

PLISSIT Model

Compiled by Heather McPherson LPC-S, LMFT-S, CST

The PLISSIT model of sex therapy is used in the field of sexology to determine the different levels of intervention for clients. The model was created in 1976 by Jack S. Annon. The letters of the name refer to the four different levels of intervention that a sexologist can apply: permission (P), limited information (LI), specific suggestions (SS), and intensive therapy (IT).

Permission - The professional gives the client/patient permission to feel comfortable discussing sex. Some clients only require the permission to voice their concerns about sexual issues in order to understand them. By encouraging client/patient to share their thoughts, questions, and concerns- the professional validates the issue, empowers the client/patient and moves toward building a trusting relationship. The client/patient may only need this level of intervention.

Limited information - The client/patient is given limited and specific information on the topics being discussed. Because there is a significant amount of information available, professionals must learn what sexual topics the client wishes to discuss in order to disseminate the education and information.

Specific suggestions - The professional gives suggestions related to the specific situations and/or assignments in order to help the client understand and improve the issue. This can include suggestions on how to deal with STIs/STDs or information on how to better achieve sexual satisfaction by the client changing their sexual behavior. The professional can discuss the issue more thoughtfully and collaborate to identify issues to be addressed, problem-solve, and choose helpful strategies.

Intensive therapy - The client is referred to a specialist that can help the client deal with the deeper issues being expressed. This is often a Certified Sex Therapist or Specialized Mental Health Provider if the presenting concern is not sex-related. These can be issues related to family of origin, trauma or abuse or other issues.

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EX-PLISSIT model

The PLISSIT model was extended in 2006 by Sally Davis and Bridget Taylor. This EX-PLISSIT model places permission-giving at the core because practitioners often bypass permission-giving and go straight to providing information. This model places a heavier emphasis on consent to started the PLISSIT model.

References

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