to triggers identified in session 12. PAL 1 initially rises again, but drops to 0/10 by end of routine.

Session 16: 17/11/2017

Pt seen for follow-up before going on two week holiday. Pt reports that he is doing very well and hasn't been tempted to use porn at all for the last two weeks. Mentions that before it would take a great deal of effort to "re-direct" his behaviour each time he was tempted. Mentions that he feels liberated and that he is no longer his old self "at all". Pt reports that he relationships with significant others have changed and he wished this kind of therapy could have happened earlier in his life. Mentions that he still uses Sheet 2 homework exercise when he feels some of the "old emotions" emerging and immediately feels confident again afterwards. Obtain patient's consent to use him for case study.

Session 17: 04/12/2017

Follow-up after pt was on a 2 week holiday out of the country without his wife. Pt reports that he finds it difficult to picture his old self now and no longer feels emotionally connected to it. New self can be seen very vividly and he feels that in most respects he is that person now. When he finds himself feeling insecure, he consciously “resets” this using the Sheet 2 exercise and this reportedly works every time. Mentions that he feels more confident and happier within himself. According to pt, despite having multiple opportunities to use porn on the trip, he did not do so as he had no interest in it. Mentions that situations that might have tempted him before, no longer did so. When he was tempted, he could “choose to be the new self”. Temptation was only relatively strong once and he found it relatively easy to manage. According to patient, he rarely experienced the feelings that used to be his triggers, as his “new self” didn’t feel like that (lonely, rejected etc.) Pt also found that he now finds self-affirmation to be enough, while before he needed to be affirmed by someone else to feel good about himself. Again mentions that he feels free and expresses the wish that this problem could have been resolved earlier.

Regular follow-ups scheduled for next few months.

Psychologist’s views on therapeutic process and efficacy

For a variety of reasons this was a very easy patient to work with. I believe the fact that we had already had a strong therapeutic relationship and he felt a high level of trust in BWRT played a big role in this. We had no significant difficulties. Due to the pt’s holiday plans, we adjusted the therapeutic timeline slightly (6 days from unlock questionnaire to unlock routine, 6 days from unlock to reboot). However, I don’t believe that this had any significant impact on the outcome.

The patient is extremely happy with the outcome of both the Level 1 and Level 2 work and indicated that he would recommend it for the people he counsels (faith based counselling).

I am very happy with the outcome and pleasantly surprised at both the extent of the changes the pt is experiencing and the speed at which this happened.