



Olga Gerassimenko: From Startled to Helpful: Adult Responses to Child Sexual Behaviour



Olga is a narrative therapy counsellor, sexual health educator, community work specialist working with teenagers and families on sexuality, gender, relationships and diversity. Discover how to process your emotions and body responses when encountering unexpected child behaviour that is ranging from curious to transgressive.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Ask myself: what do I need at the moment?

Flagsystem Algorithm: **3 Steps to assess a situation**

1. Sexual integrity: The creation of boundaries are reflecting the values of the system.
 - We teach the child how to change from transgressional behaviour to protecting themselves.
 - Neutral description to avoid jumping to conclusions and help us get more information. Which situation actually needs evaluation and which situation is just “uncomfortable” for us?
2. Criteria: Mutual consent, voluntary engagement, equality, appropriate for age/development, appropriate for context, self-respect
 - Assigning a safety flag: Is transgressional behaviour intensive and repetitive?
 - First, we evaluate the initiator, then, separately, the other participants.
 - Additional criteria: Degree of intimacy, Repetitiveness, Stress level, conscious harm.
3. Reaction needs to focus on the desired outcome, the progress achieved, the competence and possibilities, success, and a step by step movement.

Pedagogical Reaction: **How can we make the situation a learning experience?**

1. Neutral description of behaviour
2. Open questions to the child
3. Normalisation, we emphasize the healthy and normal part of the behaviour
4. If you have strong emotions, name them
5. Naming the inappropriate part of the behaviour
6. Stopping the behaviour, agreements on proceeding
7. Explaining or applying consequences
8. Reporting

Resources

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- ❖ **References:** <https://flagsystem.org>



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