

TREATMENT OF CHILD SEX OFFENDERS: EXAMINING
EFFECTIVENESS TOWARDS REDUCING RECIDIVISM
FROM THE OFFENDER'S PERSPECTIVE

by

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ABSTRACT

One of the worst crimes that someone can commit is a sexual assault against a child. So it is no wonder that America's solution is to lock assailants in prison. Housing an offender in prison is not going to prevent them from reoffending when released in the future, but teaching the individual to change his deviant sexual thoughts will. The American Psychiatric Association has recommended turning towards therapeutic intervention as a means of reducing recidivism among sex offenders. This qualitative research project examines the perceived effectiveness of treatment from the perspective of the offenders. The sample size is comprised of eight child sex offenders. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted using progressive focusing. Interviews were transcribed and coded on six themes that were prevalent in prior studies. The results indicated that offenders do view treatment as effective at reducing their risk to reoffend.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview

According to the American Humane Association over 83,000 children are sexually assaulted each year (American Humane Association, 2013). This issue needs to be addressed. Some of the most recognized psychological institutions in America, including both the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological Association, are advocating for legislatures and correctional agencies to provide therapeutic interventions for sex offenders (Perez & Jennings, 2011). The nation's leading psychology experts are recommending turning toward treatment to prevent recidivism (Connor, Copes, & Tewskbury, 2011).

Literature Review

Public concern about sex offenders has elicited considerable attention over the last two decades (Maruna, Matravers, & King, 2004). Until recently, society believed sex offenders could not be rehabilitated and should instead be incarcerated in prison (Engle, McFalls, & Gallagher, 2007). Song and Lieb (1992) found the recidivism rates for untreated child sex offenders released from prison were between 10-40 percent. Clearly, locking offenders in prison is not an effective form of reducing recidivism. Instead therapeutic intervention was recommended as a means for reducing recidivism (Cole, 2000).

If America wants to stop these 83,000 sexual crimes against children, the mental health system needs to intervene on multiple levels with sex offenders through treatment (Grady & Brodersen, 2008). Grady and Brodersen (2008) suggest that treatment is the strategy to reverse the rate of re-offense and to prevent these crimes against children from

occurring. Sex offender treatment programs aim to reduce future sexual offending (Collins & Nee, 2010). One of the most widely used forms of treatment is known as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). The basic idea behind this therapy style is that dysfunctional thinking is a common occurrence within all psychological problems; these distorted thoughts influence an individual's feelings and actions. (Moster, Wnuk, & Jeglic 2008). This form of psychotherapeutic treatment helps individuals understand the thoughts and feelings that influence their negative behavior. In the context of sex offender treatment programs, the main goal is to reduce sexual recidivism. It is through the understanding of their dysfunctional thoughts and actions that offenders address their risk factors for sexual offending and develop techniques for reducing their risk (Shaffer, 2010). CBT allows the offenders to change their thinking patterns that led to their sexual offending (Valliant, Sloss, Raven-Brooks, 1997). Research has turned toward longitudinal examinations of the effectiveness of CBT treatment on the sex offender population.

In their evaluation of a prison-based treatment for sex offenders, Perez and Jennings (2012) compared 95 inmates who received CBT with 64 inmates in the control group. These researchers used the Static-99 as a risk assessment measure and the arrest records for each participant from the date of release to create a measure of recidivism. Results showed a lower prevalence for sexually reoffending for those who had completed treatment compared to the control group, (10.4% and 18.8%, respectively).

Similarly, Duwe and Goldman (2009) found that prison-based treatment was effective at reducing recidivism. Their study examined the recidivism outcomes of 2,040 sex offenders over a thirteen-year period following their release from a Minnesota prison.

Propensity score matching was used to match untreated sex offenders with treatment offenders to reduce selection bias. After analyzing the rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration of the participants, results showed that of the treatment completers, only 7.1 percent were rearrested for a sexual offense, compared to 11.6 percent of the participants who had not received treatment. These two longitudinal studies show prison-based treatment does have an effective impact on lowering sexual recidivism rates.

However, there have been several studies in the past decade that oppose this idea that prison-based treatment is effective. In a study on recidivism rates of sex offenders treated at the Regional Treatment Centre (Ontario) Sex Offender Treatment Programme, Abracen, Looman, Ferguson, Harkins, and Maillouz (2011) found that those who had not completed treatment showed lower recidivism rates (9.1%) compared to those who had received treatment (11.1%). Additionally, the mean number of years to sexual recidivism was lower (9.4 years) compared to the control group (11.2 years). While both of these are low recidivism rates, it does not attest to the effectiveness of treatment for sex offenders.

Zgoba and Levenson's (2008) longitudinal study on the recidivism of sex offenders in New Jersey compared 150 untreated participants to 150 treated participants at various intervals over an eleven-year span. Archival data was examined from the New Jersey State Police Computerized Criminal History System and the National Crime Information Center's Interstate Identification Unit. The results showed that sex offenders who did not receive treatment reoffended at a slightly lower rate (24.2%) than those who had received treatment (25.2%).

The discrepancies in evaluating whether treatment is an effective form of reducing recidivism through quantitative studies showed the need for a different style of

research and opened the door for qualitative studies (Grady and Brodersen, 2008). In addition to not being a consensus regarding the overall effectiveness of treatment, limited research exists on the elements of treatment that could be most effective. Recently, researchers have suggested using qualitative studies to provide additional insight into the effectiveness of treatment and its specific components by looking at the offenders who participant in treatment (Webster & Marshall, 2004). Qualitative studies may help society understand the contradictory results in quantitative research.

As the primary individual assisting in the treatment of sex offenders the therapist has a unique insight into the treatment program. Little research exists on the perception and experience of these individuals. Collins and Nee (2010) did explore therapist perception as influencing change in the sex offender within a prison environment. Through an opportunity sample of four sex offender treatment provider therapists, these researchers used semi-structured interviews to analyze the therapists' perceptions. Interviews were examined using discursive analysis and common themes were identified. Results showed that the therapists view themselves as especially significant in influencing a change in sex offenders. Since therapists are a primary component in the treatment process, their viewpoint matters.

In addition to the viewpoint of the therapists, the sex offender's perspective, also needs to be accounted for. The sex offender's perspective is important because they are the ones actually benefiting from treatment. A limited body of research has emerged that uses the perspective of the sex offenders as a way of evaluating treatment designed to reduce reoffending. Grady and Brodersen (2008) conducted a study that has focused on the offenders' point of view. They examined the perspective of 18 inmates from North

Carolina through survey data collected. The responses were analyzed using grounded theory method and coded for 30 themes. Results demonstrated that participation in treatment was seen as “a positive and life-altering experience”. The majority of offenders regarded treatment as effective and believed treatment would lower their risk of recidivism. It is important to use the voices of participants in treatment because it will add to the knowledge on how to effectively intervene with sex offenders.

In a similar study, Connor, Copes, and Tewksbury (2011) used semi-structured interview of 24 inmates to examine the perception sex offenders hold regarding the effectiveness of prison-based treatment programs. Data was coded using principles of analytic induction focusing on positive and negative experiences. Results showed that sex offenders expressed self-transformation and relapse prevention strategies that were only obtained from participation in treatment.

With a limited array of qualitative research, a significant gap is noticed. All of these studies focus on treatment within prison settings and have not taken into account sex offenders who are participating in community-based treatment programs. Considering 97 percent of sex offenders are currently in the community or will return to the community, these offenders need to be addressed in research (Department of Corrections, 2014). To address this specific population of offenders, the current qualitative study examined the effectiveness of a CBT community-based treatment program aimed at reducing recidivism.

Purpose

In order to better understand the treatment process of child sex offenders and determine treatment effectiveness towards reducing recidivism, a research project was

designed to focus on the perspective of the offenders themselves. Society can make judgments on how effective they deem treatment to be, but no one knows better than the offender. It was decided to go straight to the source, the child sex offender, and get his perspective on how effective he views his treatment process to be. A qualitative study with semi-structured interviews was arranged. Qualitative studies fill the gaps that quantitative studies leave, by providing additional information about the impact of various components of the treatment procedure (Grady & Brodersen, 2008). Connor, Copes, and Tewksbury (2011) suggest that gaining the perspective of the offender, instead of just the therapists or criminal justice practitioners, provides unique insight into the effectiveness of treatment. One-on-one interviews “allows the participant to discuss their thoughts and beliefs in detail” (Connor, Copes, & Tewksbury, 2011). Understanding the personal needs of sex offenders in treatment will conceivably advance future treatment programs and reduce rates of reoffending.

METHODOLOGY

Sample Selection

In an effort to assess the effectiveness of reducing recidivism from the offender’s perspective this study used semi-structured in-depth interviews of the sex offender population. The current study utilized a purposive sampling to select participants who met relevant study criteria (Patton, 1990). A total of eight male sex offenders who fit the study criteria of having committed a sexual offense against a child under the age of 16 participated. These men were selected because their offenses are an exhaustive representation on “severity” dimension ranging from touching a child’s breast over her shirt to forced full vaginal-penile intercourse. The decision to cut off participant number

at eight was made because the information obtained regarding internal shift in being, sustained skills, and the most important aspects in treatment were somewhat redundant during interviews six to eight. All participants have received over three years of treatment and are nearing the end of their treatment. All were receiving treatment as a condition of probation. The participants vary in age between approximately 25 and 70. These eight participants were recruited from a sex offender treatment facility in an urban community in Texas. The leading therapist of the treatment group notified the clients a researcher would be attending their weekly meetings to recruit participants for a study. Once the researcher sat in on their meeting, they posted a flyer in the meeting room recruiting participants. All participation was voluntary and a monetary compensation of a \$50 Visa gift card was given to participants for their time.

Participant Offense Description

Below is a description of each participant's offense in their own words.

Carlos: Well my offense was um it involved my twelve-year-old female cousin. Um, one day she, I got home from a party real late one night, probably three o'clock in the morning. I noticed that my cousin was laying on he couch, um, she never sleeps in there by herself or anything so this was the first time I seen her in there. Uh, I ended up manipulating her to go with me to my bedroom by telling her I was gonna let her watch a movie or whatever. And she came to the room and I um like started having fantasies and like thoughts. Well I ended up telling her to jump on top of me like a grinding position and she was on top of me for a few seconds and I removed her because that's not what I was trying to accomplish. So when I

removed her I grabbed her hand forcefully and I forced her to touch my penis over my clothing.

Francisco: I uh committed aggravated sexual assault of a child. I sexually assaulted my 12-year-old step daughter when I was at the age of 38.

Keith: I um, molested my nine year old niece. I touched her breasts over her clothes on three different occasions.

Larry: We were uh at the lake August of 2006. I was drinking and I asked my niece to stay in my tent. Later that night she come in there, of course she wasn't in there all the time.. And uh, she laid down beside me and I rolled over and put my hand down her britches and I put my hand up her shirt.

Mark: My best friend's sister was 12, I tricked her into doing a little dance for me and I got her to sit in my lap. I fondled. I put my hand down her pants and fondled her breasts.

Steve: There is a lot I don't remember. I do remember the girl being in the bed, whether she got in the bed before I was in the bed or after I was in the bed that is hard to define. But she was under the covers I was on top of the covers. I rolled over on her, um, I woke up for an instance. I don't want to make an excuse and say I was high or anything, but I was pretty high.

Travis: I had sex with one of my students, a sixteen-year-old girl.

Vince: She came behind me and snatched the letter up. And when she did she took off running to the front room and I went behind her and told her to give me the letter. And she put it off in her clothes. Uh, so she was giggling and making a joke out of it and stuff. And she sat on the couch trying to fight me away and she opened her

legs and she had some tight pants on and uh I think I took advantage of the situation. I was reaching for the letter but I reached out knowing that I was touching her vagina. And I touched the vagina.

Data Collection

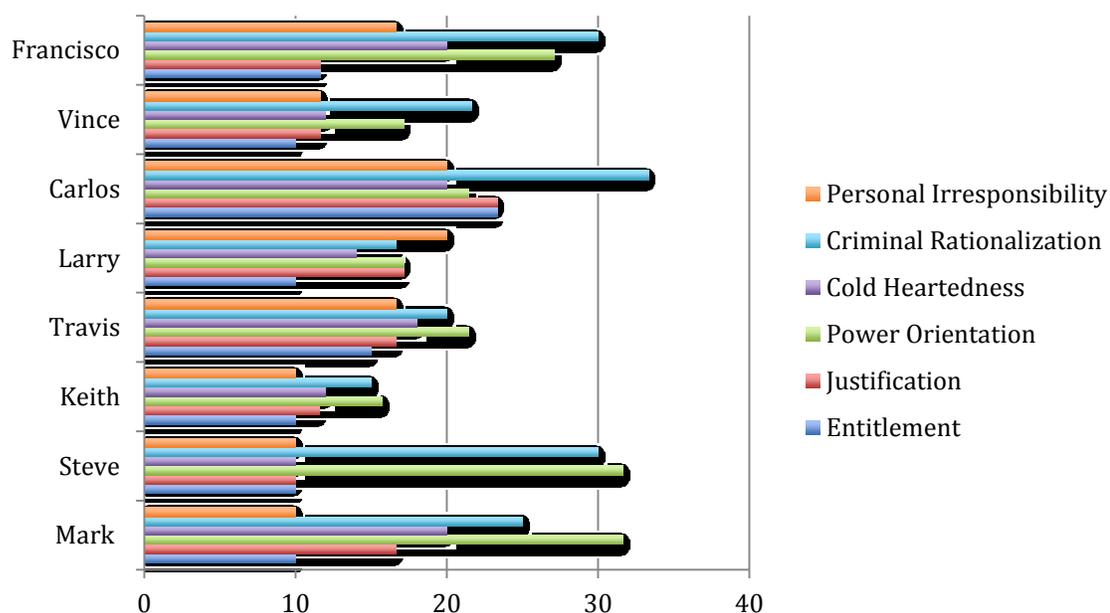
The primary purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of sex offender treatment from the view of the offender. Prior to conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews, between April 2013 and December 2013, IRB approval was obtained. Participants were recruited using a flyer posted in the counseling agency office (Appendix I). The interviews sessions started with participants filling out a Criminal Thinking Scale (CTS) assessment (Knight et al., in press). The scale measures the degree to which an individual feels entitlement, justification, power orientation, cold heartedness, criminal rationalization, and personal irresponsibility. It was decided to use the CTS in conjunction with the in-depth interviews because this scale “represents concepts with special significance in treatment settings for correctional populations” (Knight et al, in press). It was thought that participant scores would support or refute statements made by participants during their interview. The assessment was scored following the guidelines provided. All subsequent interviews were recorded with audio only. The questions were obtained from previous research and those deemed important by the primary researcher (Grady & Brodersen, 2008). Some questions from Grady and Brodersen (2008) were omitted because they were not applicable to this study. Using progressive focusing subsequent interviews were refined to omit or include questions (Bachman, 2014). Each interview ranged from 45 to 90 minutes and was fully transcribed (Appendix II). At the time of transcription, the primary researcher changed all of the

names of the participants to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. The transcribed interviews were coded based on the six scales from the CTS and the 6 themes that were prevalent in prior studies. These themes were most important aspect of treatment, least important aspect of treatment, sustained skills, peer experience, therapeutic experience, and participant recommendation. To ensure rater reliability three individuals coded the transcribed interviews. Each rater coded the interviews independently. The three raters then met to compare codes and reached a consensus on all themes found.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After coding interviews for themes, analysis showed that offenders do deem treatment as successful in reducing their likelihood of reoffending. In response to the question “Do you think treatment is successful”, seven out of eight participants responded with affirmation that treatment is effective. Of the seven themes coded in these interviews, three stood out among the participants as being essential to their viewing treatment as successful. Those themes are internal shift in being, sustained skills, and most important aspects of treatment. A description and illustration of these three themes will be provided using quotes from participants. In addition, the scores from their Criminal Thinking Scale will be discussed in relation to the themes (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Criminal thinking scale results for eight participants



Theme 1: Internal Shift in Being

Empathy

Attributing to the therapeutic experience as a whole, many participants mentioned changes in their concern for others and their increased self-awareness. Many participants expressed this concern for others as a form of empathy they had not experienced before beginning treatment. For example, Larry states that treatment focused on “teaching me about empathy. Because I didn’t have empathy. I didn’t care about nobody...I really only thought about (Larry) and nobody else”. This treatment helped many participants gain empathy for their victim. Carlos, in regards to victim empathy states:

“you don’t ever think about how bad it affected them until you do that...we do a chapter of what the victims might ask you if you were to

ever talk to them or see them. That was one of the hardest ones because, you know, you don't ever think about that.”

The empathy that was developed through this Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment (CBT) program shows how treatment is successful because it is this internal shift within these offenders that helps them refrain from reoffending. Keith's response that he was 99 percent positive that he will never commit another sexual offense was “because I don't want to hurt anyone else”. In response to what makes him not want to commit another sexual offense, Mark stated “I don't ever want to hurt anyone like I did her...that is the kinda thing that is going to keep me from doing another crime or hurting someone else like that”. Mark's empathy is particularly clear when he states “you put your victim though a lot worse than anything you could go through by sexually, mentally, assaulting them.” These responses demonstrated that fostering empathy can lead to preventing reoffending which contributes to successful treatment,

Admit Offense

Another component to this internal shift in being that was present though several interviews was the need to admit to their offense. Francisco was adamant about “the individual being able to accept what they did was wrong”. He states that for treatment “to be effective the individual has to just accept that they did something wrong and work to fix it.” This idea of taking responsibility for his offense mirrors his scores on the CTS because he does not show signs of justification. He is able to admit to his offense. Vince also showed evidence of the need to admit your offense because he claims his therapists “help you come out of denial.” In his words, “getting out of denial, which I think is the

first part, you know, is very critical.” Mark also declares that he “would have been in denial till today if it wasn’t for treatment.” Overall, all participants showed low to moderate (10-23) scores on both justification and personal irresponsibility, which shows that these participants were admitting their offense and taking responsibility for their actions. The importance of admitting their offense and the empathy they gained to the effectiveness in treatment was illustrated in the comments the participants made during their interview. Carlos said “I lied about [my offense] for the first few years...so when I finally admitted it, that’s when I can actually take the steps to recover.”

Theme 2: Sustained Skills

To gather information related to the elements of treatment the participants would take with them after their mandatory treatment is completed, researchers included questions about skills acquired during their treatment. Participants most frequently mentioned thought shifting, avoiding children, and learning how to control their cycles. In general, Larry speaks to the skills and success of treatment in his remark:

“I think that once I am through with PACC, I would really like to, I would like to come in once a month to be refreshed.”

The fact that he wants to continue treatment when it is no longer required of him speaks to the successful of the tools treatment has to offer.

Thought Shifting

One tool that has been taught through treatment to these individuals is the idea of thought shifting, or changing your thinking to a new topic. Vince explains that since

going through treatment he has learned this skill. “Now that I’ve been through this I feel like...I’m short circuiting to keep my mind from going some place that it shouldn’t go. So I have tools that I use to keep my mind from wandering like that.” Carlos explains this thought shifting and how it helps prevent his reoffending:

“One of the main tools I learned is my triggers what gets me thinking deviantly, like objectifying women...I could redirect my thoughts, or you know just thought shift period...that’s what stuck to me the because that’s what keeps me today from not offending now.”

