

[Home](#)[Up](#)

[Newsletter E3]

"I didn't know how to deal with it"

Young people speak out about their sexual contacts with adults

By Frans Gieles.

Translated from the Dutch NVSH lwg JORis Newsletter, for Ipce Newsletter .

Thanks to Gerald for translation.



With a PS: [Dutch psychiatrist Gerard Roelofs](#)

Young people have their say

In the past two years, nine times I came across disclosures from young people about sexual contacts that they had accepted. These contacts had taken place 3 to 20 years previously.

In all cases I know the involved adult to be principled and trustworthy, who would not force his will onto a child. In all cases I am convinced about the consensuality of the encounter and I am also mostly assured that the immediate aftermath was at least a partly positive experience.

But still, later and in retrospect, the encounters were viewed differently.

The experience in retrospect

The reactions confirm each other on many essential points. These points support again what one can find in the literature. Here is, in their own words, what the young people related to me:

- 1. I felt drawn in two ways: It was nice, but somewhere it also didn't feel good. I had the feeling that something bad was happening that I couldn't stop.*
- 2. It went all too fast. It was too early. It was too much at once. I rather had discovered all this slowly, at my own pace.*
- 3. I couldn't talk with anyone about it, not at home or with boy or girl friends. No, it was not a happy secret, for it weighed too heavy on my conscience. It was a barrier between me and my parents and friends.*
- 4. My spontaneity disappeared.*

5. *I was ashamed and felt guilty that I nevertheless had agreed to do it. Did you say that I took the initiative...? I thought that YOU did...! But you should not have agreed with that.*
6. *Now I don't know what I am sexually. I can't make any contacts. I have lost my self-confidence.*
7. *And at night I have those fantasies...*
8. *At home things are difficult. I can't concentrate at school. As a result of all that I started to use drugs.*
9. *I am pissed off with you. Haven't you noticed that for quite some time I have been avoiding you?*

Note: Experiences like these are commonly expressed in the "sexual abuse literature", but I encountered the same in my reading and in personal contacts about encounters that were mostly consensual with principled adults.

The origins of the experience

It is understood that the source of the discomfort is not necessarily caused by the encounter. In retrospect the experience is re-interpreted. This is an essential process that doesn't take place in a vacuum: This happens in a search for an explanation that one can come across or is offered. I can see three sources of the re-interpreting in retrospect of the experiences.

1. One's own psyche developed in the upbringing of the young people. It doesn't matter how tolerant and enlightened the family background is. Society itself is still deeply and firmly rooted in sex-negative paradigms (i.e. sex = dirty etc.).
2. The broader cultural society, which includes the family, youth culture, and society as a whole. Look, for instances, the medium of television influences young people.

Young men discover how 'society' thinks - read: how one is forced to think - about sex, childhood and youth, sexual orientations and pedophilia. Everywhere the present 'moral order' is forcefully presented to the young people who aren't able yet of reaching a critical judgement that makes them resist such indoctrination. (Where can one learn to make such judgements?)

This culture is very powerful and has the capability to wipe away the original positive experience and turn the meaning and value of that experience by 180 degrees. Such ideas fall on fertile soil, as many boys have a great fear of becoming homosexual, so much so that their own trust totally disappears and turns into homophobia.

While one thinks about these things the next source becomes quite clear.

3. The 'counselors'.... One can hear the words of the RIAGG (Dutch Mental Care Institutions) when the young people talk about their own experiences. "I have a split personality ." "I am a victim of sexual abuse ." The value of the original experience has now totally disappeared. The now offered interpretation is accepted as one's own true experience.

It is now the norm that 'Counselors' ask for the sexual experiences. When, in one's youth, these experiences have been shared with an adult, there will be an automatic conclusion that all problems stem from that incident only. This 'solution' is readily accepted, for one does not have to look at oneself, be critical of one's parents or schools. One does not even have to be critical about society as a whole that offers sex violence and drugs in massive proportions.

The problem is now clearly simplified: A scapegoat has been found. The standard 'solution' to this predicament is to go to the police and start proceedings.

It is nearly also the norm that one then can claim for damages.

The four principles

Several years ago, we discussed at one of the Ipce Meetings in Copenhagen a paper about ethics, written by (one of the) Danish people. In one of the meetings in Amsterdam, we spoke about a next version of this paper. In NVSH lwg JORis, these ethical principles are discussed several times. Gradually, we reached consensus about four ethical principles and a P.S. Here they are in the last generally accepted version.

1. Self-determination

Children must always have it in his or her own power to regulate their own sexuality, their relationships with others and their own lives.

2. Initiative

Even in a later stage of the relationship, it is always the children who make the choice to have sex.

3. Freedom

At any moment within the relationship with an adult, children must have the freedom to withdraw from the relationship. (Dependency in sexual relationships limits their freedom). Love and dedication must be unconditional. Sex is never allowed to be a bargaining tool.

4. Openness

The child should not have to carry unreasonable secrets. One has to take into consideration how the child lives with its own sexuality. This openness depends a great deal on the quality of the relationship, and the support from the adult(s).

P.S.

The local mores and customs also play a role, as openness about children's sex lives is not always appreciated. Children often have to be sexual in secret. Homosexuality is for many youngsters a big taboo. This can bring many problems and insecurity. If the sub-culture in which they live is relaxed and strong enough, then children can find support in that environment.

