

VOYEURISM: IS SOMEBODY WATCHING YOU?

*Every breath you take, Every move you make, Every bond you break, Every step you take
I'll be watching you...Sting and the Police*

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Traditionally, voyeurism is the attainment of sexual satisfaction by spying on people engaged in intimate behaviors such as undressing, bathing, or having sex
- ❖ Clinically, voyeurism is defined as a paraphilia and includes the following symptoms:
 - ❖ Recurrent, intense or sexually arousing fantasies, sexual urges, or behaviors that involve observing a person naked or in the process of disrobing, or engaged in sexual activity for a period of at least 6 months,
 - ❖ Fantasies, urges, or behaviors that cause significant distress to an individual or impair their social, occupational, or other areas of functioning
- ❖ Today it is referred to anyone who habitually spies on others without their knowledge
- ❖ The causes of voyeurism are not known although it is thought to be due to learned and reinforced behaviors
- ❖ Sexual excitement is achieved by the looking at and observing others rather than through actual engagement with them; satisfaction is attained through masturbation
- ❖ Voyeurism and the recording of images has become quite easy and widespread due to technology and the internet as well as relaxed societal morals
- ❖ Popular voyeuristic photography includes upskirting and downblousing without the subject even being aware they are being photographed
- ❖ The voyeur may directly observe from a distance, or use two-way mirrors, hidden cameras, phone cameras, telephoto lenses, and peep holes to observe their subject
- ❖ Another variant of voyeurism is listening to erotic conversations or "phone sex"
- ❖ Many states have declared voyeurism a crime and prohibit the taking of pictures or videotaping anyone without consent when they are in a private place or home
- ❖ The prognosis for stopping voyeurism is poor because most voyeurs do not want to stop their behavior, they are seldom caught, and the media reinforces watching others
- ❖ Most voyeurs enter treatment because of a court order or threat of divorce
- ❖ For treatment to be effective, the voyeur needs to commit to modifying their behavior
- ❖ Behavior therapy is an effective form of treatment by reducing and controlling the impulse to observe others and reinforcing more acceptable means of gratification
- ❖ The introduction of reality TV, celebrity spy/gossip shows, and the preponderance of internet pornography has made our society become much more voyeuristic

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Make your home as private as possible by closing doors, blinds, and curtains
- ❖ Be aware in public areas such as the beach, bathrooms, changing rooms, and locker rooms, that you may be videotaped
- ❖ If a voyeur:
 - ❖ recognize and accept that it interferes with your overall functioning and the development of healthy relationships
 - ❖ make a commitment to yourself that you want to stop these behaviors
 - ❖ limit your exposure to situations where you spy on others
 - ❖ attend a support group or participate in group therapy
- ❖ Seek professional help if you feel you cannot control your impulses and/or are unable to achieve sexual gratification without watching others

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com

Joel I. Kimmel, Ph.D. P.A. and Associates
5571 N University Drive, Suite 101
Coral Springs FL 33067