Admitting that this tool he learned in treatment is what prevents reoffending shows that for this offender treatment is successful. Larry also described the sustained skill of thought shifting and how he knows it will remain a tool he carries with him after treatment.

“I feel like the class has helped me...to get my mind to going instead of thinking deviant thought of ‘hey, there’s a cute little girl over there’, it makes you put up a stop sign, you know. It’s like, hey, don’t go there.”

Thought shifting is a core component of relapse prevention that seemed to resonate with many participants as an ongoing skill. Since this is a sustained skill that was learned in treatment, it can be concluded that treatment is a success to these participants.

Avoid Children

Another sustained skill that many participants revealed as key to their success in treatment is simply staying away from children. As part of the treatment procedures, these offenders are not allowed to be around children. Larry said “they pretty much taught me to avoid circumstances, school zones, child safety zones. It really has helped me a lot. It really has.” It is evident from Larry’s remarks that this skill of avoiding children is a sustained skill that he will take with him after treatment is over:

“Everybody is like, my sister is like you now you only got three more years, what are you gonna do when you get off probation? I’m not gonna change. I’m still gonna be avoiding children. I’m still gonna avoid school zones”.

Travis, who committed his offense against a student of his states, “I will try to keep away from being you know enclosed with someone because I start developing things. That is one thing that I know that I learned that is good...I still have to keep myself away from anything that will push me to committing a crime”. Keith had a similar mentality about his future with children: “I think after I get off probation, I don’t think, I know, I will keep doing what I am doing to not be around children.” While avoiding children at all times is an unrealistic goal, Francisco said this in regards to being around children once he is finished with treatment: “I think it’s a high risk situation. If I was around kids I would want an adult there. I would never want to watch kids by myself.” These participants have gathered skills in treatment that will help them face life after probation is complete.

Learn To Control Cycles

One of the most influential sustained skills the participants mentioned that was successful in preventing reoffending was learning about cycles and how to stop the negative cycles. Travis explains what his negative cycle is:

“Well, see uh, at the first is what triggers you. For example, if I go to a brothel you know I am in the wrong place. It is going to be very difficult for a married man like me not to look at a pretty girl right there that is offering you her body if you pay her. You go to the next step and start talking to her. The more you get into it then pretty soon you end up committing a crime, not necessarily in the brothel, but you have broken you know your barriers because you have gone step by step until you commit your crime. It’s a cycle that, that’s one thing that’s important. I forget all the names, but I know what it goes. So the first thing is don’t go there, you know keep away...you stop your cycle right at the beginning and say ‘hey, no way’, and then give your reasons and then walk away”.

Two participants explained the successfulness of learning to control their negative cycles as being instrumental in preventing reoffense and keeping him out of jail.

Carlos: “I know that if I wasn’t in treatment and I wasn’t getting the help that I need I know I would continue with the bad thoughts about random strangers to where I wouldn’t know how to stop myself from acting out or

trying to act out or um I think it benefits a lot. Because it showed me that it taught me that there are steps you can avoid um acting out or even offending. Personally without treatment I think there would be a higher chance that I would reoffend again.”

In response to the question “What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again, Mark discusses his cycle. “I have a, we have a cycle, which is a cycle is things that lead to deviant sexual thoughts or committing offenses. Like mine was always boredom, which I stay so busy now so I don’t even hit that first cycle.” By learning their cycles in treatment and understanding what steps lead them to reoffending, these offenders know how to avoid the path that would even start them towards offending.

Theme 3: Most Important Aspects of Treatment

Group Therapy

Out of the eight participants, seven responded that group therapy was the most important aspect of treatment. The one participant who disagreed was Steve; the same individual who claims treatment is not what helps him prevent reoffending. Carlos had this to say about the importance of group sessions:

“Somebody can say something in my group that I’m feeling like they can express, they can share something in group that I want to say, but I don’t have the courage or something, or I don’t want to speak up about it. Or there could be something going on with their life that I can relate to and I can benefit from”.

Francisco shared a similar feeling about group therapy:

“Actually knowing that there were people who were going through the same things that I was going through helped. Being able to help others, by either listening to their stories or having them listen to mine”

Group therapy was able to foster a sense of security and trust between the offenders, that other aspects of treatment, including individual counseling, were not able to provide.

Vince expressed this sentiment in response to the question “which therapy style was more beneficial for you?”

“Group. The best help for a sex offender is another sex offender talking to him, because they know what they go through. They know the weaknesses and the feelings... And we teach each other. That's a good thing. No one can teach someone who hasn't had a prior sexual offense a problem like that except someone who has had a prior offense.”

Books

Overall, the participants provided positive responses regarding the literature they were required to read as part of their treatment procedures. One book that was mentioned by several offenders was entitled “Reviving Ophelia”. Vince had this to say about the book:

“Reviving Ophelia it helps you to understand the transformation of coming out of the tomboy stage and going into the Cinderella stage. I never understood that until I came in here and read that and I understood the transformation of a little girl.”

Larry also mentioned that this book was particularly helpful during his treatment. “I liked that book because I didn’t realize how much little girls grew up to adventure out. I thought all girls were little angels, you know.” Vince and Larry both offended against a female child, so this book helped them empathize with what life entails for a girl. Another book that was mentioned as being helpful was “Just Before Dawn”. Francisco commented: “I think “Just before Dawn” had to do with the um, not only the effects on the victim themselves but the surrounding people, and the people around that, and how it expands out. How one action can have wider effects.” It is evident from these responses that reading these required book were effective aspects of treatment because of the lessons that were gained. When discussing the importance of these books, Francisco recommended a certain change to how the treatment class engaged the offenders in reading:

“[Include] a tutoring class for people who have trouble with reading. Maybe some audio books for people who really struggle with reading so they can actually get further along on the program faster”.

The Outlier

There was one participant who does not fit along with these results. Throughout his interview, Steve pronounces treatment as ineffective for himself. Instead he has learned what he needs to know to prevent himself from future offending through a relationship with God. While this paper is not renouncing faith in an offender's treatment process, Steve has not learned the tools that therapy can provide to reduce risk of reoffending like the other participants have. Steve continues to view his offense and victim in a negative light, as is evident in the following comments: "I just made light of it, I didn't touch or remove her clothes, I guess this would be excuse in class. But I didn't do none of the hard-core stuff" and "if the victim forgives me I could care less". He still shows evidence of criminal thinking in his personal irresponsibility by blaming the assault on the fact that he was high at the time and on society for being accepting of sex. He may view the treatment process as ineffective, but it may not be a flaw in the treatment; instead, it may be that Steve has not allowed treatment to be effective for him from a stubborn mindset that treatment is not effective and only a relationship with God can prevent reoffending.

Results Summary

The findings clearly demonstrate that the participants viewed the treatment program at PACC to be effective at reducing their risk of reoffending. Participants stated that the elements they learned in treatment would translate into skills that would prevent them from committing another sexual assault against a child. Vince demonstrates the role therapy will play in his life after he completes the program when he says "the counselors what they are doing is teaching us to teach ourselves. I could leave right now and I know

the things to do. They teach us not to fall back to the things we come out of". This quote shows that treatment is effective because the participants have learned to change their behaviors so they will not commit another sexual crime again. Francisco echoes this sentiment when he said "therapy is tools. That's all [the counselors] gives us, is tools to succeed, to make a difference in our lives". The point of this treatment program is to help the offenders be able to help themselves and reduce their risk for recidivism.

Most participants stressed the importance of an internal shift in being through an increase in their self-awareness and concern for others. This predominately came about in the form of gaining empathy and admitting their offense. In addition, the specific elements participants learned during treatment that would reduce their risk for reoffending included thought shifting, avoiding children, and learning to control negative cycles. These sustained skills are the effective components of treatment that provide confidence that another offense will not occur. Mark states this clearly when he said, "you can do everything to make sure it doesn't happen. That is all you can do, take everything you learned in treatment and put it to work". Overall, participants responded that due to the effective treatment program their likelihood of reoffending is low.

Recommendations For Future Programs

Since this study focused on the treatment program from the perspective of the offenders, their viewpoint on future programs needs to be considered. Included in the interviews were questions that allowed the participants to make recommendations for future treatment programs. One major component that emerged from several interviews was the desire for a more individualized program. PACC requires all clients to complete a wide variety of assignments that is assumed will benefit the majority. However, some

participants in this study noted flaws in this ‘one-size fits all’ program. For example, anger management classes are required for all clients. Mark was one participant who claimed he was not angry at his victim or himself for his offense so the required class meetings and literature surrounding anger management was not beneficial for him. Future programs should look towards the individual client to see what his specific areas of need are and focus attention on that area. Another example of a need for more individualized programs is demonstrated through the relationship counseling aspect of PACC’s program. All clients are required to attend relationship counseling with their significant other before graduating from the program. However, not all clients have a significant other. Instead, future treatment programs should consider an alternative assignment, such as literature reading focusing on health relationships, for those who are unable to attend relationship counseling. These adjustments to the program would increase the effectiveness and would focus more on the individual.

Another area of recommendation that was received from participants was in regards to the book aspect of treatment. Since this was noted as an important aspect of treatment, Francisco recommended adding audio books. He pointed out that some of the offenders in his group have trouble reading and having access to audio books would help to improve their understanding of the book’s message. This also links to another recommendation expressed by participants of having a more structured time line for the program. In theory the program is supposed to last three years, but all of the participants in this study had been involved with PACC for over five years. Creating a structured time line for when reading assignments are due and for when clients will join the more advanced groups would help to ensure that a greater percentage of individuals are

progressing through the program at the perceived length of three years. This connects to the audio books because for the individuals who cannot read as well the literature focused elements of treatment may be taking a longer time to complete. These recommendations would all increase the effectiveness of treatment.

Limitations Of Study

This study had several limitations that affect the overall generalizability. Due to the small sample size of eight participants the findings cannot be a representation of the general public of sex offenders. An attempt was made to recruit participants whose offense mirrored the general population of sex offenders, but this is not ensured. All future studies should increase the sample size significantly and have multiple individuals who represent the same offense severity to account for individual differences.

In addition, this study only recruited participants from one treatment program. This also limits the generalizability factor. The findings cannot offer comparisons between other treatment programs that use CBT or treatment facilities that predominantly focus on another therapy style. Any future studies should incorporate participants from other treatment programs in the surrounding area as well as nation wide. This would give a broader view of how child sex offenders view treatment.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of this study is that it only examines perceived effectiveness at reducing recidivism and does not account for actual recidivistic rates. Combining this type of qualitative study that focuses on the perspective of the offender with a longitudinal study that analyzes actual recidivism rates would give the greatest picture of treatment effectiveness. With this type of study one could see how the viewpoint of treatment effectiveness affects the actual rates of reoffending. This is

particularly true in the case of Steve who does not view treatment as effective at reducing his risk of reoffending but instead places an emphasis on his relationship with God.

Looking at his mentality and those who do deem treatment as effective in a longitudinal study of reoffense rates would shed light on the relationship between the cognitive element of treatment and the behavioral aspect.

Future Implications

Studies such as Duwe and Goldman (2009) and Perez and Jennings (2012) have found that completion of treatment results in lower re-arrest rates. Combining this with the results found in this study that offenders do view treatment as effective at reducing their risk of reoffending, it is not a far leap to propose that seeking treatment when having deviant thoughts but before one commits a sexual offense would mean the individual would be less likely to commit a sexual crime. With this in mind, the research recommends a treatment facility exist that focuses on treating the individual before a crime has occurred. This is in the same manner that Alcoholic Anonymous meetings and Drug Rehabilitation clinics exist for people to seek help for their afflictions. If our society were to make sex offender rehabilitation treatment available for people who are thinking sexually of children we might be able to prevent these crime from occurring in the first place. When asked about their thoughts regarding a facility to seek treatment, participants in this study responded with affirmation that this would be helpful. Mark in particular noted, “if they had those places I think there would be a lot less sexual assaults on children”. If a facility were able to help even one child from being a victim of a sexual assault, it would be valuable.

APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT FLYER

Seeking Research Help!

Gift Card Reward for Participation

This research study is for adult males on probation. Researchers at Texas Christian University want to learn about the treatment process of sex offenders. Research is always voluntary!

This study might be a good fit for you if:

- You are an adult male
- You were convicted or plead guilty on charges of sexual assault
 - You have had no criminal charges in the last 2 years
- Are currently engaged in treatment for a sexual crime against a child

Benefits of the study:

- Society may gain an understanding of the treatment process of sex offenders
- May lead to identifying ways of preventing future sexual assaults by offering treatment to men who have sexual fantasies about a child

If you decide to take part in the search study, you would receive a \$50 VISA gift card at completion of study.

**To take part in this research study or for more information, please contact Jennifer Barthel at j.m.barthel@tcu.edu
Vanessa Miller at Vanessa.miller@tcu.edu**

The principal researcher for this study is with Texas Christian University.

APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Carlos

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Carlos: Well my offense was um it involved my twelve year old female cousin. Um, one day she I I got home from a party real late one night, probably three o'clock in the morning. I noticed that my cousin was laying on the couch, um, she never sleeps in there by herself or anything so this was the first time I seen her in there. Uh, I ended up manipulating her to go with me to my bedroom by telling her I was gonna let her watch a movie or whatever. And she came to the room and I um like started having fantasies and like thoughts. Well I ended up telling her to jump on top of me like a grinding position and she was on top of me for a few seconds and I removed her because that's not what I was trying to accomplish. So when I removed her I grabbed her hand forcefully and I forced her to touch my penis over my clothing. The first time I attempted it she moved her hand away. And then the second time I forced her to make contact. As soon as that happened I looked up at her and seen that she was crying and she was like really hurt about it. And that's when I just started her like not to tell no body. I got scared like I had realized what I done was really bad. I could see it in her eyes she was really scared. So I just started asking her like please don't tell no body. I tried to bribe her like I'll buy you whatever you want from the store. And that was what my offense was.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Carlos: Yes it was. Um, not every step of what was gonna happen was premeditated because honestly whenever I committed my offense I didn't have like a thorough plan. I wasn't thinking days about it. But I had a general idea of like, at the time I was really

obsessed with stripe clubs and prostitutes and stuff. My thought was to have her grind on me or dance on me like like that. And um, that's what led to my offense because I had her get on top of me. And once I figured that wasn't what I wanted that's when I forced her hand to touch me.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Carlos: Well the treatment process it starts with breaking you down as a person. Like your thoughts, you know, what are you thinking. I mean like the first step for me was why did I do it. Understanding why am I in treatment. Why do I have to be here? Because I really didn't understand. Um, so it started with why I'm here. Because I offended a child sexually. To um what led to it as in my thinking errors, my deviant behaviors, my deviant thoughts. Um then going in to those thoughts into a deviant cycle. And um the like you got anger management and empathy because you know you got to to be empathetic towards you victim. You can't just expect them not to feel hurt or anything. That was the hardest part for me because you got to sit there and put yourself in the victim's shoes. That's when it breaks it down and you actually hurt somebody. We do video tapes, recording of our offense and our cycle, and then we do the video tapes of our, where we actually explain to our victim why we assaulted them or why we hurt them the way we did.

Researcher: Can you give me a few examples of tools you have learned in treatment to help prevent reoffending?

Carlos: Yes um one of the main tools I learned is my triggers. What gets me thinking deviantly. before I thought it would be normal. Like objectifying women. Um I didn't know at the time that that was a deviant thought. That that was gonna be something that

triggered me later on. Um and another tool that I learned was um actually being honest about my offense. I lied about it for the first few years. I kept going to jail, I'd been doing real bad. So when I finally admitted it that's when I can actually take the steps to recover.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is successful?

Carlos: Yes I do. I know that if I knew like some of the steps before my offense then there would be a higher chance that I wouldn't have offended. Because when you are out there just running around in the world you don't know, like you don't understand that deviant thought is bad really. I guess what I'm trying to say is you don't know it's bad you think it's normal to think this way of a person, especially if you are around this group of person that act this way, then you think its okay. But um in reality it's not.

Researcher: What kind of homework were you given in treatment?

Carlos: Homework was um we did anger management. We did that because I was upset. But I found out that I was upset at myself because I wasn't excepting what I had did. Uh just our thoughts, breaking down our thoughts, our deviant thoughts, seeing how they turn in to cycles. Um, victim empathy. Uh you don't ever think about how bad it affected them until you do that, you know. And um we do a chapter of what the victims might ask you if you were to ever talk to them or see them. That was one of the hardest ones because you know you don't ever think about that. I also did a relationship, a healthy relationship group with one of the counselors, with my at the time fiancé. We did it for about six weeks, counseling healthy relationships. And I did a lot of work. I kinda don't remember everything though.

Researcher: Were there any books you read that were especially helpful during treatment?

Carlos: I don't remember the name of it but it broke down my thoughts, my behaviors, my warning signs, and that's what stuck to me more. If you ever had the chance prior, like if I had had the chance prior to my offense to know you know that I could stop it or I could redirect my thoughts, or you know just thought shift period then there would have been a higher chance of not offending. That's what stuck to me the most because that's what keeps me today from not offending now.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Carlos: Personally, like I want to say that I know that I won't do it again. You already did it once, you've seen everything that you went through, all the hurt you caused, all the pain especially to your family. Um to a child, um I mean I can't sit here and say that I won't ever do it again because it happened once but I do know that there are steps now that I can follow that reduces that risk, that keeps me from offending.

Researcher: What makes you not want to commit a sexual crime again?

Carlos: I just cuz not only did it hurt my family or my victim it like devastated them, you know. I was doing really good for myself prior to my offense. I was you know in law enforcement. I was gonna be a police officer one day. Everything I did prior to that is gone. I can't ever do that again. Not only just hurting my victim, there is gonna be days when she might think about it and she feels hurt and um. I kinda lost my train of thought can you repeat the question.

Researcher: Sure. What makes you not want to commit a sexual crime again?

Carlos: Um, just because I mean it's not only hard on my family but it's embarrassing to your family. With my parents and my sisters and my brothers like they have to go around day to day as well as my victim and her family with people knowing that their brother their son whatever is like a sex offender. You know and just having that label to my family is just you know I don't want that.

Researcher: Do you think there is a universal treatment method?

Carlos: I'm sure there, I mean this isn't the only treatment method that I've done that um, there are other ones that I've been through that I've quit because they shame you. You know we already have enough guilt and shame. We don't have to sit there and be constantly beat up about it, you know. Um, there's that's one of the methods that I've been through that I got kicked out of because I didn't want to participate. So therefore I wasn't learning anything. Another one that I went through was kinda similar. It was shameful and um real blunt about everything. And that also made me not want to do it. So then I got kicked out of that group. Then coming to this group they don't shame you here they just help you. They break it down to where they understand and they help you and also so that we do understand that we screwed up pretty bad and but yet they show us a way that we can continue to live without screwing up again.

Researcher: What have you learned since being in treatment?

Carlos: Well I learned that first off my offense didn't just happen out of the sky I don't know like it didn't just happened. It wasn't a mistake, well it was a mistake, but um I learned that you know my guilty, not my guilty but um I don't know how to say like me wanting so bad, my desire. Can you repeat the question?

Researcher: What have you learned since being in treatment?

Carlos: I just learned that um I kinda blanked out for a second.

Researcher: We can move on and come back to it later.

Carlos: Okay.

Researcher: Do you think treatment will be effective for everyone?

Carlos: No I don't. I don't think it will work for everyone because a lot of people don't want to accept what they did. I've seen it first hand. I was even one of the people that you know it didn't help at first because I wasn't accepting it. If you don't accept what you did and don't acknowledge it, it's not going to help you at all.

