

Male Sex Offenders' Capabilities to Meet Their Goals: An Explanatory Model of Male Sexual Offending

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Abstract

Aim/Background: Sex offender research has historically focused on the deficits of sex offenders' relationships, self-regulation, and skills, giving only limited attention to their capabilities. Capabilities are the offenders' abilities to regulate their emotions, manage their behavior, deny their actions or deceive others about them, experience personal insight, and maintain interpersonal relationships. The purpose of this study was to identify offenders' capabilities in order to identify their goals and their ability to meet those goals, and to develop an explanatory model of sexual abuse from the view of the offender.

Methods: This qualitative study analyzed risk assessment records of 21 registered sex offenders to identify their capabilities and resources. Offenders' self-appraisals served as the link between their capabilities and resources to meet their goals. Using dimensional analysis, an explanatory model of male sexual offending was developed.

Results: Four cases emerged from analysis: The good guy beset by trouble; the repeat offender; the people pleaser; and the pretender.

Conclusions: With an understanding of what offenders are capable of, we can predict whether they have adequate resources to re-offend or live without re-offending. This model can be used by clinicians to predict the offenders' capabilities to meet either pro-social or pro-offense goals.

Key words: Child sexual abuse, sex offenders, sex offender treatment, explanatory model

Introduction

Adult sexual contact with children is bewildering to most of us, but in order to prevent future victimization we must seek to understand offenders' cognitions, behaviors, and social relationships. Recent theories suggest that cognitive distortions and the development of a maladaptive self-identity are responsible for deviant sexual arousal (Abel, Becker, Cunningham-Rathner, Mittelman, & Rouleau, 1988; Marshall, & Marshall, 2000). Offenders report that they are isolated from their families and peers (Gilgun & Connor, 1990) and have unmet needs for parental affection and affirmation (Ivey & Simpson, 1998). Because they create relationships that vary in levels of intimacy (Gilgun, 1994), they misperceive their victim's responses to their sexual advances (Phelan, 1995) and redefine their behavior as an expression of love and mutuality (Gilgun, 1995). While sex offender research historically focuses on the deficits of sex offenders' relationships, self-regulation, and skills, it also gives only limited attention to their capabilities.

Sex offenders' capabilities are the strategies they use to regulate their emotions and manage

behaviors related to their sexual abuse. These capabilities are derived from the offenders' resources and the degree of realism with which they appraise those resources. Offenders find either strength or weakness in their resources, and this influences the way they use these resources to meet their goals. Goals may be pro-offense goals, which are aimed at re-offending without detection, or pro-social goals, which are aimed at enhancing life, welfare, and interpersonal relationships within the community. When offenders are allowed to identify their strengths and weaknesses in relation to their resources, they will also reveal their goals.

This study was designed to encourage offenders to identify their capabilities in order to identify their goals and their ability to meet those goals, and to develop an explanatory model of sexual abuse from the view of the offender. The goal was to gain their descriptions of the etiology, timing, effect, severity, duration, fears, problems of, and potential interventions for their sexually abusive behavior. Their views of their behavior kept leading to the question "What are they capable of?" With an understanding of what offenders are capable of (i.e., their strengths and weaknesses) we can predict whether they have adequate resources to re-offend or to live without re-offending.

Background and Significance

Several theories have been proposed to describe, explain, and predict the process of child sexual abuse and three will be described here: Groth's (1978) fixated vs. regressed typology, Finkelhor's (1986) four-factor model, and Hudson, Ward, and McCormack's (1999) offense pathways. Groth classified offenders as either fixated or regressed. Fixated pedophiles were thought to be marginal or inadequate persons who were primarily sexually attracted to children. Regressed pedophiles were primarily attracted to adults but regressed to sexual attraction to children when adult relationships became unmanageable. Although Groth's typology was initially used to guide investigation and treatment of offenders, it fell into disuse after a number of challenges to its validity (Simon, Sales, Kaszniak, & Kahn, 1992).

