

Sample Index Trauma Notes

Sam is a person who identifies as gender neutral and prefers the pronoun "they." Sam reports struggling with what is popularly termed "sex addiction," i.e. inability to stop persisting in behavior despite negative consequences. Sam engages in frequent sexual acts with multiple partners. Sam has needed medical treatment for physical wounds caused by partners and for curable sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Sam currently tests negative for hepatitis C and incurable STIs: HIV, hepatitis B, herpes, and human papillomavirus (HPV)/genital warts. Sam reports no known unplanned pregnancies.

Index trauma

What is the memory of a specific, alarming event that causes the most current problems for you, that pops up when you are tired or ill, and you try not to remember or talk about? Please describe it briefly and factually, as if you were giving testimony in a court case.

My mother's boyfriend came into my bedroom when I was six and my brother was two. He pretended to be comforting me, then penetrated me. He told me that if I told anybody, the same would happen to my brother. This continued almost nightly until my mother broke up with her boyfriend when I was eight.

Impact statement

Part 1. Rather than describe what happened, please explain *why* you think your most distressing trauma occurred.

If I had been a better child, my mother would have loved me enough to protect me. I must have been a bad child and done something really wrong to make that happen to me. My mom kept pushing me to learn my numbers and ABCs. I must not have learned fast enough. She must have thought I was lazy and deserved punishment from her boyfriend. If I had been smarter, I could have thought of a way to stop him from doing that and still protect my brother.

What effect did this traumatic event have on your beliefs about yourself, others, and the world in terms of safety, trust, power/control, esteem, and intimacy?

Part 2.

	About yourself	About others	About the world
Safety	When people are distracted by my use of my body, I feel safer than if I'm just standing there.	If I flirt with people and keep them turned on, they won't hurt me.	The world is a f*ed up place and I have to stay on the move to keep anyone from getting too close.
Trust	I only trust myself because I'm the only one who sees what's really going on.	If they're not hurting me, they should be helping me and they're not. I don't trust anyone.	No one can be trusted about anything.
Power and control	If I don't have power over the other person and I'm not in control, bad things will happen.	I fight other people over everything because power and control are everything to me.	The system is corrupt and I try to keep out of it. When I'm in it, I try to bring it down.
Esteem (Belief in your worth and the worth of others)	I have no worth. I think of every possible scenario but I still mess up everything. I just try to survive.	I think some people are better than I am. Some teachers were nice and tried to help me.	I look up to people who have it all. I want to be like they are.
Intimacy (Ability to take care of your own emotional needs and to be present for the emotional needs of others)	I can take care of myself.	I long for people to love me but I don't trust them when they say they do.	Love hurts.

Part 3. From these notes, please write a one-page statement that follows the directions in Handout 5.3 from the CPT manual by Resick et al.