

Worksheet: Exploring Hypersexuality as a Coping Strategy

This worksheet is designed to help you understand how sexual behaviors may function as a way of coping with emotions, stress, or beliefs about yourself. The goal is awareness, not judgment. You may complete this on your own or with a therapist.

1. Identifying Triggers

Think about recent situations where sexual urges or behaviors increased.

What was happening right before the urge or behavior?

(check all that apply)

- Conflict or rejection
- Feeling lonely or disconnected
- Stress or feeling overwhelmed
- Feeling criticized or inadequate
- Boredom or emptiness
- Feeling unwanted or invisible
- Substance use
- Other: _____

Describe one recent example:

Situation: _____

Emotion(s) felt: _____

Thoughts at the time: _____

2. Function of the Behavior

Coping behaviors usually serve a purpose, even when they create problems.

What does sexual behavior provide for you in the moment?

- Distraction from painful emotions
- Feeling desired or valued
- Temporary relief from anxiety or stress
- Sense of control or power
- Feeling connected to someone
- Escape from negative thoughts
- Other: _____

How long does the relief usually last?

- Minutes
- Hours
- Until the next stressor
- Not sure

What feelings tend to return afterward?

- Shame
- Regret
- Emptiness
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- Self-criticism
- Other: _____

3. Beliefs About Self and Worth

Some coping behaviors are connected to core beliefs about identity and value.

Which statements feel true for you at times?

- I need attention to feel okay about myself
- I am not enough on my own
- This is the only way I feel close to people
- I don't expect others to stay
- I use my body to get connection
- I don't deserve healthy relationships
- Other: _____

Where do you think these beliefs may have started?

- Childhood experiences
- Past relationships
- Trauma
- Cultural or social messages
- Family dynamics
- Other: _____

4. Costs and Consequences

Understanding impact can help guide change.

How does this pattern affect you?

(check any that apply)

- Emotional distress
- Relationship problems
- Decreased self-esteem
- Risk-taking behaviors

- Difficulty trusting others
- Interference with daily functioning
- Other: _____

What concerns you most about continuing this pattern?

5. Alternative Coping Options

The goal is not just to stop behavior, but to replace it with safer regulation tools.

When urges show up, which emotions are you most often trying to manage?

- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Sadness
- Anger
- Shame
- Stress
- Other: _____

List at least three non-sexual ways you could try to address these feelings:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Examples may include: reaching out to support, grounding exercises, physical movement, journaling, relaxation techniques, or distraction strategies.

6. Creating a Pause Plan

Behavior change often begins by slowing the process down.

When you notice an urge, try this sequence:

1. Pause for 60 seconds
2. Take 5 slow breaths
3. Ask: *What am I feeling right now?*
4. Choose one coping strategy before acting

Which strategy will you try first?

7. When to Seek Additional Support

Consider professional support if:

- Sexual behavior feels compulsive or out of control
- You experience significant shame or emotional distress
- Trauma history may be influencing current behavior
- Relationships are being negatively impacted
- You have tried to change patterns without success

Working with a trauma-informed therapist can help address both the behaviors and the underlying emotional needs driving them.

Key Point to Remember

Coping strategies develop for a reason. Understanding the role a behavior plays is an important step toward building healthier ways to regulate emotions, seek connection, and strengthen self-worth. Change happens through awareness, support, and skill-building, not through shame.