Toward conclusions

I notice that as an adult one can realize the first three principles, Self-determination, Initiative and Freedom. However, I have to come to the conclusion that the fourth principle of Openness can as the result of the present moral pressures not be realized any longer. Nowhere is discussion possible. Support is only available, from infants onwards, for heterosexuals; sometimes a very, very little bit of support is given to the homosexuals but only when they are in their late teens or their early twenties.

For pedosexual relationships there is no support at all for the younger partner: not in the family, not at school, not in the play-ground, not in public and not from the mental care agencies

And now let us talk about secrets. The essence of a *nice* secret is that you *can* tell all about it, but that it pleases you to keep it to yourself. If you are not allowed to talk about it, it is not a nice secret any longer. I am aware that at least one of the four principles can in this day and age not be realized any more. What conclusions do I make out of that and what is your conclusion?

Conclusion 1

To soften the effect of Source No 1, the children have to be brought up quite differently in regards to their sexuality. Social patterns of upbringing do change from one generation to the next, but fundamental changes could need several generations.

To address Source No 2, I recommend that the real experience of the self be given more value. That all people, young and old, will be given more freedom and responsibility especially in sexual matters. This would fundamentally change the culture and the order of society.

To change Source No 3 we have to change the 'sexual abuse' paradigm of the sexual abuse industry. In turn such a new paradigm demands another type of scientific knowledge and research. As long as the psychology is focussed on the fragmented behavior-science rather than the more holistic science of human action, this will never happen. Sexual-sciences will have to work with other basic understandings, definitions, methods and goals.

If we will work at these points, our agenda is filled for the next half a century!

Conclusion 2

I don't have another half century to live, therefore I will have to pass on some of the points I want to make. I want to accept what these nine young people have said about themselves and their lives. I will take care that I can not be one of the causes for the 'problem -list' 1 to 9 (see above). I regard the chance of a 'negative reaction in retrospect' so big and predictable, that I anticipate such problems and I don't want to run the risk. This means that I don't allow myself to have sexual contacts with youngsters.

Where then are my boundaries?

In my relationships with youngsters I am really close with, I have two boundaries.



At first, I refuse to keep such a long distance that real and good contact is no longer possible.



The other is that I don't want any sexual involvement, which includes erotic intimacies that are meant to lead to a full sexual experience.

Within the boundaries of what is, for me, acceptable there are untold ways of connecting, which is enjoyed by one or both, in which there could be an erotic content but is not designed to lead to sex.

Conclusion 3 ...???



What are the conclusions from the reader?



How do you deal with this problem?



What is your attitude to the possibility of a 'negative experience in retrospect'?



What advice do you receive from your study-groups, visitors, or counselors?



What do you think about the four principles?



Do you think that the fourth principle is achievable in the present climate?



Are the first three principles achievable?



Which agenda points would you like to adapt yourself?



How do you want to work on that?



What are your expectations for the short and the long term?



Could we, together, find the answers to these questions?

But please understand:

1. I don't reject sexual contacts in principle, but only for myself in this time. I don't want to take the risk to be the cause of the list of nine points (that only contains the risks for the younger partner), I suspect that most members of lwg JORis live accordingly to similar principles.
2. My agenda is full of the work I mentioned in conclusion no 1. The points 1 and 3 in the conclusion no 1 are specially connected with my professional work and writings.
3. If my professional colleagues ask me, where I lay my boundaries, then I give no other answer then when I am in discussion with the JORis members. I am only one person who doesn't get talked into 'a split personality'. nor get talked as moved 'into the camp of the enemy.'
4. I wrote this as an individual person, participant of lwg JORis, thus not as a member of the board of lwg JORis.

P.S. 1

I wrote this article to tell what the youngsters with a negative experience have told me. I also have met youngsters who felt positively about sexual contacts they have had in a positive relationship with an adult.

P.S. 2 By my article: Dutch psychiatrist Gerard Roelofs

Dagblad De Limburger, 8 August 1998

Recently, Psychiatrist Gerard Roelofs, The Netherlands, told his opinion – already known for years, in the Dutch Press. I translate this passage (in my Duchy English), to compare Roelof's opinion with the four criteria and the PS, mentioned in the my article above. As mentioned,

these criteria above are developed in Ipce Meeting discussions and in NVSH lwg JORis' meetings and Newsletters. Please, compare them with Roelof's opinion.

"Above the age of twelve, a sexual relationship with an adult is not necessarily harmful for a child. 'In that case it mutuality *can* be possible and the interest of the child *can* have priority'.

"[Roelofs] has developed five criteria for a healthy pedophile relation.

[1.] There should be no coercion;

[2.] the child should be able to stop [the interaction] at every moment.

[3.] At third, sexuality should be [only] at the psycho-sexual level of the child.

In other words: the intimacy has to fit in the sexual feeling of the 12 to 16 year old youngster.

'One can think about mutual masturbation, but not about real hard sado-masochistic games,' says Roelofs."

"Two other conditions however, will in most cases form an obstacle for the actual generation of pedophiles: in Roelofs opinion,

[4.] the parents of the child should know about the relationship [and the sexual aspect of it].

[5.] Also is a condition that the child can talk about the relationship in his [social] environment, *without* meeting disapproval.

[The P.S.:]

"With these conditions, Roelof's opinion will be only a theory nowadays. No 'good parent' shall give permission for a sexual relationship of his or her child with an adult nowadays. Just so Roelofs himself, he has to confess. "But after twenty years one could find such parents."

[Home](#)[Up](#)

[Newsletter E3]