Finkelhor's (1986; Araji & Finkelhor, 1986) four-factor model identified psychological and sociocultural factors in the child sexual abuse process. The first factor, emotional congruence, was said to explain the relationship between "arrested psychosexual development," "identification with the aggressor", and "narcissism", and child sexual abuse. The second factor, sexual arousal, indicates that at least some child sexual abusers were sexually aroused by contact with prepubescent children, though there appeared to be no explanation of that phenomenon. Blockage, the third factor, drew on psychodynamic theory to explain how child sexual abusers were prevented from developing ordinary sexual relationships and outlets. Finally, disinhibition, the fourth factor, used personality, situational, and feminist theories to explain how child sexual abusers circumvented the ordinary prohibitions against sexual activity between adults and children. Araji and Finkelhor (1986) noted, however, that none of the factors could explain why child sexual abusers develop this "unusual pattern of sexual arousal toward children" (p. 118).

Ward and his colleagues developed a grounded theory of sex offending using an extensive interview process and later validated the theory by identifying three main cognitive and behavioral pathways for gratifying deviant sexual appetites (Hudson, Ward, & McCormack, 1999). The pathways reflect the offender's pre-offense mood, the type of planning that takes place, the perceived quality of the relationship, the post-offense self-evaluation, and resolutions to either continue or discontinue abusive behavior. Further, Ward and colleagues make a substantial contribution to the field by developing the Good Lives Model. This model addresses offenders' capabilities, including their abilities to regulate their emotions (Ward, 2006), manage their behavior (Ward, Hudson, & France, 2006), deny their actions or deceive others about them (Becker-Blease & Freyd, 2007), experience personal insight (Barnett & Wood, 2008), and maintain interpersonal

relationships (Chen, Liu, & Lin, 2007). In order to develop these capabilities offenders use resources previously available to them, including childhood experiences, family relationships, and personal competencies. Offenders' goals are to protect their ability to continue offending without detection (pro-offense goals) or to prevent future offenses (pro-social goals) (Lange, Lloyd, & Fiqia, 1985).

Understanding offenders' capabilities provides a foundation for victim and offender treatment and it can help society protect children from offenders who use their capabilities to continue to engage children sexually without detection. These attributes are important because they serve as the foundation for treatment, if appropriate, and indicate how offenders who are refractory to treatment use their strengths to continue their abusive activities. An explanatory model (EM) is needed to help us understand more about how offenders' beliefs and attitudes influence their behavior and to guide investigations of reports of abuse, risk assessment, treatment and treatment evaluation. This study proposes an EM to explain child sexual abuse from the offender's perspective and takes into account both the influence of the offender's social environment and interpretation of personal behavior in order to guide the process of preventing, identifying, and remediating the effects of child sexual abuse.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

Qualitative methods adapted from grounded theory allowed the research team to handle an extensive data set and consider child sexual abuse from multiple perspectives. Specifically, dimensional analysis was used in this study. The goal of dimensional analysis is to unravel and uncover dimensions, properties, contexts, conditions, and consequences of complicated concepts (Schatzman, 1991). This approach was chosen during preliminary data analysis when multiple dimensions were emerging while attempting to understand the offenders' perspectives of their sexual offenses.

Sample

Participants included 21 males convicted of a sexual offense against a child who were registered in the state of Arkansas. Inclusion criteria included at least minimal cooperation with the risk assessment process, average to above average intelligence as assessed clinically, rational, oriented, and stable mental status with no signs of thought disturbance. Offenders clinically assessed as mentally disabled and offenders whose victims were within 3-5 years of the offenders' ages (so that the offenses were considered statutory offenses) were excluded. Characteristics of the offender, the victim, the offender-victim relationship and the assigned risk level guided sample selection.

The average age of the men in the sample was 39 years (range 24-63). Two were African-American and 15 were Caucasian (missing data: 4). Four were married or in a marital type relationship; 9 had a history of one or more divorces, and 6 were single with no history of marriage (missing data, 2). Nine offenders reported no exposure to sexual abuse as a child, and three reported a history of abuse by an older woman as a child; the remaining records contained incomplete information on history of abuse. Eleven were steadily employed at the time of the assessment and 7 were unemployed, 5 due to disability and 1 due to retirement (missing data: 3). All had at least some high school education; 11 had graduated or received a GED, and 4 had some college or a college degree.

The 21 offenders had a total of 37 reported victims. The victims' average age was 8 years (range 3-15); 30 of the victims were 12 years or younger. There were 32 female victims and 5 male victims of the same average age.

