**SEXUALITY AMONG DISABLED PERSONS: A REFLECTION**

A person with disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that prevents such a person from carrying out one or major activities in life. It may be a developmental disability, intellectual, mental, sensory or cognitive. Such a person may have developed this disability from the time they were born or later in their lifetime. This disability limits the person some of the daily life activities and they can only achieve such through other people’s interventions.(Walker, 2007). This reflection entails information gained from research on the sexual lives of people with disabilities. It examines about their sexual behavior, sexual esteem, and also their sexual satisfaction and how their stigmatization from the society. It also suggests ways by which societies’ perceptions can be changed from seeing them as sexually disabled to normal sexual persons. Further, this writing will highlight some of the roles nurses can play in acknowledging and facilitating sexual needs of such people.

Some of the physical disabilities limit these people sexually by inhibiting their sensations and sexual activities. There are some who experience the normal sexual desires and processes because their sexuality is whole but other disability impairments hinder them from getting into relationships. Also practical and social barriers hinder these people from leading a satisfying sexual life like other people due to reduced and limited mobility and other times bowels malfunctions during intimacy.(Walker, 2007)

Being around someone with a disability brings about various reactions, feelings and emotions like empathy, sympathy and pity. It makes some people uncomfortable. One reason for this is because they feel sorry for them thinking they are suffering and bitter about their status. Another reason is that they fear they might say the wrong thing to them or they may interact with them in ways that would make the disabled person feel unworthy, unrespected or even taken for granted. However, there are others who really feel very comfortable interacting with people with disabilities and do so by just engaging with them as normal. Some people will find these people sexually unattractive while others will find them even more sexually attractive to a point others marry or get married to them.

 There is a lot of stigmatization about their sexual limitations from the society which makes them feel treated differently and uncared for. The perceptions from those around them is that they cannot intimately satisfy or get satisfied sexually like other people due to their nature hence most of them are left feeling very lonely and dysfunctional in the society. They always feel they have to prove themselves to the society trying to show that they have normal needs and desires. From their perspective, sex doesn’t have to be intimate but rather anything that can give sexual pleasure and fun. It’s about knowing their body, their mind and being accepted by the society and being understood to function like normal people. (Ferguson, 2013)

What the societies need to do is to change their negative perception and embrace to support the persons with disabilities in their sexual lives. They need to understand that despite their limitations in achieving one or more life activities, their body sexual functionalities are as normal as everybody else. There is a lot of enlightening that the health organizations and the government need to do to the societies to help them understand and support the sexual needs of these people. People should be advised on ways to appreciate disabled people in the society and their families also need not to lock them in the house hiding them. Those that are already in successful relationships and marriages with physically impaired persons should come out and share their experiences with the societies so that others may be encouraged to see it working. Nurses for example should play their role in acknowledging and facilitating these people’s sexual needs by according them a holistic care. They should embrace awareness and reflect on their role in attending to such patient and be genuine as they offer their therapeutic interventions to these customers. They should be aware not to misinterpret such patients needs be kind, polite and pleasing in exercising their socially appropriate professionalism. They should be genuine in offering their nursing care to disabled persons by understanding them and acting according to the laid down guidelines on these issue so as to ensure a holistic intervention is delivered to the patients. This will ensure reduction on the sexuality stigmatization among disabled fraternity.(Walker, 2007)

In conclusion, every person in a community needs to be treated equally in all aspects of their lives and those with special needs to be assisted according to their needs. People living with disabilities have normal needs and desires. Despite their one or more limitations, they have a right to enjoy their lives just like other people and when it comes to sexual needs, the need to be supported and helped to make sure they live a completely fulfilling life.

**References**

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