Researcher: If probation had not required you to attend treatment would you have sought help on your own?

Carlos: At the beginning of probation I would never have sought it on my own. I would never have tried to get help. I didn't know I had a problem. I didn't acknowledge that I had a problem, you know. I didn't think that I had a problem. I blamed it on alcohol that night. Um but um I'm kinda thankful that they did.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Carlos: No I wouldn't. Again, it's shameful like you feel, you feel that, you have these bad thoughts. You don't want to share them with people because you feel that something intimate, that it's something personal. I wouldn't have wanted it because I would be feeling shameful, or guilty, or kinda gross, you know. So I wouldn't have.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Carlos: Everything has its effectiveness. There is also something that is gonna hang on to you even if it's just a sentence or if it's just a practice that you can use. The one I found most ineffective was I guess again not in this group but in another one was when they were shaming you about it because what it did was make me withdraw from everybody. It made me to where I didn't want to say nothing to nobody. And I would go weeks without even saying anything. So I think like the shaming people about it.

Researcher: Is there anything you would add to treatment?

Carlos: Well there is a pretty good outline of the way they have. Um I don't think I don't really think I would change anything because um the outline I have now is pretty good. Because you basically start from why you did it or who, it basically starts about who you really are all the way to the end to where you can actually make a tape for the victim. Not really an apology but explaining why. So I don't think I would add anything.

Researcher: Are there treatment producers that work better based on the age of the victim or should it be based around the offender?

Carlos: I think it's like if you were to separate a group for male offenders that offended males, I don't think it would be any different than a group that they offended women or children or. I think it's beneficial to have a group where it's mixed because I can share something in group and somebody else can pick up on it um well they can kinda relate if we had a similar offense. Um or even if there was a totally different offense compared to mine um there's still that possibility where they can relate somehow. So if you're just stuck in a group of just I guess uh I don't know I don't think it would be helpful. I think it's better if it's mixed group you know. Personally that's what I think.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Carlos: Not only just the guilt I have from my prior offense and like the shame that I caused my family. Just there's tools that I've learn that you can just, if you are having bad thoughts about anything, whatever it might be there are certain tools that you can use to shift your thoughts. Or um kinda like if you are being in a fight and somebody is being like coming at you or something or like an argument. Um like you would stop breath in and walk away. There are similar kinda techniques that we use that helps us that way as well.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Carlos: Um I like group better than alone. Like I said, somebody can say something in my group that I'm feeling like they can express, they can share something in group that I want to say but I don't have the courage or something or I don't want to speak up about it. Or there could be something going on with their life that I can relate to and I can benefit from that because if I don't say nothing but somebody said something and they get the feedback then also I'm getting the feedback. Where if it's just a one on one group you don't get that in a one on one.

Researcher: Do you think you should not have one on one therapy?

Carlos: No. I think one on ones are great because also one on ones you can share things you don't want to share in group. You can share something in one on one that you are not comfortable yet to share in group. I'm up for both of them I just think group is beneficial more.

Researcher: What steps did you go through to get where you are today?

Carlos: Well um I'm almost toward the end of my treatment. I just have one more thing to do. The first step it was a big step, it was a lot of steps. Basically just breaking myself

down as a person, understanding myself, doing the bookwork, um I mean it was polygraphs, testing uh a lot of testing, like the Abel test, the MSI test. Of course more polygraphs. And a lot of group. And then finally the video tapes.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Carlos: Yes, um cuz when I was offending my victim um I wasn't focused on her feelings or her thoughts or her emotions I was just like I said it was like an object. It wasn't until I seen like the reaction on her face that's when I just like totally freaked out myself. Like what the hell what the heck did I just do you know. That right there is when I stopped.

Researcher: What would you say to someone thinking of committing a sexual crime?

Carlos: If they are thinking about it then talk to somebody about it. I mean even if it's like a pastor or older sibling or just a complete stranger. If you don't talk about it or get it out of your system then you know that thought is just gonna build up and build up and then your gonna end up offending. Somebody that's thinking about it needs to talk about it, get it out of their mind.

Researcher: How effective do you think treatment is?

Carlos: I think its really affective to where I know that if I wasn't in treatment and I wasn't getting the help that I need I know I would continue with the bad thoughts about random strangers to where I wouldn't know how to stop myself from acting out or trying to act out or um I think it benefits a lot. Because it showed me that it taught me that there are steps you can avoid um acting out or even offending.

Researcher: Without treatment would you have reoffended?

Carlos: Personally without treatment I think there would be a higher chance that I would reoffend again. Um it might not be a child, it might be an adult. Just because the lifestyle I was living prior to it was just so unhealthy. I think without treatment there would be a big chance that I would yea.

Researcher: Do most offenders reoffend?

Carlos: From my personal experience I haven't met but one person who has reoffended. And I've been in treatment for almost five years. I mean I just seen one person in five years that's reoffended and that's because they didn't take their treatment seriously. They were just here when they needed to be. They didn't say nothing in group. Um I think, I don't know, I think now if they are serious about it there is a big chance they won't.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Carlos: Um, well, I want them to be able to trust us as offenders. Um deep down we are still genuine people. We are still good people. Um I mean we just made the ultimate bad choice. Just because I offended sexually doesn't mean that's who I am though. I was just in a very sick thought pattern. I didn't know how to get help for it. I didn't know where to get help for it. I was too stubborn to even get help for it. But now that there's group and there's helpful ways to overcome it I can be the normal person the same as anybody else. It's just I've already offended you know. Society should not be scared of sex offenders. The ones they should be scared of are the ones that don't do their work, the ones that keep offending are really violent offenders. They think that everybody that offends are just completely horrible people. A lot of them aren't horrible people they just didn't know how to get help.

Researcher: Is there a punishment that sex offenders deserve?

Carlos: Yes, just like any other crime you would commit um like on my case I went to jail. I stayed in jail for a few months, like 7 or 8 months. I'm on probation for ten years. But there's a lot worse punishments like prison time. I don't think there should be an ultimate like they get their hands cut off or something. You know like but I think the law should work based on what they done.

Researcher: Do you think all sex offenders should spend time in jail?

Carlos: Of course, I mean I think you really don't start thinking about what you did until you are locked up. For me that's when it hit me that I actually offended. Whenever I did offend and was not arrested yet I didn't feel like I did anything wrong. I didn't feel that what I did was an actual crime. I knew it was wrong of course. But it wasn't until I sat in jail that I actually got to reevaluate myself and the situation. That's when I was like I really really messed up. So I think yes. Jail time or prison time or whatever is acceptable you know.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Carlos: It's hard because you can't just stop someone before they offend if they don't talk about it or if they don't ask for help. I mean that's just, if they don't want the help, or if they don't ask for help or if they don't show signs for help. There is no way you can stop someone before they do it. Now if they were to come out and say look I have a problem this is what I'm thinking, I need help, let's talk about it. They are less likely to offend.

Researcher: Can society trust you around children?

Carlos: Yes I can. Um I mean we go through testing to see the age range. We have a test we have to do where it categorizes like the age that you are attracted to. And of course

like, certain people are attracted to under age kids and some are not. Can you say that again?

Researcher: Can you trust yourself around children?

Carlos: Oh sorry, knowing not only that I know I can trust myself, but my testing also proves that I can be trusted around kids.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is ever finished?

Carlos: No. Treatment should never be finished. I mean if you finish, like if tomorrow were my last day and I just went around the world carelessly like, like I don't have to worry about nothing I ever learned, I'm gonna reoffend, you know. You got to constantly think like, you got to put your stop signs up. Like if I just go out there and just going around and not thinking about my consequences it's gonna be bad. But you know if you keep on everyday, every week, every month with that in your mind, with the possibilities that you may reoffend I think you will have a better success rate.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add about the treatment process?

Carlos: Yea there was a question about what I learned that I was having problems earlier with. I learned who I was as a person. Um I learned that you know, I'm not gonna say everybody has bad thoughts, but a lot of the majority of people do have bad thoughts and they should get help you know. Or even just talk about it with somebody. Um treatment gave us that opportunity. Or what's bothering us. Um I learned how to you know again just redirect my thoughts to good thoughts. Or you know I just also learned that everybody does deserve a second chance. Like I said earlier, just because we offended that doesn't mean that's who we are you know. I think if you really take these books and

really apply it, if you do your job, I mean I don't see there being a problem with society accepting somebody.

Francisco

Researcher: Let's begin with you telling me about your offense.

Francisco: Um, wow a brief overview, I uh committed aggravated sexual assault of a child. I sexually assaulted my 12 year old step daughter when I was at the age of 38.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Francisco: Yes. There was grooming and planning, and you know, yea. It wasn't something that just happened.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Francisco: I did 18 months of therapy in TDC before I started the treatment program here. I've been in the treatment program here for over 4 years. So, um, the overview I guess would be to try to identify what your triggers are, what your high-risk situations are, um, what your thinking was, um, your bad cycles. Everybody has cycles, good or bad. It's just a way of identifying the bad cycles and finding stop gaps in those cycles to live a better life and not recreate the crime.

Researcher: Can you give me a few examples of tools you have learned in treatment to help prevent reoffending?

Francisco: Oh um, I would say um, thought stop, thought shift is very important. Having some strategies in place is very important. You know if I find myself in a bad situation, 90% of the time I make sure I drive any place I go. So if I need to leave it's grab the keys and go. I can always make some excuse to get out of a situation. The other one is being very close to my support group. My family members I'm allowed to have contact with

they know, they don't know everything I do but they know physically if something has changed. I mean you know if I'm not eating right, not sleeping right, not shaving, they just know to ask. I've told them you know if you have concerns bring them up. Don't keep them to yourself because that could be a problem for me.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is successful?

Francisco: I do. I think it's helped me a lot. You know there are some things about it that don't apply. I think that some people in my group have issues with that, but once you see that they have to do a broad range and you see everyone is an individual and they have different thought patterns and different out takes you can take what you can get. One thing I said to one person in group who was having a problem was, you take what you get out of group and apply it to yourself. If it doesn't apply to you, screw it, you don't need it. It's just, you try to pull the things out and try to apply them. That was the thing when I was locked up, I'll make it brief, but when I was locked up in TDC I tried to keep the good things about me, my humor, my commitment to my friends, wanting to help people, and trying to go away with the selfishness, and you know the I guess the thoughts that I have that I deserve things. That's just not the way it is.

Researcher: What kind of homework were you given in treatment?

Francisco: Oh, study books, uh books to read that had to do with offense, giving you different points of view that other might be thinking, empathy books, um just you know books to read, homework to do. There's a bunch, but that's the hit points.

Researcher: Were there any books you read that were especially helpful during treatment?

Francisco: Yea, um, “Just Before Dawn”, I thought that was pretty good. Uh, “Why Did I Do It Again?”, I thought that was pretty helpful. Um, what was the other one? “Out Of The Shadow” was a good book.

Researcher: What were those about?

Francisco: Um, I think “Just Before Dawn” had to do with the um, not only the effects on the victim themselves but the surrounding people, and the people around that, and how it expands out. How one action can have wider effects. “Why Did I Do It Again?” had a lot to do with cycles, patterns. You know if you keep doing the same things and keep expecting different outcomes that’s just stupid. You have to change something to get a different outcome. “Out Of The Shadow” it had an impact on how sexual abuse has been around, it’s not designated to one group of people. It affects all people all where all the time, there is no specific person that cannot commit a crime.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Francisco: I know that I have the ability to. In my heart I don’t want to, which is why I have to have those high-risk situations, be aware of those. You know, that I don’t need to be around certain things. If I did it once I am capable of doing it again. But I hope that with all the steps I have in place that it becomes a non issue. But it’s like alcoholism, it only takes one drink. It only takes one bad decision to start down that road. So I have to be fully aware of what I’ve done and make sure I don’t make the same choices.

Researcher: What have you learned since being in treatment?

Francisco: What I’m capable of, the fact that I committed the crime. I did it but it doesn’t have to define who I am or who I can become. You know I can get past this. You know I just have to make those choices and stick with it.

Researcher: What makes you not want to commit a sexual crime again?

Francisco: Oh lord, as briefly as I can put it, it would be you know the fact of the devastation that it did to my family. The fact that I hurt another human being, not just down but her relationships and the relationship she will have with others and possibly how she treats her kids. The affects it had on my parents um my children, my other children, it's just a wide range of things that affected a lot of people.

Researcher: Do you still have deviant sexual thoughts?

Francisco: I do. I do. Um, not so much in the area of you know kids and children. But yea I do. It just has to do with the thought shift thought stop. Making sure I don't put myself into those. It's always going to be there. Take an alcoholic and tell him not to think about alcohol and it just is not going to happen.

Researcher: Do you think there is a universal treatment method?

Francisco: No. Everybody is different. Everybody is an individual so every treatment plan has to be individualized. I think with the broad range of net that they cast they try to do the best that they can as a group. But I don't think that there is a be all fix that would make it universal.

Researcher: What would you change about this treatment program?

Francisco: I don't think I would change too much. I think they put a lot of emphasis of the bookwork. For some folks it just don't mix that way. I think if they could do more visual things, more tapes, you know. Cuz a lot of people can't get as much out of a book as they can actually seeing it on TV or getting actual feedback.

Researcher: Do you think treatment will be effective for everyone?

Francisco: No, I think it's up to the individual that's in treatment to make that choice. I mean because if they go in to treatment thinking they didn't do anything wrong, that everybody else is just full of crap, then it's not gonna have any effect on them.

Researcher: If probation had not required you to attend treatment would you have sought help on your own?

Francisco: I actually did yes. I was seeing a therapist before I was sentenced to TDC. So I would say yes I would have.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Francisco: I think so yea.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Francisco: Oh gosh, um I don't think there was anything that was ineffective. There was some things that didn't apply to me so I just kinda swept those to the side. I did the work but if it didn't apply, it's there so if I need it in the future. As far as where my stage of life is now, you know I just you know. As far as one specific thing there wasn't anything.

Researcher: What treatment procedures would you recommend to someone just beginning treatment?

Francisco: I don't know. Maybe a timetable to help them stay on track with homework. That's one thing that I have struggled with, staying on top of my homework. You know maybe a tutoring class for people who have trouble with reading. Maybe some audio books for people who really struggle with reading so they can actually get further along on the program faster.

Researcher: Are there treatment producers that work better based on the age of the victim or should it be based around the offender?

Francisco: I don't know. That's a tough one. Everyone is an individual, whether they are young or old. Most of it's about how they go about getting treatment. Um, if they are fighting treatment it's just not gonna sink in and that's the whole point, they have to get to that point where they want to make a change for it to be effective.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Francisco: I think the group therapy, actually knowing that there were people who were going through the same things that I was going through helped. Being able to help others, by either listening to their stories or having them listen to mine, I think that was helpful as opposed to individual.

Researcher: Would you eliminate individual therapy?

Francisco: No, because there is a lot of things you can bring up in individuals. There are some people in the group that are not receptive. So getting, needing to get that information out is key. So if you can only bring in up in an individual that's the way to bring it up. But I do think the group is the key thing.

Researcher: What do you think the most important aspect of treatment is?

Francisco: The individual being able to accept what they did was wrong. Being able to take steps that will not only keep society safe but to have a better life for themselves. I want to be able to make plans and stick to those plans. My main thing is I think I have 20 to 25 years to hit retirement, and I want to hit retirement. I don't want to be 80 and still be working.

Researcher: What steps did you go through to get where you are today?

Francisco: Accepting what I've done, um, knowing that I need to make a change in my life, listening to ideas of others on how to improve my life, uh, shoot just trying to be a better person. Knowing what I do not only affects myself but people around me. And if I do something to someone else it has a much wider range on who it effects.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Francisco: No. No. Not at that time. I just uh I was just too into myself. It didn't matter what anyone else thought, what anyone else said. It was about what I wanted and what I had planned to do and it was all about me at that time. So at that time no.

Researcher: What would you say to someone thinking of committing a sexual crime?

Francisco: Seek help. Scream do something. It's just devastating. You are just a small part of it. It's the affect on society as a whole that it would just screw up everything. Man and I say this with as much honesty as I can, I wish someone had put a bullet in my head so I would not have hurt my daughter. I think it would have been better. I mean I say that, but I don't know. That's what I say.

Researcher: How effective do you think treatment is?

Francisco: I think it has its place. I think it's effective for those who choose to use it. But there are still those who think they can do it on their own or they didn't do anything wrong or they didn't hurt anybody and you can just hear the excuses. For it to be effective the individual has to just accept that they did something wrong and work to fix it.

Researcher: Can you ever be "cured" or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Francisco: No. No. That is one of the things I have learned in here. That if you have done it once, the potential to do it again is there. It always falls back to the, my dad was a recovering alcoholic. But he was still an alcoholic till the day he died. He went 30 plus years without a drink. But he knew that if he ever had the one that was it. And this is the same thing. You can't fall on the same pattern and think you will have a different outcome.

Researcher: Without treatment would you have reoffended?

Francisco: Probably, yea. I think I would have.

Researcher: Why do you say that?

Francisco: Because there wasn't any, in my mind at that time there was no sense of the consequences. There was no sense of what I was doing to the other person. It was all about what I wanted, my wishes, my control for power. It was all about me. So yea I definitely see that if I wasn't caught it could have gotten worse. It could have escalated I think is the word they use.

Researcher: Do most offenders reoffend?

Francisco: No. It just comes down to the fact of you know who applies it. Who applies it and who sweeps it under the rug. Who thinks it's societies fault. If they are trying to push blame on someone else then they are not taking responsibility for their own actions.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Francisco: I think they can, I don't think they should. I understand the stopgaps in there. But I see a lot of the people, a lot of the gentleman I am in group with, and I see how several of them have turned around their lives. And I can see them succeeding, the majority of them succeeding without ever having a problem. I don't think they should

slap a chip in their arm or have a camera on the 24/7. But I think they should be weary, it should be a concern. Like I said, if it happened once, it could happen again if the situation repeated itself.

Researcher: Is there a punishment that sex offenders deserve?

Francisco: I have no idea on that. Like I said each case is individual. That's me judging other people. And considering the crime I have done it make it really hard to judge anyone else. I can say that if I were to reoffend anything they did would be justified. And that's basically where I stand. For me to judge anyone else, I just can't do that.

Researcher: Do you think therapy is enough to change behavior?

Francisco: No it has to be the choice of the individual to change. Therapy is tools. That's all they give us is tools to succeed, to change, to make a difference in our lives. But the uh application of it has to come from the individual.

Researcher: Do you think all sex offenders should spend time in jail?

Francisco: Again, that counts on me judging someone else. To say that it depend on the crime is just making it easier for some than others. I don't think prison actually helps anyone. The only thing I got out of prison is knowing I can do time. And that's not a deterrent. The fact that I don't want to do time, that I actually want to you know see my kids if they want to see me, possibly see my grand kids grow up that's the deterrent. All prison does for most people is let them know that they can do crime. And that's not the deterrent.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Francisco: That's you know a grey area. If the person is dead set on doing it there is not much you can do to stop them. If they got some tell tale signs you know you do

everything you can to stop them. Even if it's calling the law. I don't even think there is anything in society, if they are dead set in doing it. It's got to be something in that person that makes them change their mind.

Researcher: What could someone have said to you to stop you from having deviant sexual thoughts?

