



Ethical Scenarios

Ethical Scenarios for discussion: Week 7

Ethical issues arise occasionally in our work and can be challenging to deal with. These include such things as relationships with patients outside of work and other kinds of boundary violations. The following scenarios are a few possibilities that can arise in the midst of doing sex education/counseling. Think about how you would handle these scenarios as well as any others that you would like to raise for discussion in our next seminar.

Scenario #1

You are a health care professional who provides sexual health teaching as part of your practice. You have someone on your caseload that you have seen several times to help deal with the after effects of treatment on sexual function. You have become aware that you look forward to seeing this person and are more conscious of the way in which you dress on the days that you are going to see him or her. You find that your sessions with this person often go overtime and that you find yourself engaging in more social conversation than you might normally with a patient.

What do you think about this scenario? Is it something to be concerned about or not? How would you know? What might you do if you are concerned?

Scenario #2

You have been seeing a couple who are dealing with the sexual effects of prostate cancer. The husband always reaches out to hug you as he is leaving. You return the hug briefly but feel quite uncomfortable about it. What concerns might you have about this? How might you manage it?

Scenario #3

You are working with a couple where the wife has had breast cancer. She is experiencing decreased sexual interest and difficulty reaching orgasm. The husband asks you directly what you do to “spice up your sex life”. How do you handle this?

Scenario #4

You have seen a couple together several times. The husband calls and asks to see you alone. What are the pros and cons of doing so? How might you manage this? Does it make a difference for you if the person is a patient or the partner?



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