

ABSTRACT

This heuristic study from a post-modern social-constructivist position explores the client's experience of seeking to repair early relational deficits through their sexual practices, preferences, desires and relationships.

The literature relating to clients seeking repair through adult sexuality is minimal; this study explores that literature and the broader link between early relational deficits and the adult expression of sexuality.

The four research participants did seek repair in ways which aligned with the limited literature in terms of seeking a lost unity, searching for intimacy and resolving splits through the powerful contact of sex.

The study demonstrates the irresistible power of the unconscious desire to address unmet needs and the destructive nature of the urgent search for intimacy - and suggests that although a repair through the erotic is sought, it is rarely found.

This project is integrative in both a therapeutic context, linking the relational and developmental, the child and the adult; and also in the context of the self, as it explores the intensely unifying power of sexuality.

The study has implications for therapists and trainers. The breadth of sexual expression detailed in the findings as well as the range of early relational deficits invites further targeted research around this critically underexplored area.