Francisco: In all honesty at that time I think the only person who could have stopped me would be me coming from the here and now. I think if I had come from here and bonked myself from upside the head or something. Or actually seen the devastation that I caused my family. I would have hoped that that would have been enough. Or you know like I said if I had gone back in time and called the law on myself.

Researcher: Can you trust yourself around children?

Francisco: I think I can. But I think it's a high-risk situation. If I was around kids I would want adults in there. I would never want to watch kids by myself. Um for one that would protect not only them but it would protect me. I would have someone else there to stand up for me and say I didn't do anything. I truly have no desire to hurt anyone else. But you know like I said it happened once, so let's just keep the high-risk situations to a minimum.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is ever finished?

Francisco: Um, no I think therapy can go away but the treatment itself not really. If you are going to grow as a person and improve yourself you really got to you know, it's got to be a daily thing. You got to wake up in the morning with those decisions and you got to go to bed at night thinking about everything you did during the day. And if you didn't hurt anybody and you didn't reoffend then it was a good day.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add about the treatment process?

Francisco: No.

Keith

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Keith: I um, molested my nine year old niece. I touched her breasts over her clothes on three different occasions.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Keith: The first time it was not. Um. Can I go into the whole story?

Researcher: Yes. You can say as much or as little as you would like.

Keith: My wife and I were, had lost what we thought was a baby two years prior. It was a um growth in her I guess uterus. She had the symptoms of being pregnant. For two months it kept growing but it never developed into a baby, so they had to, after the sonogram you know take it out. She didn't want anything to do with sex for the next two years. She was always negative. I put up with it because um she is a good woman. I told her she had to snap out of it because um you know it was affecting our relationship. Every mother's day she would be crying all day, valentines day, the next two Mother's days that went by because she was told that she was not going to be able to have any children and that would have been out first together. So, when her father passed away we went to South Texas to see him because we were not told that he had passed away. We were told he had a heart attack and was in the hospital. We get there, I drove the ten hour drive and my niece was scared and bored I guess. I wanted to take a nap because everyone was sad in the house and I was tired, and she went to the bedroom where I was at and wanted to wrestle but I didn't want to. I was tired and I was getting irritated and

she wanted to arm wrestle and she tried to put my arm down up against the pillow. And when I tried to get it away she straddled my arm and I got aroused. I hadn't had any sex with my wife in two years. Then I started having all of the deviant thoughts about her. In my mind I made her a grown up. Then I started having fantasies about her. I didn't actually touch her the first time but I saw it as, as a sex act that I had wanted. The other times were premeditated. I manipulated her.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Keith: It should have been three years of analyzing ourselves, looking at our deviant cycles. But it took me seven years because in the beginning I wasn't in a hurry to finish. I figured it was gonna take the whole ten years of probation that I had. No one hurried me so I didn't see a reason why I had to hurry. About three years into it I realized I'm just not hurt, I'm hurting myself by not participating. They were pretty lenient with me though. Um, I think the fact that I wasn't, that I had a zero balance the whole time I was here is why I wasn't put into remedial like everyone else. Um, I would answer the right questions that my probation officer would ask me at the time. So I did, I pushed myself to, I egged myself on. I noticed that during football season I wouldn't do any homework what so ever. I would use Sunday football as a, justified why I didn't do any homework. That's why it took me so long. I could have finished it in three years.

Researcher: What kind of homework do you do?

Keith: Some of it were sex offender literature, books that you would read and then write about. All of those books had the answers in them if you read em. I tried to skip through but I ended up having to go back through and answer the question in the back. But

everything that I had to do, everything in the books had to do with sex offender thinking and um what they want you to learn about yourself and having empathy for your victim.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is successful?

Keith: I'm very sure that it is if the person is committed to it. I don't know that I would have gotten everything out of it in three years, but I was able to see other people's failures and their success by doing what they were supposed to. I figured that if these guys could do it, I should and could learn more about my deviant cycle.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Keith: I'm gonna say no. Because I do not want to hurt someone else. I hurt a lot of people when I committed my crime and when my victim told. And it doesn't matter how anyone found out. I never did want to find out. It never did matter. My wife had told me that my brother in law and my sister in law had locked her in her room and told her to quit lying. They didn't believe her. So I made a decision that day. My wife and I went over to let them know that she was not lying and everything she had said was true. I was gonna go turn myself in. Um, that's what I did because back then I didn't know what empathy was, but I had it in me. What crossed my mind was how awful it must have been for a nine-year-old little girl to not be believed about something so serious. And to be punished. Um, so, we did and um I asked for their forgiveness. They told me they couldn't do that and I needed to do what I needed to do, whether it was turn myself in or have them call the police. So I left my wife there and I walked to the police station in [town] where they live. But while my wife was with her, it was her sister's daughter, while she was there they felt empathy for me. And they asked her to go get me and if I could get some type of counseling, if I got help, then they were not going to press any

charges. This was in September. By the middle of October I was attending a sex offender counseling voluntarily. Knowing that when she went to counseling, CPS was going to get involved and there was going to be consequences. But I promised them that I would seek counseling. I attended that counseling group every week for a year and seven months before I was arrested. The fact that I did that I think swayed the judge to give me ten years probation instead of jail time or prison time.

Researcher: Do you still have deviant sexual thoughts?

Keith: No. I'm gonna say no because I used to um, I make myself think about all of the people that I hurt and I change my thoughts before they even start. If I see a pretty young woman I used to follow them like in the grocery store um thinking um I want to see what she looks like, how she acts. I would do that but then I would come back and do all of my grocery shopping and going home thinking to myself what am I going to get out of that? It didn't sit right. When something like that came up after my counseling I would change my thoughts. I don't have a reason to be following someone, it's not like I am uh Brad Pitt and I am going to get there phone number or have a date with them. Because I am actually happily married.

Researcher: How much of a constant struggle do you think it is for you not to commit a sexual crime?

Keith: It's not a struggle at all now that I have the tools to use-thought shifting. It would be hard for me to groom someone because I know how I did it with my victim. Um, I would have to have them get to know me before I could get to do something. But that is not going to happen. I am not alone with any more children, with or without my chaperone. There are a lot of steps I take. When I go to a restaurant I sit on the inside of

the booth to where I don't have to worry about kids brushing up against me and I have to report it. So there is a lot of I say preventive thinking now. I go into the men's room like at a Home Depot something, like in public where there is a lot of urinals, I will open the door and look in and get out as fast as I can if there is any children I wait until they leave. It's just not in my mind anymore to hurt anyone else.

Researcher: Do you think there is a universal treatment method?

Keith: I don't think so cuz there is, speaking of personalities, there are just people who may never get it. They may offend again and I got it from the beginning I just didn't want to participate. But I don't know that there is a universal treatment plan, I think it should be universalized.

Researcher: Do you think treatment will work for everyone?

Keith: No. No and I've seen it. I've seen it to where they have been in the same amount of classes that I have and they still make a bad choice in life. There was one person that, he, he is a beautician I guess, he cuts hair, and he allowed his neighbor's kid to come. He cut their hair basically. He justified it by their parents were there. That guy just didn't get it. It doesn't work for everyone. It all depends on people's thoughts.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Keith: I thought about that in the beginning but I made myself think that was normal thinking so in my mind I didn't think that it was deviant. So I don't think I would have, I don't think it would have helped me if I had never known I had a problem. But if I could have made myself see that it was very wrong, I don't know if I would have needed

counseling at the time without me committing the crime. I probably would have blown it off as that is what all men think.

Researcher: What do you think someone could have said to you to realize it was not normal thinking?

Keith: Maybe someone close to me, uh, get in trouble by doing what I did. It may have snapped, it may have made me snap and realize that is not right, you better get that out of your mind. But growing up I never. I can't blame it on my raising um, my parents were pretty strict. We never had anything like that happen in the family before. So, I don't know that I could have known.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Keith: I think it was the, I don't remember what it was called. You would record yourself smelling rotten liver while you answered, while you read a question to keep you from thinking it was okay to do what you did without smelling. I don't think that helped me at all. I don't see how that would help some people. It didn't do anything for me as far as I know what is right and wrong now. I always thought that I did but it didn't change my, the way I would have answered the question without smelling the rotten liver and the other was ammonium. I don't think that was effective for me.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Keith: What helps me is knowing that, well for one thing that I think I was put on this Earth to help people. I was real proud of that. I have helped a lot of people even after my crime. But just knowing that I hurt people helps me not to commit a crime, another one.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Keith: I think in group because I was able to see other people's reaction to a lot of the questions that were asked and then I put myself in other people's positions, the other offenders. I tried to answer the same question that they just answered. Some of them were different. I would have answered them different. Um, I would have answered them more positive and I got to see, because I was in class for seven year, I got to see, or I got to hear all of the minimizing, justifications, so I think that helped me in the long run to stay as long as I did.

Researcher: What steps did you go through to get to where you are today?

Keith: First step is, what I can remember is trying to figure out why I did what I did. I would ask myself, um, why, what reason did I have to touch a little girl. It wasn't um, I ruled out all of what I thought might be the answer. One of them was, was I envious of my brother in law, the answer was no. Was I envious because they had children and I couldn't, the answer was no because I had two from a previous marriage. I tired to ask myself from the beginning why I did what I did. I was looking the wrong way, it was all me. It was just what I was thinking at the time. It wasn't actions from anyone else. It was all my doing. My victim had nothing to with it as far as I was never blaming her. Then the next step would be where do I want to go from here. Do I want to be straight and tell all, I held back. I didn't participate in the voluntary counseling I went to for those two years. That counselor in my mind was just accepting my money. He was charging me double because he knew I could pay. He would ask me not to talk in class. Don't let these guys know you are here voluntarily. Let them think the courts sent you. You are going to mess up all of their thinking. They are not where they are at where they are by someone like you coming in. It was more, yea, when you are finished, when I think you are threw,

I will right a letter of recommendation for you because you are probably not even going to get arrested or anything like that. I didn't see it as a counselor, or as a counseling group. It was more of attendance and listening to them. I learned what not to say versus what to speak out about. So when I started at another counselor after I was arrested, which was two years after my crime. I don't know why it took so long. I was arrested going to jury duty, but even after that I was forced by the court to attend counseling. The second counseling group that I went to that's when I closed up. I wasn't brave enough to admit what I did. I would just listen. It wasn't until I got to this group that I had to open up because I realized that it was not helping anyone. I was wasting my money by just coming here and paying and not opening up.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Keith: Not, no. Not the way I was thinking. I, I don't know if this is a word or not, but I grew her up. One thing I do know is that I never told my wife that that part about not having any sex for two years. I didn't want her to think I was using that as an excuse. I didn't want her to feel like she was the cause of me thinking that way. It wasn't anyone else's fault but mine. So, I cannot say that I could have stopped.

Researcher: Do you think you are a bad person?

Keith: No. I made a wrong choice. The fact that, it took ten years, but the fact that my mother-in-law and the victim's mother have forgiven me completely, shows that I am not a bad person.

Researcher: How effective is treatment?

Keith: For me, it is very very effective. I learned all my triggers I learned what to look for. I learned what not to do. And I completed my treatment very satisfied with my outcome.

Researcher: Can you ever be “cured” or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Keith: I don’t think it is 100% no. But 99% of me knows what to look for to avoid another crime. And some offenders offend without planning, a rapist, I think. But in my case I groomed my niece to that point. And if I ever groomed another person I would know to stop. Because I don’t want to hurt anyone else.

Researcher: Do most offenders reoffend?

Keith: I don’t think most do. I would say 10% of them reoffend. That’s what I have seen.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Keith: They can trust 90% of us.

Researcher: Is there a punishment that sex offenders deserve?

Keith: I used to be pretty hard on myself after my crime. I used to think that castration would help, but it was brought to my attention that I still have my hands. I can still offend. I can still touch inappropriately. Because of the shame and guilt that I felt, no one would know the shame and guilt that I had because I tried not to show it. In my case I was only in jail for 24 hours from one day to another. That was enough to shake me up. Some of these guys go to prison 5 10 years. So I don’t know that there is a universal punishment. I don’t think I deserved 10 years probation but I was satisfied with it to salvage the business my brother and I had together, to keep my family together.

Researcher: Is therapy enough to change the behaviors?

Keith: I think you also need a support group to go through therapy. My wife is a real good chaperone. She won't lie for me and I wouldn't ask her to. If I did something I shouldn't she would be the first one to call my supervisor to let him know. Therapy is 75% of the cure. The other 25 is support group.

Researcher: Should all sex offenders spend time in jail?

Keith: I think so. I think what helps me is that I sought treatment voluntarily. Because when I went to court my attorney had already given that information to the district attorney, the prosecutor. They took that into consideration. But I do think that jail time shouldn't be an option, it should be a requirement for everyone. It may not help everyone but I think that is what they, or what we, deserve.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Keith: I don't know that it would have helped me, but I think that I would have thought twice had I known someone who had done what I did. Had I known what they went through and what they had to go through to get back into society that would have helped me to think twice.

Researcher: What could someone have said to you to prevent you from ever having those deviant sexual thoughts?

Keith: I think I just answered that. Knowing what they went through, and that they had to go to jail, and putting their family through all of that hardship, family separating because of their actions, or our actions.

Researcher: Can you trust yourself around children?

Keith: Not right now. I don't know because I haven't been around child by myself. I can trust myself by knowing that there are other adults around and they know my offense.

Um, but not by myself. I don't want to know. I don't want to find out. I just make it a point to not be alone with them. I think I got a year before I get off probation. I think after I get off probation I don't think, I know, I will keep doing what I am doing to not be around children. I have a six-year-old granddaughter that I make sure my chaperone is around, because she will run around the house and she will come up around me. The way my house is there is a counter, like a bar, that I either stay in the kitchen with my wife or the living room so she has a full view of me. If I go in to use the bathroom, I make a point to use the master bedroom. I go in to lock the bedroom door just in case she decides to follow me in, and those are just steps that I learn to take. And when I hold her, I hug her from the side. I don't carry her, I don't. Just so there won't be any doubt in my daughter's head that I won't commit a crime against her. Just to ease their mind a little

Researcher: Do you think treatment is ever finished?

Keith: I think it depends on the individual. I think I learned everything I can possibly learn about myself. I am still learning, but I think there is a point where some people don't need treatment anymore. I hope I am one of them.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add about treatment?

Keith: The fact that it took me so long to finish and I basically wasn't punished for it, helped me get it, helped me understand why I was able to finish knowing that. Not only did I complete all of the assignments, I feel like it helped me 100%. And there are some people out there who will tell you that they think probation officers and probation in general is out to get them, that they want them to fail. But when I was arrested I was buying a home that I had lived in for five years. There was a day care center two houses from my house. The law says that I cannot stay at that residence if I am closer than 100

feet, and it was about 500 feet. But probation allowed me to stay there 90 days until I sold the house and bought another one. They didn't have to do that. Um, maybe if I was leasing it or renting or something that may not have been an option. I would have moved out that day. So, I was able to sell the house, move into my new house on the 90th day. It all worked out. It just so happened that someone wanted the house. I am here to tell you that probation is not out to get you if you do what you are supposed to do. I was real grateful. I had no reason to buck the system. That's what I wanted to say.

Larry

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Larry: Um, I was charged with injury to a child. We were uh at the lake August of 2006. I was drinking and I asked my niece to stay in my tent. Later that night she come in there, of course she wasn't in there all the time. She come in there later and I was drinking, like I said I was drinking all day. And uh, she laid down beside me and I rolled over and put my hand down her britches and I put my hand up her shirt. And uh the next thing I know I'm in jail for injury to a child.

Researcher: And how old was she?

Larry: Eleven.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Larry: No. (long pause). I didn't plan it. Uh, like I've told (probation officer name) before when I got on probation, I pictured her as being 18. When I first got on probation I denied it. But uh it wasn't, it wasn't, in my mind it wasn't planned.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Larry: This is PACC, and I am going through sex offender class. The main thing is what I have learned about PACC is they um are teaching me my thinking errors, uh, they are teaching me a lot about my deviant cycle, and um teaching me about empathy too. Because I didn't have empathy. I didn't care about nobody, you know. I was going through a divorce at the time too. So I really thought about (Larry) and nobody else. They really taught me a lot here, reading the books that I read. They pretty much taught me to avoid circumstances, school zones, child safety zones. It really has helped me a lot. It really has. I would recommend it you know for somebody who has problems with being a sex offender. I wish people that were thinking about hurting a child would stop and take this class. I know its helped me a lot.

Researcher: Can you give me a few examples of tools you have learned in treatment to help prevent reoffending?

Larry: Well a lot of it is, um, go back to the thinking, the thoughts that I'm having. I've learned to stop what I was thinking if it was a bad deviant thought. I have learned to stop it. Stop. Don't go no further with it than what I'm doing. That's helped me a lot because its its its helped me to uh open my eyes. The tapes we are doing, the ones we did before have really opened my eyes. It's really got me to thinking because I don't, for one thing, I don't want to hurt nobody else. I mean I don't want to hurt another child. This class has helped me with that. Because I was dealing with I don't know if you have heard but my Dad was abusive to me. I feel like um the class has helped me to not to be to think to get my mind to going instead of thinking deviant thoughts of hey there's a cute little girl over there, it makes you put up a stop sign, you know. Its like hey don't go there you've

already been there. You don't want to go back. It's helped me a lot with my thinking errors and stuff, the tapes, these people know what they are doing.

Researcher: What do you mean by tapes?

Larry: Our uh behavioral tapes that we did. The ones that we had to do with, the one's we are doing you know the smelling. Makes you really stop to think when you smell that smell, you know. But uh its just helped me a lot with the material they give me.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is successful?

Larry: Yes for me it is. It's helped me. I've been here five years.

Researcher: How do you know it is successful?

Larry: Well, I've seen people come and go here and that's really opened my eyes of getting to see it's successful and not reoffending. I'm not reoffending you know and it's successful because there are people here doing their probation time not reoffending not hurting nobody else.

Researcher: What kind of homework were you given in treatment?

Larry: I've done uh uh "Out Of The Shadows" book, lots of book reports, the polygraphs, uh the tapes, um, just the I think a lot of it is the reading part, writing the book reports.

Researcher: Were there any books you read that were especially helpful during treatment?

Larry: I liked the uh "Reviving Ophelia". It's a book about girls and how they grew up. Most of them was without their dad. They had their mom there but how they grew up and then they got in high school and how things changed for them. They started dating and noticing guys looking at them, you know. And some of the book it caused a lot of

problems because their dad wasn't, they had a mom, you know it wasn't enough for them. They went pretty much done their partying and went crazy. I liked that book because I didn't realize how much little girls grew up to adventure out. I thought all girls were little angels, you know. I thought all the boys were the devils but in that book it showed how some girls did grow up to be trouble. If that's the right word.

Researcher: What have you learned since being in treatment?

Larry: I've learned that uh a lot of what I've learned is child safety zones. I've learned where I can go and where I can't go. And that's helped a lot too. You know, anybody else that wasn't in treatment would drive through a school zone and not blink an eye not think nothing. I myself, when I drive through a child zone I have to stop and really realize what I'm doing. I want to get through that school zone. I'm looking around. I'm making sure there's no kids anywhere. I'm just paranoid when I'm going through a school zone. Even going through a McDonalds. I don't go to McDonalds but when I go by a McDonalds with a playground in it I get to thinking I got to get out of here. It's everywhere. So everywhere I drive I'm paranoid, you know. I can't sit here and say it won't happen again. I'd be lying if I said I knew it wouldn't you know. So, I mean I'm just very careful now. I watch what I do.

