

Effect of Abuse on Sexuality

- Connects shame to sexual responses – victims of sexual abuse often “carry” the shame of their abusers (Pia Mellody)
- Creates shame and guilt over physical and emotional responses to abuse
- Following early exposure to sex or sexual trauma, the brain struggles to make sense of the physical and emotional sensations connected to sexual experiences
- Teaches that emotional vulnerability is not safe
- Teaches that the only way to “connect” or feel loved is sex – that they will never be valued or loved as themselves
- Teaches that sex is the only thing about them that others want and the only way to get attention – the only way to maintain any type of connection with others
- Teaches that sex is about control (being controlled or controlling others) rather than connection