

## UNDERSTANDINGS OF SEX

When an individual experiences sexual abuse, this trauma can create a particular mind-set, or frame of reference, where sex is viewed as a negative experience, rather than a positive energy that consenting adults can enjoy. Included below is an excellent list compiled by *healthyplace.com* that aims to help survivors understand the true nature of sex.

<b>What Sex IS</b> 	<b>What Sex is NOT</b> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex as positive sexual energy</li> <li>• Sex as controllable energy</li> <li>• Sex is a choice</li> <li>• Sex is a natural drive</li> <li>• Sex is nurturing, healing</li> <li>• Sex is an expression of love</li> <li>• Sex is sharing with someone</li> <li>• Sex is part of who I am</li> <li>• Sex involves communication</li> <li>• Sex is private</li> <li>• Sex is respectful</li> <li>• Sex is honest</li> <li>• Sex is mutual</li> <li>• Sex is intimate</li> <li>• Sex is responsible</li> <li>• Sex is safe</li> <li>• Sex has boundaries</li> <li>• Sex is empowering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sex as sexual abuse</li> <li>• Sex as uncontrollable energy</li> <li>• Sex is an obligation</li> <li>• Sex is addictive</li> <li>• Sex is hurtful</li> <li>• Sex is a condition for receiving love</li> <li>• Sex is a 'doing to' someone</li> <li>• Sex is a commodity</li> <li>• Sex is absence of communication</li> <li>• Sex is secretive</li> <li>• Sex is exploitative</li> <li>• Sex is deceitful</li> <li>• Sex benefits one person</li> <li>• Sex is emotionally distant</li> <li>• Sex is irresponsible</li> <li>• Sex is unsafe</li> <li>• Sex has no limits</li> <li>• Sex is power over someone</li> </ul>