Researcher: What makes you not want to commit a sexual crime again?

Larry: Because uh truthfully it hurt me. It really did. I loved this little girl. She was like my daughter. It's hard. I can't do it. I wouldn't do it again. I would rather, I don't want to say die, but I'd rather be in worse shape than I am now than hurt someone else.

Researcher: Do you think there is a universal treatment method?

Larry: I think also going back to the treatment I think that uh once I am through with PACC I would really like to, I would like to come in once a month to be refreshed. I'm not saying that once I get through and I'm off probation that I'm gonna go crazy because I'm not. But I would like to set it up that once I get through and once I'm off paper that I can come in here just to keep refreshed.

Researcher: Do you think treatment will be effective for everyone?

Larry: Everybody that I've seen in this treatment it has. I haven't seen anybody, well no I'm sorry no it don't work for everybody. I've seen people relapse. And they paid the price. But I've seen people this is what gets me about this class. They are here to help you and if you don't want their help then you're not gonna make it. These are good people. They are here to help you. You just got to take what they can give you.

Researcher: If probation had not required you to attend treatment would you have sought help on your own?

Larry: Yes. Yes.

Researcher: Why do you think that?

Larry: Because I had a problem. I had hurt somebody that really meant a lot to me. I lost a real good family for this. I didn't just lose a niece that I hurt. I lost a wife, a stepdaughter, a good family. Yes.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Larry: Yes. I wouldn't be where I is at today. I still would have been.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Larry: Here? None. I believe in everything that they do. I really do.

Researcher: Is there anything you would have changed about treatment?

Larry: Yea, don't have it on Friday night. Have it on Wednesday nights. It's just like I get my son every other weekend on Friday I go get him I have to take him on my sister's and go to class. It kinda messes up your weekend. Everybody is like want to go out tonight, and I can't cuz I got class. I would rather it be Thursday or Wednesday.

Researcher: What treatment procedures would you recommend to people just beginning treatment?

Larry: I would recommend they go through the same thing we went through. The books, the tapes, the polygraphs. If you got a problem they are gonna get you on polygraphs, let's fix it. If you got a problem that can't be fixed they need to put you in the pen where you don't need to worry about hurting nobody, you know.

Researcher: Are there treatment producers that work better based on the age of the victim or should it be based around the offender?

Larry: Should be for the offender. I think there should be treatment for the victim. Its gotta be, they need something for the victim.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Larry: This class, my chaperones, and me.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Larry: I think it is groups because you pretty much get to vent to other guys that's in your situation and they pretty much give you feedback. I don't mind meeting with my counselors, but in a group it's like you and me talking, telling you this is what's going on with me. And you can vent back to me and say hey this is what going on. I went through

that or this is how you fix it. I'm not saying that none of the counselors cannot do that but when you are in a group pretty much two or three of the guys in that group is going through the same thing you are. And there is two or three guys that that can say this is how I would deal with it. Probably group.

Researcher: Do you think they should not have individual sessions?

Larry: I don't think so. I think that is just a way to make more money. I just think it's another way to make money.

Researcher: What could someone have said to you to prevent you from offending?

Larry: Think about it before you do it. Who are you going to hurt? Do you have the money to pay for this? Do you really want to live like this for ten years? I've never told anyone this but I wish I had gone to prison. I would have done and been out living my life. I told this lawyer when I went to court, give me 20 years. I've never been in trouble. If I knew then what I know now I would have took it. I would have been there two years. I would be out here and been doing work. I can't even work. I mean if I didn't own my own business I couldn't work. How am I gonna keep a job? That's why I thank God I have my own business. I can take off any time I want. I don't know how they expect anybody to keep a job. If you don't work they revoke you.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Larry: If I hadn't been drunk, yea. I'm gonna blame it. I don't care what anybody else says, I'm blaming it, I told everybody when I first started this that I was drunk and I was. I had been drinking all day. I was drinking like a fish. I brought three cases to the lake. I had been drinking all day, ever since probably 9 10 in the morning up until my offense.

What else can you blame it on? I mean really? (chuckles). If I hadn't been drinking I wouldn't be here.

Researcher: How effective do you think treatment is?

Larry: It's effective to me. I don't know about these other guys, but its effective to me. It's really opened my eyes. It's got me to thinking. And that's hard for me you know. I go out here and do a job and somebody says to me, hey build me a room on my, ok how big you want it, ok, I got this. But the thinking, I look at my thinking errors probably once twice a month just to refresh my mind. I mean I'm not at all, I'm not a young kid. This is a good deal, you know. I recommend it for everybody. Even if you, if you even think about hurting a kid get help. I wish there had been someone to help me. Hey dude, that aint gonna work. I was just going through a lot at the time. I was losing the woman that I loved, a family, her family. You know sometimes, this is something I was gonna tell you too. I know my offense happened, but I feel like my dad has really backed away form me. My step dad. My mom won't. I don't care if I go to jail, my mom gonna be there. But my dad stepped away from me. Everybody told me no, but he is. We are not close like we used to be. So I know it affected me. Everybody else is like, bubba you messed up, or son you messed up. What are you gonna do with it? He has backed off. He is not the father that I know since this happened. It bothers me. This is the thing too. I live by myself in a big ol home. That don't help me. Because I sit down and sometimes I'll watch TV and my mind gets thinking. Not to deviant or to reoffend. But it gets to thinking, thinking about how my dad's treating me. How I lost all my friends. I don't have my friends to talk to or vent to if I had a bad day. I don't have that. I don't have my friends that I used to have. And that's ok. If they want to be like that, screw them. Everybody has something

they done that they don't want people to know about. A real friend would be like hey (Larry) I'm here for you. I lost all my friends. I have my sister, my mom and dad, my girlfriend, my other sister. Family that's it. My sons. Other than that nobody. And I don't go out and do anything. I, if I go out to eat or something then I worry about who's watching me. I'm scared. And I'm not doing anything wrong. I stay in my house. I don't go nowhere. I let my sister buy me groceries. I'm worried about running into to some little kid. So I don't even go. I shouldn't have to live like that. But I do. Three more years of it. I don't even feel right. I don't feel right being around my son. I don't feel like I'm being a dad because of this stuff. I don't know if that's wrong, that's the way it is. I think a lot that hurts me is I wanted to watch my niece grow up. She's still my niece. But knowing that what I did to her, she's gonna remember that. I'll never be able to walk up to her and say hey can we talk. I can't do that. I think this happened for a reason. I know somebody got hurt that I cared about, that I loved. But I had a drinking problem. I was uh, I think God had something to do with this. I might be wrong saying this, but I think he did. I have not touched alcohol since 2006. And I think this is the way he is gonna open my eyes. Like I said I lost somebody that I really cared about. I lost my wife, my stepdaughter. I think God said hey you know it's time. This is the only way he could get me to open my eyes. Everybody is like, my sister is like you know you only got three more years, what are you gonna do when you get off probation? I'm not gonna change. I'm still gonna be avoiding children. I'm still gonna avoid school zones. I'm still gonna be avoiding this, this, and this.

Researcher: Can you ever be "cured" or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Larry: I think between you and me right now, I'm at 90, 80% cured.

Researcher: Why do you think that?

Larry: That's the way I feel. I'd rather take my life than hurt somebody else. And I've tried that 3 times.

Researcher: Without treatment would you have reoffended?

Larry: No

Researcher: Why not?

Larry: I need treatment. I'm gonna back up on that. I need treatment to help me to uh not do it again. I do need it. But I feel like right now, I have been in here since 2008, this will be six years next months. I feel like that has brought me a long way from where I was to where I am now. Making your making your, my deal was my thinking. Nobody cares. And I've changed all that. I've changed it. People do care for one thing. The other thing is you don't want to hurt somebody else. It's helped me to learn a lot. My main thing to it is helped me with empathy. I do care about people now. Back before my offense all I cared about is drinking. I didn't care if my wife liked it. I didn't care if my mommy and daddy like it. I didn't care about nothing. I was zero state at the time. But now all that's flipped flop. I've pretty much done a 360-degree turn. Now I care about what people, well let me rephrase that. I care about what some people think. I don't care about what everybody thinks because that would not be good. (Chuckles).

Researcher: What would you add to treatment?

Larry: I think there is enough. I mean I got a paper in here that's this long that I have to do for PACC. I think a lot of this stuff on this paper ought to be waived.

Researcher: Such as?

Larry: My Abel test. I took one and it was fine. They are wanting me to take another one. They are showing me. Oh another thing is relationship. I don't think this should be anybody's business. They are talking about me bringing my girlfriend in here six times. Five or six times, to talk about my relationship. That is my business. I did their support group. I brought all my support group. You know it's like, here is another Able. I done took a Abel test. Healthy relationships. 6 times they want me to bring my girlfriend in here. 6 times. That needs to be waived. I've done everything else. Why should I have to do a full disclosure? Don't they know I'm feeling bad enough and shamed and worthless enough for what I did? They want me to go up there and take a polygraph and say hey tell me about your offense. It kills me every time I have to talk about it. I don't go over here and talk about it. It rips my frickin heart out. Let's talk about it. What did you do? Come on man. That's been 7 years ago. I don't like it. It rips my frickin heart out when I have to talk about it. Don't you have it on paper? Don't you have it right there in front of you? Injury to a child. Don't throw it back in my face again. It's bullshit, you know. I don't understand it.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they reoffend?

Larry: Help them. If they need help, I mean if they want help. You can't make em. If they want help you help them. That's all I can. I mean you can give them advice. Like I just told my kids think before you do it. But if you don't know the person, you can't wish you told them something. I don't know you. So how am I gonna tell you. If someone had told me what I told my sons I wouldn't be here. I wouldn't be doing this. But there wasn't. I think honestly if somebody wants to stop all the reoffending and stuff all these people reoffending and molesting kids and stuff you take it and make it mandatory that

they put it on every channel of the TV. You show a mean cruel thing that a man is doing to a girl or a girl is doing to, women do it too. If you make every channel and you show it, what your consequences are and how you hurt that little girl, and how you hurt that family.

Researcher: Is treatment ever finished?

Larry: I don't think it will be for me. Like I told you earlier, I'm gonna keep coming. At least once a month, just to uh uh keep me refreshed.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add about the treatment process?

Larry: I think it's a good deal but like I said I think it's a money pit. I think if you are gonna help somebody you can't help them in their pocketbook. You got to help them.

Mark

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Mark: I was at a friends party, it was a New years party after I got back from college. I was 19 years old. My best friend's sister was 12, I tricked her into doing a little dance for me and I got her to sit in my lap. I fondled. I put my hand down her pants and fondled her breasts, um, I've been on probation for 6 years, I had a 10-year sentence. I went to prison for a year. I've been in treatment for 6 years. Um, I've learned a lot since I've been here and.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Mark: Yes, uh, when I first started I would have said no, but when I thought about it, there was always planning right before an offense, even if it is days months before. Or in my case it was hours or pretty much 30 minutes before. We got to his house and my

friend passed out. There was his sister and 30 minutes later I committed my act. I planned it whenever I manipulated her into doing what I wanted.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Mark: Um, you uh, they put you in a, it's a three year program, um, which I've been 6 years, but uh, you go through books, all kinds of book which help you deal with what you did. How, why, get you a better reasoning of who you were then and how much you have changed now. It's helped me a lot. We do a three-year thing, all the books we go through. Then we take a polygraph. We take a polygraph over our sexual history, over everything we have done. We take a polygraph for the offense of the night or the other victims, multiple times. We have to take an MSI to test who we are attracted to, which as you get further along in the treatment process and see how treatment has helped you, like I know it has me. I have already taken my second MSI and it has shown a huge improvement compared to where I started. Um, and an Abel test, which is sorta like that MSI. Then you have an annual polygraph every year to make sure you are doing everything you are supposed to be doing through treatment and probation and everything. Treatment it helps you deal, it helps you handle your self, it helps you get better control of yourself.

Researcher: So when you sit in your therapy group, what kinds of things do you talk about or focus on?

Mark: We attend group every week. We talk mostly about our offense every week. The group I am in now since it is a veterans group, we are towards the end, we are more on the lines of how we are going to keep on track with our avoidance plan-avoid, cope, escape. Everything we have been taught through this whole process this treatment, we of course always discuss our crime. But it also helps in other ways, like most people, like I

didn't have people to talk to. Going to group it helps so much especially cuz I even see a psychiatrist on top of this. Just for that comfort of other people that actually know what I'm going through.

Researcher: When you said "avoid, cope, escape" what did that mean?

Mark: Um, we uh, it's, avoid is not to put yourself in situation you know you are not supposed to be in, like, like we have rules like we can't go to restaurants, parks, playgrounds things like that, even if you don't register, which I don't register. But we still have the exact same rules. You want to avoid that. But it also comes to if you are shopping some where like at the mall, not the mall, we can't go to the mall, but a grocery store but uh, maybe somebody, I've had it happen to me a couple of time. A kid brushed in to me walking down the aisle and I've had to report it. Then there is cope and escape. Cope is to have to deal with it. I already explained that kinda in the avoid. And escape would be another thing that has happened to me, I've uh before I had a chaperone, I had my niece run up to me and I had to run away form her cuz there is no time there is no time to sit there and think just because if you give yourself time to think about it instead of just escape like you are suppose to then you will end up staying there and get in trouble with your PO, your probation officer, and it's just a plan you are supposed to, we have stuck by since we have been here. Everyone knows what it means or is supposed to.

Researcher: Do you think the treatment is successful?

Mark: Yes, very. Very very successful. I would like to say I would not reoffend to say, just because no one I know in here wants to reoffend. It was horrible I mean it. Especially for the victim. Cuz you ruin ruin so many people's lives. Not just yours, but hers, and family and friends. Everybody gets affected by it. If it wasn't for treatment I would know

where I would be. I would probably be in prison, I was already heading down that road before. I'm thankful for it. When I first started I was young, 19, when I started coming. I hated it. I did not want to be here at all. I was young and dumb. I about 3 years went by before I admitted to the offense to by family, to anybody. And um, none of that would have even happened. I would have been in denial till today if it wasn't for treatment. That's what reading all those books and stuff helped me being able to talk to my family. So yea, its helped a lot.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Mark: No, I don't think I will. But I can't say no. There is always always that opportunity that chance. Anyone can commit a sexual crime. It's just now where I'm at now, no I don't think I will. Avoid, cope, escape. I'm just so used to, I'm just so used to following the rules everyday. I want to say no. I do everything I can not to.

Researcher: What makes you not want to commit a sexual crime again?

Mark: Goes back to the I guess the pain. My victim. That is the worst part. We have been doing role playing and making video tapes for our victim. Restitution. No. I want to say closure, but it's uh, a type of closure. For your victim we make a tape. We have a person who plays our victim and that was probably the hardest thing I have ever done in my entire life. I didn't ever want to hurt anyone like I did her. But doing all of that kinda stuff in treatment. That is the kinda thing that is going to keep me from doing another crime or hurting someone else like that.

Researcher: What do you mean when you say "role play"?

Mark: We do skits, we have a, like me and another offender in the big group that we are in, in the treatment group we are in every week. We uh, I play the part of my victim, and

I pick another offender in the class and they play the part of me, of the offender. And we get up and role play everything that leads up to the actual crime and we, how how everything played out. It is really touching watching the other guys do it. I've heard that every person, every person I am in treatment with right now, I have probably heard their story over 40 times throughout the years I've been here. And when you see it like that and the emotion, you can tell it has done, like it has done everyone good.

Researcher: Do you still have deviant sexual thoughts?

Mark: Yes. Yea. A lot less deviant. But a lot pop up there every once in a while, but the whole point of this class is how to control them. Or the point of treatment is to control them and not act on deviant thoughts, deviant sexual thoughts. The biggest thing that they told me was cuz I used to be so scared to even report a deviant sexual thought, or any sexual thought. Our therapist here told me, is deviant thoughts are not a crime. It is just a thought that needs to be talked about. And I've opened up so much now, I wouldn't speak a word here for years. But yea I still have some deviant thoughts, but not nearly as I did around the time my crime happened.

Researcher: How much do sexual thoughts plague your daily life?

Mark: Soon as they hit, it's like a barrier in my head. I'm so used to blocking it out. We did these ammonium tapes. When we had deviant thought we would have ammonium capsules and we would break them open and smell them. I did that for a year. And what it does it, we call them 'brain cookies', or brain waves I guess, uh, it plants like a new path in your brain to when you think about that you avert it and push it away don't act on it.

Researcher: How much of a constant struggle do you think it is for you not to commit a sexual crime?

Mark: Not at all. I mean, I think not at all, just because treatment so much. You kinda stop thinking about anything sexual. I know it is healthy to have healthy sexual thoughts, but like you are kinda I don't want to say scared to have a relationship you are just cautious. Very very very cautious. But yea it's scared. I was putting a good coding on it. I think it helps, it helps a lot.

Researcher: Is there a universal treatment method?

Mark: What do you mean by that?

Researcher: Is there a treatment method that would work for everyone?

Mark: Yea, I think it is a case-by-case basis. I have never seen two cases that are the same. That is why we all have separate rules. Before I revoked my probation and went to prison for a year, I was allowed to go to the park and hang out with my brothers and nieces and stuff, I didn't have no restrictions at all. There are still people in the group that are like that. I know that there are high risk and less high risk. The therapist tells us about high-risk offenders and low risk offenders. I guess the whole process, everyone is a high risk when they come in cuz they just committed their crime, but I guess the whole process is just to get you to that low risk offender. I think every case is different.

Researcher: Are there any treatment methods that work better based on the age of the victim or is it more based on the offender?

Mark: I think there should be different treatments for different victims. Um, because a lot of, when you get your 12 and up, or your 13 and up and they are going through the phase of adolescent I think you should have a different one for them because they are going to take it a lot different with the emotions than a treatment for 10 and under or something for that. I don't know how they do treatment for victims like that, but I know

offenders in here, I think a different class would help you better understand your victim. It would be hard to understand an offender with a 15-year-old victim whenever you have a 5 year old victim, that's just the way I see it.

Researcher: Will treatment work for everyone?

Mark: No. No. I've seen it not work for everyone. I've seen a bunch of people go back to prison. It wasn't because treatment was a flaw it was because they were young and dumb like I was when I went back to prison. They didn't care. They didn't want help. I didn't want help. I want it now. I need it now. Like I said I don't think there is a flaw in treatment there are a lot of people who don't want to do it. When you are young you don't see how many people you are going to hurt, how many people are going to be affected. You don't care, you are just there because probation and county says you have to be there. You get tired of it because you don't care.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Mark: We've talked about this in treatment a lot. I don't think I would have. I think it is a really good idea to do, but I know the state of mind, the age I was in I wouldn't of. I thought it was normal then. I though pornography was normal for my age. I mean, you have older guys mid 30s 40s, I think they would have been mature enough to seek the help before they done it. I think that would have probably caused a lot less victims. Honestly I don't see why they don't have a place already to go get treatment, they have a place for everything else. I don't think it would work for the younger generation, but older guys, married guys, and yea I think it would help a lot.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Mark: (long pause) I really didn't have one. There was one book I read which was 'Men in Anger' and that was the only problem I had in the whole treatment. Which is funny because I was angry when she made me do it, but I wasn't as mad as the book made it seem. I didn't really have any complaints. I've enjoyed talking to people in the group, all the books hit me in some kinda way. Even the tapes and videos I was explaining about earlier, all helped a lot.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Mark: Well, I definitely don't want to go back to prison. But it's my victim. It's the hurt thing, I don't want to hurt nobody. I definitely don't want to hurt nobody again like I did. There are always ways, like I could go back to jail without hurting anybody. I feel like everything is moving along perfect right now. I have a, we have a cycle, which is, a cycle is things that lead to deviant sexual thoughts or committing offense. Like mine was always most boredom, which I stay so busy now so I don't even hit that first cycle. Which I know everyone at treatment has to do one. Like you have to do you cycle and memorize it and talk about it. Pretty much every week your PO, or probation officer, just to make sure you have taken any steps to avoid your cycle, which is where avoid, cope, escape comes in.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Mark: Both. But uh I like, it's weird cuz I like group, cuz I've known all these guys for so long and I feel it helps with different input. But I also said earlier that I see a therapist in probation so I can get one on one contact. But the best is group, just for the extra opinions. And all the focus ain't right on me.

