

When developing interventions, it is critical to not over-complicate the situation and make too many assumptions in relation to its root cause. In this respect, applying the *Law of Parsimony* is critical. It states “that the simplest explanation of an event or observation is the preferred explanation (APA, 2019).” This requires that the individual responsible makes the fewest possible solutions and always seeks to find what is also known as an *elegant solution*, or “a solution to a question or a problem that achieves the maximally satisfactory effect with minimal effort, materials, or steps (APA, 2019).”

There are great visual tools available that can be adapted in order to indicate degree of risk when dealing with different types of behaviors. Identifying what is readily available and adapting as needed is encouraged. In any situations possible, utilizing an intervention that is commonly used with NT peers is advised. Not all strategies have to be *autism specific*, they just need to be practical and to translate in the most meaningful way into adulthood. The use of a combination of the above defined strategies will provide a framework to have rules developed around appropriate and inappropriate places and times to view online pornography, as well as making the distinction between stylized versus real-world relationships. Role play and behavioral rehearsal is helpful in that it allows for the individual to model what they believe to be the appropriate response to specific situations, and get in-vivo feedback to correct for further social errors. Ganz (2007) supported the use of some of these intervention strategies stating that “visual scripts and related educational strategies such as video modeling and social script narratives provide visual or auditory cues to promote communication and social skills in children with disabilities.”

A psychoeducational component will be critical to address challenges the parents have in discussing this topic, as well as a rationale as to why they did “not see this coming.” As ASD is often seen as a “childhood disability,” caregivers will often report that they did not anticipate that they would have to deal with this until much later. Coaching will need to be provided to the parents so that they feel capable to deal with further topics related to sexual interest and relationships.

In the case of Nick, it is important to provide psychoeducation regarding sex education for all, as well as some specific information regarding pornography and how to interpret and process the images he is seeing. From the information provided by the parents, it sounds like there is a need to provide an explicit social skills intervention as well, in order to provide the resources needed to develop real-world connections. This will assist Nick moving forward in being able to determine appropriate romantic and sexual partners. The family does have some valid concerns when it comes to the frequency, intensity, and duration of his interest in viewing pornography. This needed to be something that was addressed in the pre-assessment, as well as in individual sessions with Nick. While the viewing of this type of pornography is not illegal, there are concerns as to how this is impacting him

overall. What is *commonly understood* regarding pornography is not so common. What comes into play are cultural, moral, and religious implications. That is why this is a topic that is so challenging for clinicians. Other than what is legal versus illegal, there is little consistency from individual to individual. This is an area of interest in which both the parents and Nick are at a disadvantage. For him, he is engaging in a highly stylized world in which the lines between fantasy and reality are blurred. For his parents, this is a world that they have admittedly no experience with, and are unable to help him see the big picture and anticipate problematic scenarios moving forward.

## **Implementation**

It has been identified that for this intervention, a therapist that is familiar with both ASD and sexology would be key. In the absence of this combination, the familiarity with ASD should take precedence. Sessions were set up with both Nick and his parents separately, in order to assess perceptions, values, and areas of needed psychoeducation. It was important to either query or meet with Nick first, in order to have time to do research on the platforms, forums, etc. that he is interested in. It was in the best interest of the family system that there is solid information behind his interests and a rationale provided for why it is appealing to him in relation to his diagnosis. Sessions with Nick specifically addressed his perceptions of sex and sexual relationships, with care given to the possibility that these stylized relationships seen on pornography are forming the basis on which he perceives relationships in the real world. It was important to explore his interests and to clarify any potential misconceptions that exist. It was equally important to address general social skill deficits to encourage Nick to connect with others in the physical world.

For the parents, it was important to provide them the guidance that they needed in order to feel prepared to deal with their adult child. Much like previous transitions, this one was of particular importance for them in order to assist him into his independence. While they do not need to provide the specific intervention in this case, they do need to have the information to serve as a social coach moving forward and feel prepared to provide support as Nick explores his interests and develops relationships. The therapist needed to spend time with the parents and provide them the rationale for following this course of action, and to come to an agreement of what will be acceptable and unacceptable moving forward.

Once the therapist had developed a baseline of understanding where everyone is coming from, it was important that the intervention seeks to support Nick's independence and his overall quality of life (QOL). This is an important construct within the transition world, with practitioners shifting the focus away from simply preventing undesirable or problematic behaviors, and teaching the behaviors

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