# Are gay men more likely to suffer from sex addiction?



The Seeking Integrity Blog recently put forward the idea that gay and bisexual people were more likely to be grappling with sex addiction that the general population, largely due to internalised homophobia and lack of support and acceptance from family.

The cycle of addiction, characterised by a repeated pattern of shame and escape through further addictive sexual behaviours, is particularly pronounced among many gay and bisexual sex addicts. As the blog illustrates, the intertwined nature of shame and self-hatred can perpetuate a damaging cycle: shame leads to addictive behaviours, which in turn deepen feelings of shame and self-loathing. This vicious cycle underscores the urgent need for comprehensive treatment approaches tailored to the unique challenges these individuals face.

Treatment strategies for gay and bisexual sex addicts must acknowledge the existence of ego-dystonic feelings, where individuals internally reject their sexual orientation, wishing they were not attracted to the same sex. As outlined in the blog, treatment should initially focus on containing addictive sexual behaviours, before addressing the underlying negative feelings associated with sexual orientation. Clinicians are advised to recognise these secondary issues, facilitating early shame reduction while delaying in-depth exploration until there has been some stabilisation and establishment of sexual sobriety.

A crucial takeaway from the blog is the firm stance against the idea of altering a person's sexual orientation. The authors state unequivocally that sexual orientation is an immutable aspect of identity. Misguided efforts to change it are deemed not only futile but potentially harmful. The blog argues that while individuals can decide not to act on their same-sex attractions, these feelings themselves remain unchanged. To illustrate this, it posits a provocative question: would it be believed that conversion therapy could transform a heterosexual man into a homosexual? The authors pose that if one would answer "no" to that, the reverse must also be acknowledged.

The therapeutic approach advocated involves creating a secure and empathetic environment where individuals can explore their thoughts and feelings regarding their sexual orientation without the pressure of attempted changes. Clinicians are encouraged to support individuals in understanding and embracing their sexual orientation while making informed decisions regarding their behaviours.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* [https://www.naadac.org/assets/2416/jeff\_zacharias\_-naadac-\_seattle.pdf](https://www.naadac.org/assets/2416/jeff_zacharias_-_naadac_-_seattle.pdf) - This document discusses the higher rates of addiction among gay individuals, emphasizing how social prejudice and internalized homophobia contribute to feelings of shame and impact mental health.
* <https://www.edgewoodhealthnetwork.com/resources/blog/blog-sex-addiction-in-the-gay-community-recovery-is-all-about-connection/> - This article supports the claim that sexual compulsivity is more prevalent among gay and bisexual individuals, highlighting the role of connection and the damaging cycle of addiction reinforced by negative self-perception.
* <https://psychcentral.com/blog/sex-addiction/2013/03/when-straight-men-are-addicted-to-gay-sex> - This article explores how shame linked to sexual behaviors can complicate sexual identity, confirming the notion that feelings of internalized shame can lead to addiction patterns, as discussed in the Seeking Integrity Blog.
* <https://immigrantjustice.org/sites/default/files/content-type/resource/documents/2018-10/NIJC%20Asylum%20Manual_final%2007%202018.pdf> - The resource highlights the necessity of support in the LGBT community, similar to the blog's assertion that treatment should address the unique experiences of shame and acceptance in therapy for gay and bisexual individuals.