Researcher: What steps did you go through to get to where you are today?

Mark: Well probation and treatment wise, like I said all the books, 5 different books. I've done all those. I did the videotape I explained earlier. I did the smell tapes I explained earlier. I've taken a polygraph every year to make sure we are doing everything right. And attending class every week. It's a six-year process. Everything that I just explained has been drawn out on a six-year process. I've had it done, I probably could have finished a couple years ago, but they had to get a group together big enough for the last group-the veterans group. Probation wise, I have a little under 3 years left on a ten year sentence. I did 388 hours of community service. I did all of those and other than that being current on all of your fees. The next step after this, when I go to after care, I have to, well I don't have to, I am going to go to the rape crisis center of Fort Worth and meet with them for a talk about my case and everything I am doing right now.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Mark: No, No. I didn't have the knowledge. Like I said I didn't care. Not definitely, I definitely couldn't.

Researcher: Do you think without treatment you would have reoffended?

Mark: Yea. More than likely yea I would have.

Researcher: What would you say to someone committing a sexual crime?

Mark: Since they don't really have places they can seek for help, I would bring him to class for me. I could tell him stuff, but he probably wouldn't listen to me. He would need to hear it from a lot of other people, like the therapist. Which is the whole uh having a place to go for people who have deviant thoughts and stuff like that. I don't know, like I said I would tell him everything I have learned in class. But I don't know if it would do

him good without hearing if from someone else, even though I've been through all this stuff. It could help, but some people it wouldn't. You need places like that, where you can go to and talk to.

Researcher: What is the main thing you would want to get across to him?

Mark: The pain is causes. How much people you will hurt. How wrong it is. Yea all of that and force him to come to class.

Researcher: Do you think you are a bad person?

Mark: Nope. I think I have done bad things, but I don't think I am a bad person. I have done a lot of bad in my life, before my offense. And I've done a lot, like I used to do. I still have problems with shame and guilt, mostly shame. Uh, but, I don't see myself as a bad person.

Researcher: How effective is treatment?

Mark: Very effective. I seen probably 30 guys get off of here since I've been here. Probably 20. 20-30. I knew them all. If it wasn't for those guys getting out. I wouldn't have people to look up to or something to look forward for. When you first start here you think you are going to be here forever. But then you see people graduate and stuff like that, getting out. How many people change. Treatment is really the only way you can go to do that if you committed an offense. I mean you need help if you plan to act on them. Planning is the worse, just because if you plan it then you are past thinking about it, you are putting it into action. The treatment is the only way you can do something before you hurt a lot of people.

Researcher: What do you think the most effective part of treatment was for you?

Mark: Bringing my family here. I was scared. I didn't tell them for years. I left class, I can't remember the exact day, but I left treatment one day, and I was crying. I called them. I called my brother and told him. I called my sister, my mom, my dad. I called all them and told them everything. And a week later I brought all of them in to see my therapist for my support group. I was scared they wouldn't want to talk to me anymore. And they were disappointed. That was the day treatment turned around for me. I wasn't just coming here to be here, I was coming here because I wanted to be here. I don't have to be here now I can quit anytime. I would go to jail, but I can still quit.

Researcher: Can you ever be "cured" or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Mark: No. Nope. You can't be 100% sure. It already happened once. It could happen again. You can hope it won't, you can pray it won't. You can do everything to make sure it doesn't happen. That is all you can do. Take everything you learned in treatment and put it to work.

Researcher: Do most offenders reoffend?

Mark: Most no. Some do. Maybe the ones that actually go through the whole treatment process I bet a very low number do. I know the ones who go to prison and don't do treatment reoffend all the time. It makes you a better person coming here. I wouldn't say most people, some do.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Mark: I want to say yes, but no. Just because my previous statement that you are never 100% sure it never going to happen again. You can never 100% trust that an offender, that sounds bad because I want people to trust me, but I don't think you can trust. You

can have some trust. There are people that haven't reoffended, or people that haven't offended, could offend. I am not saying we are all bad people and never trust sex offenders, but with the facts that you may reoffend. Our society looking at a sex offender and they may reoffend, and I had kids or something hell no I wouldn't trust them.

Researcher: Is there a punishment that sex offenders deserve?

Mark: (Long pause.) I think the punishment so far, of everything I got, I wouldn't say its justice because it's not. I deserve more. I mean yea, I went for jail for a year, and I am on probation for ten years and pay a crap ton of money, but that don't matter cuz you put your victim through a lot worse than anything you could go though by sexually mentally assaulting them, molesting them.

Researcher: Is therapy enough to change the behaviors?

Mark: Yes. I think it is. I mean I know it is from when I have started to where I am now. I can't stop thinking about the previous question. I think punishment should be stricter.

Researcher: What would you make the punishment to?

Mark: I wouldn't go death. We are still people. We have done a lot of wrong. Ten years is a long time but I can guarantee that the victim is going to be thinking about it a lot longer than 10 years. So, actually I think it is pretty good. When you are a sex offender you already register for the rest of your life. The only thing I could think is add on the prison time, but it still won't make what you did ok. So I don't really know the answer to that.

Researcher: Should all sex offenders spend time in jail?

Mark: Yea, there are a few people in my treatment that didn't go to jail at all. It straightened me up real fast. Yes you should definitely go to jail if you commit a sexual

offence. To just be put on paper and go about your regular life doesn't seem like much of a punishment. I was only there a year and I know I got off easy.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Mark: Treatment, help for people who haven't offended but are having the sexual thoughts, that is the only thing you really can do. Cuz if they don't, you don't think about that stuff. At least I didn't. About what it would do to other people, I didn't think about what was right or wrong. I thought about me about what I wanted to do. If you don't have that help they are going to offend. If they don't get caught there are going to be more and more victims cuz they didn't do something in the first place to get help cuz there is no where to get help.

Researcher: What could someone have said to you to prevent you from ever having those deviant sexual thoughts?

Mark: I don't know if I would have listened back then being young at that age. If there was a way of knowing everything I did now I might have listened. Without that maturity, then I don't think it is going to do the younger age any help at all especially the way society is now.

Researcher: Can you trust yourself around children? Can other trust you around children?

Mark: Yea. I know I can trust myself around children. Others, I want them to trust me around children but it still goes back to what if I reoffended or the chance of reoffending. Where I am at though, people can trust me yes. They can trust me around children. I am not the same person I was. I have changed a lot.

Researcher: Is treatment ever finished?

Mark: No. Not at all. Like I was telling you a while ago, I would still be doing the everyday avoid, cope, escape, running though my cycle avoiding everyday even after I'm done with treatment. I have already made plans with probation to see a therapist every week even after I'm done with treatment. I don't think I need the, well you can always use help, but I don't think I need the help I needed when I got here. I am still gonna come here when I am off just because it, I don't know if it is because I have been coming here for years and years and it would be weird if I wasn't here or if it's, well I know I enjoy it, or if I need it. I think it is more of a routine and I enjoy it here and I enjoy getting help, than me feeling like I need it to control myself. I feel like I control my cycle and I don't need the actual treatment anymore. But the communication and the support that never hurts.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add?

Mark: Just I know I said it a lot, but I honestly hope they get places for people who have deviant sexual thought. You can't bring them to places like this with people who have already committed the crime. We don't know how to stop just a thought because we went past the thought and made it into a crime. That's the only thing I can think of. If they had those places I think there would be a lot less sexual assaults on children.

Researcher: When people use the term "deviant sexual thoughts" what does that mean?

Mark: You can have a healthy sexual thought, but deviant is when, there is all kinds of deviant. There is like bondage is deviant, anything that causes pain towards someone is deviant, thinking about someone who is underage like a child, deviant as in a married woman. There are so many deviant sexual thoughts you can have. Deviant just seeing a girl walking down the street and thinking about her, not even knowing her age and she

could be underage. There is, everyone has deviant sexual thought, it's what you do with it.

Steve

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Steve: I was charged with attempted indecency with a minor. The crime was the intent. I don't know what else. I got 7 years on deferred adjudication. I really don't talk about it a lot in group. There is some stuff I don't remember. There is a lot I don't remember. I do remember the girl being in the bed, whether she got in the bed before I was in the bed or after I was in the bed that is hard to define. But she was under the covers. I was on top of the covers. I always slept on top of the covers, even to this day I do. I rolled over on her, um, I woke up for an instance. I don't want to make an excuse and say I was high or anything, but I was pretty high. I was doing a lot of drugs and um, just started touching her. Then I guess, for what the police report says, she got out of bed and I guess I fell back asleep. Her dad started calling cuz I was a live in caregiver about an hour later. I woke up and took care of him. She asked to be taken home, which she only lived maybe 4 or 5 miles down the road. And she started telling me what is going on what were you doing or what were you think. I'm sorry. I just made light of it, I didn't touch or remove her clothes, I guess this would be excuse in class. But I didn't do none of the hard-core stuff, so back in my thinking back then nothing happened. So sorry I won't let it happen again, you what I'm saying? She was pretty, I guess you would say mature about it, she wasn't scared about it or nothing, inside she was I guess. Initially she was scared cuz she didn't know what my intentions were. I dropped her off and went back to the house and about an hour later the police came so.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Steve: No.

Researcher: Was it the treatment process you go through?

Steve: It's pretty weird and wacky I guess you could say. It seems like it changes year to year you know. You get through with a whole bunch of stuff. You sit around for a year and wait for the next type of class to come around or whatever. I don't see there is any type of real advancement because they have one layout that is supposed to meet everybody's needs in treatment, which it can't. Everyone's treatment needs to be different, we all have different cases. We are all different people. They try and fit all. Luckily now that [therapist's name] is in charge they changed it up.

Researcher: What are some things you have done in your treatment?

Steve: Well, to tell you the truth I have read a lot of books and done a lot of workbooks and stuff like that. I mean to be perfectly honest with you, people always ask what did you get out of it and I can't never remember any of it. I understand about cycles and stuff like that. I am a skim reader and I can read through a book in a matter of an hour and answer some questions, which that's what I've done. As far as taking any of it in, personally I think it's useless. Either I am in control of my actions and my emotions and feelings or I'm not. No matter how much studying I do, it's not going to change who I am so, I've got to do that. I'd rather not have all that information in my head. Just workbooks. One class I did a couple of years ago, you know, it was a fathers class, which a couple of us who were older and mature and had kids, we went thought this fathers deal with the therapist and that was interesting. I don't remember a lot of it, but it was interesting. I got

some good stuff out of it. Of course this class, I like it, well I don't know about like it, I don't like this counseling stuff or class stuff, I like counseling, I hate class. I hate groups.

Researcher: Do you think the treatment is successful?

Steve: In my case yea I um, I wouldn't credit it to the treatment no.

Researcher: Why not?

Steve: Of course being a therapist or whatever they are with their therapist they get to see the faces we put on in group, for group, for probation, it's kinda like going to an AA meeting, everybody before the AA instructor gets there is outside talking about the beers they drank just before class. So 99.9% of everybody in this class would tell you that they hate it, that they wouldn't be here unless probation made them come here. That's the same with me. I would rather do it myself. That is what I have done myself. Luckily if probation hadn't been there to say you can't smoke weed no more, you can't just self medicate and do what you want, I would not have changed.

Researcher: What have you done on your own that has helped you?

Steve: I went back to my roots, as far as I grew up in a Christian environment. Now I live with my mom and dad, and of course they are. My mom is a 5th grade school teachers and she is in charge of the church's kids stuff or whatever you call it, Sunday school. So a lot of church, a lot of reading the Bible. A lot of prayer. A lot of mediation. A lot studying, keeping my mind occupied.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Steve: No

Researcher: What makes you not want to commit a sexual crime again?

Steve: I fear going to Hell and being tortured forever more than I fear going to prison or empathy for a child. I feel sorry to say that.

Researcher: Do you still have deviant sexual thoughts?

Steve: Yes

Researcher: How do you control them?

Steve: I know they are not my thoughts, because the me, it's not deviant, I mean it's deviant because the thoughts come in to my mind. That's why I hate this class, and I hate hearing anybody's story, and I hate talking about it because I have asked for forgiveness. I could care less if you forgive me or the teacher, or the victim forgives me I could care less. I have asked forgiveness from God and I would like to just forget about it. And every time I have to hear people's stories or I have to tell my story, well then it just replays in my head. Any all them ghosts of the past just come up, because I have been deviant since I was 13 or 14 years old. I grew up in a placement and stuff like that. You can take advantage of being 15 or 16 and take advantage of a 12 or 13 year old. At that time 12 or 13 year olds were sexually active. Or you could be taken advantage of by the 30-year-old woman who was supposed to be the night monitor. A lot of ghosts, a lot of demons of the past. I guess that is what I define as a deviant thought. I don't sit there and think about it. It just popped into my mind.

Researcher: How much do sexual thoughts plague your daily life?

Steve: Probably twice a week at least. Every, I'd say, if I'm in Wednesday night group then sometimes I start seeing them Tuesday. Wednesday of course, then Thursday.

Researcher: Do they affect your daily life?

Steve: Yea.

Researcher: How do they do that?

Steve: Lets see how to explain it. If I was riding down a highway and somebody told me not to look at a red car, I'd see every friggin red car on the road, you know what I'm saying. So, just putting that in your head, it happens when going to probation every week. Just seeing that, every child becomes a you know don't look, you know what I'm saying. Not look, don't do that. Don't have them thoughts. I never even had them thoughts before I had to go to class, you know what I'm saying. I wasn't a pervert. But now I have them. Those thoughts plague me. Cuz I remember names and stuff like that. A child's name or anything. If I hear that name then that thought will come up, or that name will come up, or that picture will come up, you know.

Researcher: How much of a constant struggle do you think it is for you to not commit a sexual crime?

Steve: It's not a struggle at all. I'm plagued with the thoughts, but I aint committing a crime because uh.

Researcher: So how do you go from having the thoughts to not committing the crime?

Steve: Meditation. I tend to just go read my Bible or go listen to the radio as far as Christian radio station. Read. I don't know, it sounds weird but I just don't desire a woman at all, you know. I don't desire. I just harden myself to where I don't want that, you know, sexual anything, you know.

Researcher: Is there anything you learned in therapy that helped you?

Steve: It was stuff on my own.

Researcher: Is there a universal treatment method?

Steve: No. I don't think personally. The way our world is. I know we are not supposed to blame the victim or whatever, especially if they are under 17. But if you got a society that approves of you know 10, 11, year old girls having sex. 15 16 year old girls knowing all about sex. Seeing it every day on their computers, you know. They got not even teenagers doing you know sexting or whatever it's called. You have a society that is plagued by something like that and you have men who are naturally horny toads, cuz you know they have to see that. There's not gonna be a solution unless you go back 100 years when everybody had morals, you know. You get married, if you have an affair or whatever, the more than likely nobody knows about it you know. It's not something that is gonna be spread around. You keep your sexual desires contained. Most men you know so.

Researcher: Will treatment work for everyone?

Steve: No, not at all.

Researcher: Why not?

Steve: Well most people are most likely faking it to make it you know. Once you get off probation you know, you don't have treatment. Treatment is only working cuz of probation, you know, as far as I can see. Especially there are guys who come in and then go back to prison. Some guys I think it would. I don't know if it is the treatment or the fear of going to prison. Nobody wants to go to prison so. So whether they commit a crime that is you know, I think the crime starts in your mind. That is how I have stopped myself from a reality of everybody else's. If I you know, I'm harder on myself just to think em, just to have them thoughts, that eat it me, even if a flash just comes in my mind, I'm like dang it, you know. Got to go pray for an hour you know what I'm saying, so, cast that demon away from me. I wouldn't even want to attempt to you know act out on the sex,

you know. Unless I'm married. If I'm married then you know, but, I'm not married anymore.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help

Steve: No.

Researcher: Why not?

Steve: Because back then, it's almost been ten years, seven years, eight years now.

Honestly I never thought about a child or you know. I can't say it's not a mistake cuz it's against probation. I can't even have that thought in there, but literally I'm not even, you know, I wasn't a pedophile or something like that. I wasn't after kids. I thought everything was normal you know. I had sex when I wanted, with whoever I wanted. If the desire came across, if a girl wanted to hook up, then hook up. I just thought it was normal. If a girl was 16 years old and she was able to shoot dope up her arm, you know, I thought it was ok, you know. I didn't think I was taking advantage of her you know.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Steve: That one I don't know. I don't know. Luckily I didn't have to go through the sexual coercion or whatever it is, where they had to put some kinda nasty stuff in a jar and stiff it. I would like that is pretty ridiculous. Uh, or making a tape of you masturbating so the teacher can hear it and stuff. That could be pretty ridiculous. Luckily I didn't have to do all that. Everything else has been. I don't like the group setting. I think I can get more accomplished. That would be something I think of as a fail. There should

be more one on one. Which is what I do sometimes, the one on one. That is what is most effective, the group setting you know.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Steve: Back to that I desire going to Heaven more than I desire pleasing my body.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Steve: Alone. Me personally because I can hear my own voice, I can think about what I want to say, and just the relationship. Of course I couldn't talk to a woman. I couldn't do therapy with you, because I don't really like women. I don't like to express feelings with woman. Especially deep-rooted stuff. Like [therapist name] I developed a relationship with him over 5 or 6 years. I trust him with understanding me with the way my mind operates you know. And in group, luckily I have a few people who have know me, like [offender name] he has known me for 6 years now. That is once a week. I see him more than I see my two daughters. Guys like that who know how my mind operates, you know.

Researcher: What steps did you go through to get to where you are today?

Steve: (long pause) I guess the biggest hurdle would be the right way to express empathy. For quite a few years I couldn't own up to my offense. That was not a big deal. Even though there is some stuff I don't remember. And some stuff that I don't think is accurate as far as the police report goes. Empathy, expressing empathy because even now a days I feel empathy for everybody in every situation on all levels even if they are not a victim, if they are just a regular person. But I never know how to express empathy because my heart has always been hard. I could express empathy towards my kids, my brothers and sisters, my mom and dad, but never anybody out of you know somebody I loved passionately. Empathy would have to be, or at least expressing empathy.

Researcher: How do you express empathy now?

Steve: I don't express it to where everybody can see, but like in my prayer life, the um, I don't want to brag about it but I have to be in constant prayer. Whether that is beneficial to anybody or not I don't know, but it is just smoothing that I you know, have to prayer a lot. Some people just say thank you for this food God and other says no lay me down to sleep. Me I have to, if I see something in my spirit you know that was going wrong to you, I am empathetic. I would be empathetic in my room, or whatever in prayer. So that is where I express it not to where everybody can see it, but I know that Holy Spirit can see it.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Steve: Yea.

