I don't want to be a pedophile! \[1\]

Dear Alice,

For my entire adult life (the past four years), I have been sexually attracted to young girls. I think about being with one often when I masturbate, and have intense sexual fantasies involving 8 to 14 year old females. I have yet to act on my feelings, NOR DO I WANT TO! I know it is wrong to have sex with a minor; I know that it violates them and totally scars them emotionally for life. I know that a child can NEVER consent to sex. But... I still have these fantasies. I'm afraid to tell a therapist about this, but I know that's what I should do. Would a therapist tell the cops or something? I haven't broken any laws... but still, what would a doctor say or do? I want more than anything else to be normal, and have healthy relationships with women, but I'm so afraid of them. I feel as though I'm a moth, and adult women are fire... they may look nice, but if I get too close to them, they'll burn me. But little girls... they just seem more real. I have never had an intimate relationship with anyone in my life. I have never been on a date, never kissed, never even held hands. But then again, I've never asked a woman out either. I'm just so afraid of women. I think that might be why I like little girls. I guess what I want to know is... should I tell a shrink, or will that only make things worse?

Sincerely,

the reluctant pedophile

Answer

Dear the reluctant pedophile,

Aside from the courage and strength it must have taken for you to write this letter, you have other important things going for you: you haven't acted on your fantasies, and you are open to the idea of getting help from a counselor. First thing's first: psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and other qualified mental health and medical professionals are required by their codes of ethics to keep conversations between themselves and their patients CONFIDENTIAL. In very, very few situations are they permitted to share patient information with police, parents, teachers, and others. Your situation, as you've described it, is not one that would be turned over to law enforcement, or anyone else.

You're right about something else: seeing a therapist is what you should do. Counselors exist to help people become what they want to be and/or feel? in your case, someone who wants to have healthy relationships. If you decide to see a therapist, s/he (you can choose someone with whom you think you'd be more comfortable) will listen to your concerns, fears,
complaints, personal history, family stories, hopes, dreams... and anything else on your mind. The therapist would probably ask you questions that can help you better understand why you feel the things that you described.

Thinking and talking about one's self, a therapist's questions, and the ideas that both patient and counselor come up with together are all essential parts of trying to help people become healthier? whether that's feeling more in control, establishing respectful relationships, and/or other outcomes. A counselor might also recommend medication and/or joining a support group that, when combined with therapy, can help you control your desires as you explore the causes of your feelings. Although it's not essential that you see a therapist who specializes in pedophilia, the resources mentioned in the Related Q&As listed below can help you find providers with extensive experience in the NYC area.

Wanting to get help with what you know is a problem for you? and perhaps for others, too, someday? is extremely honorable. Your current knowledge about yourself, and your absolutely correct belief that talking with a therapist is the next necessary step for you, puts you in a better place to benefit from this assistance and to get closer to "normal," as you put it. Many people have things that embarrass, stress, depress, worry, frighten, anger, and sicken them, but unlike you, so few people share their feelings with anyone else. Of course, sharing personal issues can be difficult? if not almost impossible? to tell anyone else in the world about. But when they finally do, solving problems and attaining greater peace of mind is much easier.

It is important to keep in mind that you can't fix everything overnight. In addition, some problems cannot be cured. Instead, issues such as alcohol and other drug abuse, over-eating, and unhealthy attractions to others often become desires that people learn how to control so that they don't harm or continue to harm anyone. It is possible that you can learn to do the same with your attractions.

You deserve to be healthy, and you deserve to have healthy relationships. The sooner you summon some additional courage and reach out to someone to help you, the sooner these things might happen.

Alice!

Category:
Emotional Health [2]
Relationships [3]
Nonconsensual Relationships [4]
Miscellaneous [5]

Related questions

Exhibitionism/Exposing self [6]
Health resources at Columbia and beyond [7]
How to find a therapist [8]
Sex offender... forever? [9]

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