Researcher: How could you have done that?

Steve: By just not doing it. Just uh, not not wanting, not desiring being sexually satisfied at the expense of somebody else, you know. Cuz like I said on my tape, it really wouldn't have mattered if it was her or you know somebody else. It could have been a 30-year-old woman. I could of rolled over and you know hard up right then, I would have given a couple of touches, are you gonna spread you legs or what, you know what I'm saying? If not, whatever, roll back over and go to sleep, you know. An object I guess you could say.

Researcher: What would you say to someone committing a sexual crime?

Steve: You on dangerous ground, I mean, they are gonna get caught one way or another. Everybody is gonna get judged for everything that they have done, good or bad. Whether you get punished for it here on Earth here or not. One day the big judge is gonna be able to hold you accountable for it.

Researcher: Is there anything you would want someone who was going to commit a crime against a child to know?

Steve: It's not worth it as far as I mean, we all know what sex feels like in the end. You hit the climax and you and it's over with, unless it's love. If you are with your wife or something then it's love, it means something. Besides that, I would say just go get a shower, just go relieve yourself in the shower. It's the same thing you know in the end, the climax is the same. You don't want to make a victim you know. Because now your victim is not your wife, so you are just gonna take something from him. Male female, some people have male victims, but whether it is male or female you are going to take their innocence from them.

Researcher: Do you think you are a bad person?

Steve: Yea. I mean now or before? Now I consider myself a human, I will make mistakes. I am not perfect. But uh yea I have done very bad things, that I personally would consider worse than any offense I have done or whatever.

Researcher: Do you think all people that commit sexual crimes against children are bad people?

Steve: I think what they done is very serious bad. All together bad. Because we don't, especially a child you know. We didn't just hurt ourselves, we hurt God too.

Researcher: How effective is treatment?

Steve: To me, it's ineffective. To others, you know, they might find it effective. To me, it hasn't helped me any. I've leaved some stuff that's all I can say. But it isn't nothing I haven't already known. I you know was locked up in a criminally insane asylum for almost two years, you know, for attempted murder. It's the same stuff.

Researcher: Can you ever be “cured” or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Steve: Yup. Yup.

Researcher: How can you be certain?

Steve: If God didn’t turn his back on me for the stuff I’ve already done, then I know God is real. And I know that if I don’t turn my back on him and if the things that he has shown me and he is real and the things he has shown me are real, then I don’t think that anything is worth living in sin. I think this is a sin, just like any other sin. Adultery is a sin. But if I know it is a sin and I do it anyway, that is turning my back. And he has already given me millions of chances. So I don’t want, I don’t want to go to hell. It doesn’t seem like a very pleasant place. I can barely rest now, you know, so I don’t want to be in a restless state for eternity. I want to sleep one day, in peace. But I don’t know, bad thoughts.

Researcher: Do you think most offenders reoffend?

Steve: Physically, probably not. Not most. I’m sure that there are a few who do and will. I don’t think that most will, because this probation is a very tough probation. Just to make it a few years on this probation you have to have a strong desire not to go to prison and not to lose your freedom. I don’t think they will reoffend. Not physically, mentally they might.

Researcher: What do you mean by mentally reoffend?

Steve: Well, you know, like know how to control themselves, but you know offend in their mind. I guess see a kid and start lusting after the kid, but still maintain physical composure, you know. But still it’s kinda reoffending in my mind.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Steve: The ones that have been caught? I would say the ones that have been caught, most of them. But the ones that haven't been caught, because like I said. A lot of society thinks that sex offenders are somebody's that are out there perverting on 2, 3, 4, 5, year old kids. But sex offenders are the people out there, a 30 year old man out there have sex with 13 year old girls that have had you know 10 sex partners before the time they are in junior high, that is a sex offender too. But I mean, the ones that aint been caught or the ones that don't know they are a sex offender. I've know quite a few but that just aint never been caught. Back then I didn't know that I was a sex offender.

Researcher: Is there a punishment that sex offenders deserve?

Steve: Yea I think we deserve a lot more than we get.

Researcher: If you could mandate a punishment what would you choose?

Steve: Probably death.

Researcher: Is therapy enough to change the behaviors?

Steve: No

Researcher: What else do people need?

Steve: I mean like moral standards and stuff. God there is no other. Somebody who has gone this far, we are considered worse than a murderer and our victims are still alive, you know. Some of them are probably living prosperous lives and don't even think of the crime that was committed to them. Some of them I'm sure do and dwell on them. I don't know.

Researcher: Should all sex offenders spend time in jail?

Steve: (long pause) I don't think so. I didn't spend no time in jail. I think we deserve worse treatment than that.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Steve: Change society. I'm not gonna use society as a blame but, we bread it in to ourselves. Just like a Sodom and Gomorrah. The days of Noah. The same thing. Society accepts what we do. Of course there's got to be some that get caught, and some that get looked at bad. But it is acceptable. Sex in general. I mean, the prevertedness. It's on everybody's mind, it's in your face. Unless we change society, I think it will just get worse.

Researcher: What could someone have said to you to prevent you from ever having those deviant sexual thoughts?

Steve: I don't guess anybody could have said anything. I myself was a victim. Um, and um, the environment I was in, it was just a uh, you know, ranging from the adults that was supposed to be supervising us or whatever to the kids, it is just a big orgy almost through my whole teenage life. After I became a teen, I became an adult, it just became the norm. Not with kids, but just sex in general. Pleasing yourself. If someone else was willing it didn't really matter what their age was.

Researcher: Can you trust yourself around children? Can other trust you around children?

Steve: Yea. Yea. I am trusted around my daughters and my son, and all the cousins and stuff like that.

Researcher: Is treatment ever finished?

Steve: It is supposed to be like a 3 year deal, and I've been in it 7 years almost. I wish it would hurry up and finish. Talking about the life long process, no it's never finished. I don't think so. I'm sure I'm gonna have to struggle with the ghost of the past, but they are

just ghosts they are just you know, ghosts. My mind trying to separate reality. It aint reality anymore, for the most part. Sometimes it gets hard, but it's not who I want to be. My treatment is in the Bible. In that, I can never throw that out the window. I can never say, I read the bible 100 times, so I don't need it anymore.

Researcher: Do you want to add anything else?

Steve: No.

Travis

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Travis: Uh, it is called improper relations with a student and a teacher. In (location) it was the first one that came up in court, because I went to court. So, I had sex with one of my students, a sixteen-year-old girl. I was you know the one of course who took the lead and it was really for self-gratification than anything else. Uh, unfortunately I didn't think my better judgment and uh thought about consequences, just I thought the moment. And unfortunately for that uh, do you want me to really relate what happen?

Researcher: That is fine, we just wanted to know the basic background.

Travis: Okay.

Researcher: Was the decision to commit the offense premeditated?

Travis: Uh, it kind of went in steps. At the beginning it was not. It was with a student who came for help and it just went, it developed in by level. I thought at that time before I discussed it group that I was the only one who was having, not the only one, but the only one who had that kind of problem. Whenever I used to look a girl, my eyes went to this part of her body, the breasts. And she had nice breasts. Little by little I started getting my eyes from her face down to the breasts part. It just went along. She became also

interested in me, so I developed the relationship with her and took advantage of her that way. It went in a slow process. Even though it went in a lapse of time of you know about from September 15 to November 4 or 5 I don't remember. It still went in a slow. It wasn't from the beginning.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Travis: The treatment process that I am going through right now, the way I looked at it is they are trying to help me understand first of all to have ownership of the crime that I committed, which was the hardest part for me to do because it was not something I was trying to do. You know the way I looked at it before that I just push her or was not, it was the two of us it was a consensus. It was the two of us, but still it was me that was the one, the guilty one. You know taking ownership of it took me a while, because it was not like I said something that I was trying. It was something that we both wanted. I was the guilty one not her. I think it was important. That was one of the things that I developed. The other part of the treatment that I think was very beneficial was the fact that I, is the empathy part. I am very empathetic to people's suffering and the things that they go through. Very much. But like I said, this time I closed that and didn't look at that part. I look only at me and not at her. So that empathy part of put aside, pushed aside and not I did not look at what she was going to go through. I only looked at what I was going through.

Researcher: Can you give me a few examples of tools you have learned in treatment to help prevent reoffending?

Travis: Yea, uh, one that I did not learn here but I learned it in my knees was that if I have a thought that comes to me that is not a thought that I should have I pray

immediately because the Lord help me to take off this thought. And he does. He help because I know my Lord and I know he helps me and I know he does. That is a tool I learned in prison when I was you know crying and kneeling there and thinking all that had happened to me in prison. And the Lord was good enough to show me his goodness and mercy. And and and it may sound crazy but he talked to me. It was not at all, but he really did. Not that it was a long conversation but it was just he pointed out something that it was important. To me that is the main. To me that is really the one that will keep me from not doing it. The other ones are good, I mean, like for example I shouldn't be, I will try to keep away from being you know enclosed with someone because I start developing things. That is one that I should know that I is learned and is good. Uhhh, I don't go to movies or or places or you know, I don't have those problems but I still have to keep myself away form anything that will push me to committing a crime. I try to keep away. That is something that is very much taught to me in the meetings that we have. Another tool that has been very important to me in looking at this is you have to look at the consequences. And when you look at the consequences in one of the shut downs we had at trick or treat, they show all of the people involved just because of our crime. And it was way too many. In my in my case, the ones of I have hurt most are my family. All of the consequences are the ones I have to pay attention to that I didn't used to. That is another tool that I have really pushed me into keeping away besides the one I already mention. There are others that don't come to mind right now, but the first one is the main one. That is the one that keeps me away.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is successful?

Travis: Uh, I learned something but not from right now, from a long long long time ago. See I am an old man. You get out of something as much as you put in. So if I am in this treatment procedure treatment session treatment things, how would I get the best, I got to get the most. I could sit down and start complaining about this complaining about that but that does not get me anywhere. I look at it as being a teacher before, as being a student okay. What am I going to do? Just wiz through, or am I really going to get into it. So to me it is important. Treatment is something that I, I want to get the best that I can get. The most that I can get. I am getting it.

Researcher: What kind of homework were you given in treatment?

Travis: The whole list of things that we do. One is a reading part. And you have to. They give us a program where you have to read certain books. And you answer certain questions. That is one. We read about six or five books, I cannot remember how many now, but there is a reading part. And then uh there is also you know something that I think, if you say what should always be included in a treatment program, that what I think there should be is the polygraph, because in that one you can't, you know, you know where you are at. It is very very scary at the beginning but after a while like they say just tell the truth. That is one part of the treatment that I think that I hope is always included, besides the reading part, which is always good. And another thing that they do is uh, you have uh some sections in getting ready for the polygraph that is getting ready for the sexual history that is also very useful because then you realize really where you come from in your sexual history problem, not just your offense, but from way way back. And I have discovered there are some things that I never knew before. So that is one that is good. That is one of course that is with the offense itself, that is the full disclose. That is

really how you look at how you came out to commit your crime. That is another tool that is given in the program, which is I think very very useful. And of course there is also uh the tapes and the uh evaluations that they do through the times with (therapist name), that has to do with behavior, which also makes you think very much if you were the victim, ok how would you like to be treated.

Researcher: Were there any books you read that were especially helpful during treatment?

Travis: Uh, yes. "Out of the Shadow" is one that I thought would always be in my mind. And the other was is I can't remember the title right now, but it is about the young girl, the young person. It was very useful. "Out of the Shadow" was one that was very useful. And "Why I did it", "Who am I", some how they didn't help me very much. But "Out of the Shadow" it did.

Researcher: And what is that about?

Travis: Uh, okay. Where are you really situated, you know. It is nice to hide yourself, you know cover yourself because no one knows but all of a sudden you are out and that is important to really be. Because when you hide you don't let your personality really show who you are. But when you let other people know who you are it helps you a lot you know. Usually, you don't. I never in my life went to anybody. But many people came to me for help. I never, I always was back. The all of the sudden here, all you do is tell. That has helped me there.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Travis: Uh, what they say here is it is important to remember that you can't say never. But at the same time using the tools that you have you shouldn't. So I can't say that I

never will but I pray that I never, that I will not commit it because it is not worth it. It is not. The consequences are way to many to go though again. But how will I come to that conclusion because of my relationship with upstairs the Lord. With the tools that I have, so I hope that they will keep me away from this.

Researcher: Do you still have deviant sexual thoughts?

Travis: They come, they come. I mean you are in a world where it is very difficult not to. I like westerns for example. You look at a western and then all of a sudden here is a naked girl. You have to turn around or something. You have to say hey Lord. Only when I think about it. When any thought come I have to stop it, because if I don't stop it then it will become a process again of going back to what I used to be. Of letting my mind go, then I commit a crime. So deviant thoughts come, you cannot I'm sorry. We live in a world where you cannot avoid it, but it is not whether it comes but whether you can overcome it.

Researcher: Do you think there is a universal treatment method?

Travis: Uh, I don't think so except the only one I consider universal is relationship with God, that was is universal. Whether you are, whoever you are, in this case it is not for, this sec, this church, this whatever, it is whether you know your Lord. That would be the only universal one that I consider it is. Even in the group itself, each of us needs to be in a different situation. But it is impossible to do that so you group us, and get the best that you can. In my personal opinion, the only universal treatment is upstairs, your relationship with God.

Researcher: Do you think treatment will be effective for everyone?

Travis: Yes, because you will always get whatever you can, but you know it depends on how much you want to get because people are, human are very interesting and funny. Uh, we don't like to have treatments like this. In the group you might say it is good, but if you listen to them outside they complain about this complain about that. You forget that we are here because, in my case, I committed a crime. I would not be here if I did not commit a crime. So if I committed a crime, how much I get is how much I put it. So that is the way I looked at it.

Researcher: What have you learned since being in treatment?

Travis: The best way that I have learned is uh there is always a hope. There is hope for you. You shouldn't look at yourself you know as the worst of the worst even if people will look at you that way especially with sexual crimes. But at the same time, you still are an individual in the eyes of again in the eyes of the Lord. Treatment helps you to see that. You are going to see your self-worth, because sometimes it is self worth that we try to please others. Sometimes we forget that you are somebody that you have a value. Somebody paid a price for you. It is important to keep that in mind. That is the way I look at it.

Researcher: If probation had not required you to attend treatment would you have sought help on your own?

Travis: No. I would have not. Definitely like I said, I didn't think I needed it. But I am glad that probation required it. Because like I said now I have tools that I didn't have before.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Travis: Uhhh, I think so yes because you see what treatment does is it open a door that you wanted shut. Once again you want to be in the shadow because there you can commit a crime, but when you are out you cannot because everyone is looking at you. That is kind of making comparison that way. I think that is the important part of treatment. I think that is the best I can tell you.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Travis: I think that some of the questions in the book sometime that we are supposed to be reading, I think that some of them are just so you can, there are other ways that you can make them important you know besides just asking a question. Uh, I have read many books. Reading is my hobby. So when I look at a book, I try to see it from the point of view of the author. What are you trying to convey? What is it that you want me to learn from you? What is it you want from me? But it is difficult in treatment that everybody would have the same thinking. There are some people that don't even know how to read. Some of the questions are very superficial to me. But that is for me because I am used to reading.

Researcher: Can you give me an example of what you mean by superficial questions.

Travis: How many people were raped? To me what is the point? What is the point of knowing how many people were raped? For me, the interest is in look at the process, why were they raped, why was the person committing the rape. To me, the why is more important than how many.

Researcher: What treatment procedures would you recommend to people just beginning treatment?

Travis: Uh, what treatment procedures, I think that the first encounter that he should have when he is beginning is to have personal visit with the counselor and then be put in with the group, so that the counselor knows where he is and how best he can help and not just go straight to the group. That is something that I think is important. Yea he can take ABEL and all of those things, but to me that is not what it is. If I talk to you as a counselor you're here you running this therapy session and stuff. The one on one is important in the beginning so the person is not afraid when he does into the group. Because he is thrown into the lions before he knows how to treat the lions. That is how I would look at it. That is how I would say is important. First have a personal and then be with other people.

Researcher: Are there treatment producers that work better based on the age of the victim or should it be based around the offender?

Travis: Uh, I think that it has to be more on the person more than the victim. Because the person that is just committing the crime is not looking so much as to how old the person is, but at how I can get my benefit. He looks at himself. So he is the one who needs to be focused on because and then as he learns who he is then he is able to learn the victim's point of view. He needs to understand himself first. If he looks at the victim, he looks at her as a victim and his mind is not working as it should. The mind is a very interesting thing. First is him. And then I tell you ok look at him or her or whoever the victim. The age to me do not really make the case. There are certain people who like of course little

kids or whatever and that's what he will learn on the one to one at the beginning. Not everyone has that thought but some people do, are pedophilias you know.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Travis: Like I said, it's my relationship. I spend time everyday before I do anything else, I get up and pray and read the Bible. When you read scriptures then you value the person because they are a child of God and you don't want to hurt a child of God. See that is where I failed, I was too far from my Lord when I committed. That's what happened to me in prison, all of a sudden I had my epiphany and then went back to what I know before, that's where I should be. That's the only way I look at it for me. But other people probably don't care about a relationship with God you know. They may be a lot different. It is hard for me to know them because I am not in that position. There are different ways to answer the question.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Travis: Both. In the beginning and then in the groups. Check it out. And then go back to some personal sessions and then go back to group. Whatever as long as he needs. Because you always have to keep a check, otherwise you don't know. The only way to know is one to one. Then you can ask questions that you cannot ask in a group. And you don't answer as comfortable in the group. You may think you are but you are still in the shadows. It is hard to get out even in a group. That's sociology. That's who we are. We keep ourselves. So I would have that. First with a with a counselor, a therapist, then the group, then check it out the therapist again, and go back again.

Researcher: Could you have stopped the sexual crimes on your own?

Travis: Yes, I could have but I didn't because my selfishness was too strong and I lost contact. If I had had the relationship I should have had with my Lord I would have not done it because I mean it's not that I was committing a crime every day or every week or every year no. It happened that way because I was unfaithful to my wife. It was always when I was not in good shape with my Lord. So that's what happened. So I think that I probably could have. I just, I probably could. But maybe not. I don't know. Because I did it. So I guess it's no. But I you know, I thought I could probably. That is why I did it because I had too much trust in me and I didn't know what I should have handled. So I guess not.

Researcher: What would you say to someone thinking of committing a sexual crime?

Travis: Don't do it. Think about the consequences. The only problem is that people won't tell you I am thinking of committing a crime you know. Unless you are a counselor and they come to you and tell you I am planning to do this, which is very very rare it is going to be difficult to anybody that is planning on committing a crime to open up and say hey I want to commit a crime. It is difficult to stop it that way. But uh if you are observant but even then, I was thinking of a teaching situation, if a student was you know, I talked to some and reach out you are going to far with this girl. Oh thank you, you know. It's not easy you because we all like to be in the shadows.

Researcher: How effective do you think treatment is?

Travis: I think it is as effective as you want it to be. Like I said before, it is how much you want to get it. For some people, we forget that we are in treatment because we commit a crime, in this case I committed a crime. That is why I am here, other wise I would not be here. So the effectiveness is do you recognize that, do you recognize that

you need help, do you have ownership of your situation now, ok. Get the best men. Don't start complaining because there is no reason to complain. You are not going to gain anything. So yes it is good but it depends on your attitude.

Researcher: Can you ever be "cured" or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Travis: I don't think so. There is always a possibility. Always. It's there. It is just how do you want to do it. You have the possibility, but stop put the breaks. Don't go through your cycle again. If you stop your cycle right at the beginning and say hey no way because and then give your reasons and then walk away. So, how willingly are you to stop that's important. If you are in treatment how willingly are you to use the tools that they gave you, that's what's important. If you only come because you have to come because the PO gave you, then it just everything go by and you go back. But if you are careful now you have the opportunity and take all the elements that you can get so that you won't commit it again. That's when the benefit will come.

Researcher: What do you mean when you say "offense cycle"?

Travis: Well, see uh, at the first is what triggers you. For example if I go to a brothel you know I am in the wrong place. It is going to be very difficult for a married man like me not to look at a pretty girl right there that is offering you her body if you pay her. You go to the next step and start talking to her. The more you get into it then pretty soon you end up committing a crime not necessarily in the brothel but you have broken you know your barriers because you have gone step by step until you commit your crime. It's a cycle that, that's one thing that's important. I forget all the names, but I know what it goes. So the first thing is don't go there, you know keep away. The triggers get you.

Researcher: Without treatment would you have reoffended?

Travis: Without treatment, uh, like I said in prison here in (location) I had an epiphany that I committed my life back and I know that I'm in it and I don't want to get out of it again. The Lord is good, he forgives you. But there is also besides the love is also the justice and no you can't. I don't want to do it again. So, I don't think so.

Researcher: Do most offenders reoffend?

Travis: No I don't think so. In the treatment you realize like I said again that it's not just you it's a whole. The consequences of your crime the empathy that you come and develop it's not just sympathy about this, but you come to empathize with what the victim went through is going through and will always go through. All those things and you realize I don't want to hurt anybody. So, I think that no.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Travis: It's something that I had a battle in prison. Uh, here I would be with in prison with a person not with a person with people who had committed killed four or five person some more than five and they would look different than us that were sex offenders. So there is a stigma for sex offenders and a lot of it has to do with culture. And here was another guy that was peddling drugs to kids but he not looked as a sex offender is. Society has already a mold of looking at people and say yea there is a guy a drug addict or whatever, but for sex offenders and I can see why. Especially in our Christian countries look at the value of the person, we value the family, we protect the family as best we can and so if I have a child and somebody's comes and violates we act a lot stronger than otherwise. So, I think it is going to be very difficult for society because of

that in mind. It will be difficult for them in mind. It could be but I think it will be very hard.

Researcher: Is there a punishment that sex offenders deserve?

Travis: Yea I think so. Besides the punishment of going to jail there are other punishments that you get you know some people get divorced from their wife or husband. Some people uh go to prison and get raped in prison. Punishment will come because it's natural it will come. There is no way to avoid it. It can be physical, emotional, spiritual. So punishment comes.

Researcher: Do you think all sex offenders should spend time in jail?

Travis: No, not necessarily. I think that we have a justice that will treat the problem and come up with something. And that's it. That's why we have a system of justice. That's why we have that. Whatever they decide whether we like it or not that is what is decided.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Travis: Once again do you know that person? Let's say you are a mother and have two daughters and then you have a stepfather. Keep your eyes open. Something might happen there. If you are a mother or a father of children keep your eyes open. I think that is the best way you can do it in a family situation. In society it is very difficult, because how can you? In a small circle where things happen it may be that way.

Researcher: Can society trust you around children?

Travis: I hope so yea. I don't have any, mine is very well set. I don't want to commit a crime. I pray that I won't. I love to work with young people especially. It was the love of my life to help them.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is ever finished?

Travis: No. I don't think so. You always, not necessarily in group session. But if the definition of treatment is look for help when you need it, it never ends. Because you always need help regardless of where you are.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add about the treatment process?

Travis: I would say, uh, help the person that is in treatment to see that he is not being punished. He is there because he needs it. Try to convince him that way. I see many many of them that look at it that I am being punished. It is something that you choose. The therapist is trying to help you. Let people know that. This is why the one to one is important at the beginning.

Vince

Researcher: Lets begin with you telling me about your offense.

Vince: Uh, my offense was uh uh my stepdaughter, she was 13 years old and uh I, as I walked past her room I saw her backpack and it had a letter in it. And I had been telling her mother that I thought she was sexually active because there were some guys that were coming over that I was running off. Well I saw the backpack and the letter in it that had a heart on it. And I went inside and grabbed the letter and started reading it. The letter had uh some four letter words, talking about him fondling her and different things. So I was upset with it and I was gonna keep it and tell her mother. She came behind me and snatched the letter up. And when she did she took off running to the front room and I went behind her and told her to give me the letter. And she put it off in her clothes. Uh, so she was giggling and making a joke out of it and stuff. And she sat on the couch trying to fight me away and she opened her legs and she had some tight pants on and uh I think I took advantage of the situation. I was reaching for the letter but I reached out knowing

that I was touching her vagina. And I touched the vagina. And when I did I snatched the letter and she said you're not supposed to touch me there. She said daddy you preach to us every week about that. Why would you touch me there? I said I'm sorry just give me the letter. And I went to snatch it and I cut her, the paper cut her thigh. And she said I'm not getting out of my clothes in front of you. She got up and tried to walk away. I grabbed her from behind and took her back inside and I said now give me that letter. Get that letter out of your clothes and give it to me. So my charge was I reached down and touched her vagina. And I reached down and picked her up from behind. So there was two counts. And they gave me a choice, two years in the pen or 10 years probation. Um, it went a whole a year nothing was said. But then one day they came to our and I told my wife and my wife said I want to make sure there is no problem here, because my daughter is 14 now and she has a 16 year old sister and you and I got a two year old daughter together. So I went down to the police station and said you know that my wife wants to make sure, I know I don't have problems like that but my wife wants to make sure. I made that choice to reach down and touch her. And he said well we got classes we can put you into. He said we can't let you go home tonight but we are gonna put you up overnight and get you into some classes. 6 months later I was still in jail. They locked me up and then the district attorney told me I had a choice. And I had never been to jail before and you know. I said just let me go to class and he said no you do 2 years in the pen or you take 10 years probation. I had never been to jail. I was scared to death and don't want to go to the pen so I took probation.

Researcher: What is the treatment process you go through?

Vince: The treatment process I go through is coming in and getting rid of the denial and working through my uh way up to admitting to things I've done and see my uh my as I say how to uh short circuit these thoughts to not make a bad decision like I did. Uh process uh uh of coming in and going through lie detector tests to see that you have not stepped over any line and you have kept to the stipulations that are on your sheet and from the court. Um, and working your way towards being rehabilitating to see how you have thoughts of a child or doing something crazy that I did. So you have ways to short circuit, ways to stop that thought. That's the process you go through.

Researcher: Can you give me a few examples of tools you have learned in treatment to help prevent reoffending?

Vince: Yes. I think that I've been such as if I'm looking at TV and it's a show that's not rated or something like that. Now it's a different thing, I looked without shame at a 14 or 15-year-old girl walking around in her bathroom. I don't go to swimming pools or nothing like that, but I'm saying on TV or something like that. Now that I'm uh been through this I feel like there's a like I'm short circuiting to keep my mind from going some place that it shouldn't go. So I have tools that I use to keep my mind from wandering like that. There had to be a process that I went through before I touched (victim's name), seeing her walking in short pants or seeing uh the print of something before I took that. So I have learned to short circuit that and keep my mind from that.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is successful?

Vince: I would say about 80%. I think that 80% are sex offenders and not pedophiles. And I think there is a difference between the two. I think that you know the biggest part, most sex offenders are gonna be rehabilitated and learn what a bad choice good choice is.

But a pedophile is different. I feel like it is a sickness. It is a disease and it requires more treatment. And that's speaking from being locked up with them. From listening to stories. I know an illness when I see it. And making a bad choice is bad. But to be a pedophile to think about taking advantage of someone who doesn't really have a choice that's something different. That's a deeper sickness. I just feel like um we got a problem with putting pedophiles and sex offenders in the same bowl. That's something to do with the Adam Walsh Act. And one day it will be in Texas and we will be able to separate the two. And we won't be stabbing the sex offender in the heart while slapping the pedophile in the hand. It's something deeper.

Researcher: For those who are not pedophiles why do you believe treatment is successful?

Vince: I think it is successful because a lot of them made a bad choice. It wasn't a lifestyle it was something they thought they could get away with. Like someone who looks at a 16 year old girl who has dressed herself up to look grown and maybe in a club or out somewhere they shouldn't be. And you find out their age but they look ready. And to be slapped on the hand or to go through something like PACC you see how critical a decision like that is. Cuz now you go 10 years of your life where you got, and you are on the computer, everything just for a bad choice. And I think people like that they totally turn around and make a difference. I think sometimes the punishment is too severe. Cuz they could actually go through something like that and catch back up with their lives in a year or two or 3 years. But when you take 10 years out of someone's life I don't know sometimes it's fatal.

Researcher: What kind of homework were you given in treatment?

Vince: I was given well the ones I was given, all of them helped me like I won't do it again. But it was homework like anger management. Cuz my biggest problem in my offense was my temper. I felt like uh I worked and I made very very good money. So I felt like everybody in my household was like my. It was kinda like a Hitler regime. It was my way or no way. I think the anger management or the "Men in Anger", that booked helped me so much. And then "Reviving Ophelia" it helps you to understand the transformation of coming out of the tomboy stage and going into the Cinderella stage. I never understood that until I came in here and read that and I understood the transformation of a little girl. A person has to respect that there comes a time when a dad can't discipline a child a girl like a mother can. There is a big difference. And I think all of the books helped because they they help you to come out of denial, which is a big thing when you are in denial. When you are denying everything and you build up all these things in your mind you start feeling like I'm telling the truth. Getting out of the denial, which I think is the first part, you know is very uh it's critical. If you don't make it out of that stage you can't make it you know it does happen a lot. There's a way to keep these thoughts out of your mind. I think anger management helped me the most. That's where I really needed it.

Researcher: Do you think you will commit a sexual crime again?

Vince: I'm supposed to, in my heart I know that I won't do it again, but I'm supposed to say, and that's what this class is teaching me, that it's always possible. That's why I'm always on call. That way I don't take my protection down in my mind to let it seep in to start back looking and thinking well they are 14 but they don't look like it. I don't take my protection down and I if I keep telling myself that it's possible that this can happen

again, then that fear factor sets in and I'm always on guard. But in my heart it's into me now. To think that there's something like that it's a sickness. It kinda gives you a sickness to think of something like that not only that I have been molded. Before this, before my crime, I would get on the internet and run my friends name and people in school to see who was a sex offender, never knowing that one day my face would be on there. And that's just the kinda hatred I had to think kind of thing. In my heart I know that I'll never commit it again, but I never want to convince myself that it won't happen again. I want to keep that fear factor up, those cards.

Researcher: What have you learned since being in treatment?

Vince: Uh, well I I've learned that there's a difference between a sex offender and a pedophile. I've learned uh there are some people that are very sick and they prey on children. But I also found out that it's not like society thinks. There's no way that once a a sex offender, always a sex offender. I've found that there is a way out. I've been a preacher and I know religiously there is a way out. Not getting too deep into religiosity there is a way out with what you're learning, coming in with an open heart and really learning what they are trying to teach you, you are able to see that there is help that there is a way out. But you have to be able to absorb this stuff. You can't just, and that's what I'm afraid of for that other 20% that I'm talking about. They come in and just learn the rule, learn the right things to say and then once their 10 years are over, they still have the same state of mind they just learn how to get along, get out, go with the flow of things, and that's the other 20%. I've learned that there is a way out for people like that. And I've also learned that it's hard. I think it's best, a alcoholic, a ex-alcoholic, will make the best counselor for alcoholic. Since I been here, I told (therapist name) since the first year that I

been here that psychology was my major and then I was called to preach. Psychology came in to play with people who was having religious problems. But um I'm so interested in this now. I know the feeling the type of sickness the person has. I would love to one day sit down and kinda pick these guys minds to where I can help them. I think the best help for a a sex offender is a teacher or someone who was a sex offender who can see through their little games, the little things they try to do better, to make people think they are okay.

Researcher: Do you think there is a universal treatment method?

Vince: I think there should be and I don't think it is. I think it should be but I think it just when I was growing up people didn't want to teach sex education. They didn't think it should be in schools. And this is where it should be. It seems kinda graphic for kids that are 9, 10, 11th grade, but I think you won't be able to help people once they are already abused or once they got into this system of of of tacking advantage of children. I think you got to take it to the children and help them understand. It helps girls that 7th 8th grade are already touched by their brothers, their step dad, their nannies. There's already being girls touched. And boys sometimes don't understand. Men sometimes feel threatened by ladies that may turn them down. They know that somebody younger won't turn them down so they take advantage of younger girls and I think they need to be taught. I think it needs to be in the schools. That's where you start taking care of it universal, if you start teaching it at a younger age.

Researcher: If probation had not required you to attend treatment would you have sought help on your own?

Vince: I went to jail trying to sought treatment. I was gonna get treatment whether they put me in jail or not. But I don't know if I would stay in here for 10 years. But I know I would have got enough in the first year or two, to where I could have saved my \$120,000 home. I could have saved my \$5,000 a month. I could have raised my daughter. I could have been there. I think I could have been healed in the home to where I would have kept my family and been a citizen and not in jail. And a bit of it is I have something I really want to venture into now. I really want to be able to help people. And religion sometimes is kind of a world in itself. This right here, sociology and psychology, to where I'm helping people one on one to where I'm in the neighborhood that's something that I've always wanted to do out of high school. It's a bad thing that happened to me but it may turn out to be for a good reason.

Researcher: Do you think treatment will be effective for everyone?

Vince: No, it just won't. There are people who have a state of mind to where they are gonna do what they want no matter what. There is just stubborn and you can just see it in them. They just tell you what they not gonna do and they just bumping their head up against the wall. There is just some people who out smart the system. It's back to that same 20%. They is just going with the motion to the ocean. They is just doing what they need to do to get through it. You know so I just want to I guess 20%.

Researcher: If there had been a treatment facility or therapist group that was offered to you when you were beginning to have deviant sexual thoughts would you have sought help?

Vince: Yes most definitely.

Researcher: What treatment procedures were ineffective in your mind?

Vince: Ineffective? Most of it really has been helpful. And you know I would have thought desensitization wouldn't have been helpful but that even helps in a lot of way. I can't see much that was ineffective. You know uh some of the questions in the book uh, "Why Did I Do It". If I was to say something that was least effective I would say it would be that because everything else fit right in. I was a sex offender before that because when I grew up, I've been a bad person. I've been a pusher a pimp, all these things. I never asked nobody their age before I put them out on the street. They could have been 16. I think all of it has been real, it has been helpful to me. Because I know what I need to absorb to get better. And when a person don't know that they are just going through the motions.

Researcher: What treatment procedures would you recommend to someone just beginning treatment?

Vince: Uh, well "Why Did I Do This". All the lessons that you learn to bring you out of denial, I think that's the first phase. I think when you get in to this the very first. You can tell a person is in denial when they tell what they did. You can tell denial in their voice. That is the first hurdle. You can to get over the denial.

Researcher: What helps you avoid committing sexual offenses again?

Vince: A number of things. I don't never want to go to jail again. Never. I would never want to hurt a child. I think of my daughters, someone touching them the way I touched (victim's name) and um I don't get that mad no more like I did, but it more or less gives you a sickness. There are lines that I just won't cross now, whereas before I was a daring person, I would get as close as I could. I've gain respect for the law, first of all for the

law. And I've gained respect for myself. You really disrespect yourself when you take advantage of a child. It really reflects on who you are, you know.

Researcher: Which therapy style, alone or in groups, was more beneficial for you?

Vince: Therapy style? Group. The best help for a sex offender is another sex offender talking to him. Because they know what they go through. They know the weaknesses and the feelings. So that group uh uh I like the way (therapist name) teachers. He lets the group take over. He lets the group discipline each other. So if I fail a polygraph I have let my group down. And we teach each other. That's a good thing. No one can teach someone who hasn't had a prior sexual offense a problem like that except someone who has had a prior offense. I think one on one therapy is like two dogs fighting, just one on one trying to outsmart each other. I think it causes more problems than good. When you are in a group that is the best thing you can get. They got an insight on what you are going through. A lot of times it just helps by listening to what another person, it helps. I like the group.

Researcher: What would you say to someone thinking of committing a sexual crime?

Vince: That you are not just ruining your life. That you are also affecting an innocent child. It's not fair to not give a child a chance to live a good life, a good stable minded life. Because you mess up their mind, to where things, later in life you don't know what damage you do. When you mess with a child's mind it affects their life. You affect the whole family of the child. I would let him know what a broad stroke he is taking by doing that. It's all for self-gratification. They don't understand that it is going to affect the child for a lifetime. I would let him know what he is truly doing. Sex offenders don't realize

the affect they really have on a child. It affects them for life and affects everything. I would let them know how much damage they are really doing.

Researcher: Can you ever be “cured” or be 100% positive you will never commit another sexual offense?

Vince: I feel I can if I keep in my mind that it’s possible. I have to tell myself that it can happen to be 100% sure that it won’t. My defense is to never let that thought go.

Researcher: Without treatment would you have reoffended?

Vince: Yes, I think I would. Because if I hadn’t have came in, you see she didn’t tell for a whole year. And if she didn’t tell what would have stopped me from doing it again. What I done was a sex offense was my first step to pedophilia, that’s where it starts at. I think I would have done it again. I think I would have done worse.

Researcher: Can society trust sex offenders?

Vince: Yes I think they can. Sex offenders I think society can trust. Pedophiles have to go through a lot. I feel like sex offenders can be trusted by society. I think they can be good citizens and a lot of them don’t even take 10 years to become good citizens again. A lot of them made a bad choice. Pedophiles is more than a bad choice, it’s a sickness. They feel like they have to find a prey. They look for someone they can take advantage of.

Researcher: Is therapy enough to change behavior?

Vince: Yes, therapy is. It can definitely change behaviors. You can to absorb what you are taught. And you have to get over the denial thing. I had a hard head when I came in. I thought nobody could tell me a thing I didn’t know. You have to get over that. You have to learn how to follow. Once you learn you are able to get the help you need and you are able to get better.

Researcher: How could we stop someone before they offend?

Vince: Teach them young. When I started looking for help I had already touched her.

Nobody is going to admit to you that they got a problem before you catch em. I feel like the only way you can do that is teach them young. Teach em young. I feel the younger you teach em the more you will get it accepted by society that it's needed in school. They need it taught in schools so they can defend themselves against the aggressor and they can defend themselves, the boys can defend themselves from the thoughts.

Researcher: Do you think treatment is ever finished?

Vince: No. I think it goes on. The counselors what they are doing is teaching us to teach ourselves. I could leave right now and I know the things to do. They teach us not to fall back to the things we come out of. But I think that's what treatment is about. If you want us to get the fullness of life, so you teach us how to keep these feelings away, how to short-circuit any lustful thoughts. You teach us to take care of ourselves.

Researcher: Is there anything else you want to add about the treatment process?

Vince: I think I uh fit it all in there. My major thing is just seeing people put in the same boat. I really think we need to be separate. These sex offenders should be separated from the pedophiles and aint nobody gonna suffer. I wish we were separated.

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