Offenders were diverse in terms of criminal charges and relationships with victims. Most had been convicted of sexual abuse (33%), sexual assault (19%), or rape (14%). A majority (57%) were the victims' fathers or father figures. Other relationships included a family friend (24%) and an acquaintance or a position of authority (10%). Two of the men had molested children who were strangers to them. Two cases involved viewing child pornography, in which there was no direct relationship with victims and the number of victims involved was unknown. Eight of the offenders were assigned to risk Level 3, the highest level, while 11 were assigned to Level 2, and 2 were assigned to Level 1. Risk levels are designed to provide local law enforcement with the information they need to make decisions about community notification, with higher levels indicating the need for notification of virtually all members of the community and lower levels indicating the need for a narrower scope of notification.

Data Collection

Data were collected from offender risk assessment records compiled by the Arkansas Sex Offender Screening and Risk Assessment (SOSRA) Program. The SOSRA Program conducts in-depth assessments of all offenders required to register in the state. The records described include documentation of the charges, the official version of the offense, from the perspectives of the victim(s) and law enforcement, interviews with the offenders, in which they provide their versions of the offense, and the offender's written responses to an Incomplete Sentences Test (IST). ISTs are used in the risk assessment to identify relevant interview topics, since they allow for subjective responses to open-ended stems. The offenders whose records were reviewed for this study were required to participate in the risk assessment process or were subject to legal sanctions; thus, their participation was not voluntary. Hence, the offenders' responses to the ISTs were likely to reflect their attempts to portray themselves and their actions in the best possible light and are therefore useful in identifying their capabilities from their perspective.

Data Analysis

The explanatory model began with a two-dimensional matrix of "Goals" and "Resources." The goals were either pro-social, which were activities that enhanced life, welfare, and interpersonal relationships in the community, or pro-offense, which meant that the offender hoped to continue offending without detection. Goals were identified by comparing the offender's version of the offense to the official version of the offense. The degree to which the versions matched or differed indicated the offenders' attitude towards their offense. Their attitudes stemmed from their view of self, sense of responsibility, personal values, need for understanding, and this view of others' attitudes towards them. Pro-social goals were revealed in those who accepted responsibility, which was indicated in their responses to the ISTs, such as: "I got into trouble because I did something I shouldn't have," and "It's not fair that my stepdaughters had to endure what I did." Pro-offense goals were revealed in those who did not accept responsibility and had attitudes of indignation and self-righteousness, a lack of self-control, limited capacity for foresight, sexual impulsivity/compulsivity, faulty reasoning, and maladaptive values. Their IST responses included: "My sex charge has been used to keep me away from my son," and "My sex charge [was] supposed to be 'assault' or something."

The offenders had developed resources through their personal experiences and their social and intimate relationships. Personal experiences included experiences with their jobs, the law, and

recreational activities. Social and intimate relationships, such as in their childhood, with family members, and with others in society, influenced how they managed future relationships. Their resources were either adequate or inadequate. Adequate resources included something or someone they could turn to if they had trouble sustaining memories, insights gained from life, and life experiences that they could draw on to solve problems. Examples of adequate resources were revealed in IST responses such as, "When I was a child, I played and learned," and "My family is supportive." Inadequate resources included inappropriate means, limited scope, incoherence, and a lack of skill to adjust to life-changing circumstances. Inappropriate means included using a method to meet primary needs that reduced the possibility that these needs would be met. Limited scope was defined as a focus exclusively on one or two primary needs to the exclusion of other equally important needs. Incoherence reflected the manner in which offenders' attempts to meet one type of need interfered with meeting other equally important needs. Inadequate resources were revealed in IST responses such as, "My dad would pick up anything he could to hit us with it," and "I worry about what people think about me."

A third dimension added to the analysis, "Self-appraisal," reflected offenders' own assessments of their capabilities and resources. Their self-appraisals were either realistic or unrealistic. The offenders' childhood experiences, relationships with their family of origin, competencies and relationships as adults, their views of themselves and others, others' views of them, and their references to their offense were analyzed. Realistic self-appraisals were found in IST responses such as, "People tell me I am a hard worker," and "Others don't like it when I try to control them." Unrealistic self-appraisals were found in IST responses such as, "If only others understood I'm really very nice."

Results

The central explanatory theme that emerged from this data was the offenders' capabilities or abilities to meet their goals. Their capabilities reflected their resources, which were either adequate or inadequate, and their self-appraisals, which were either realistic or unrealistic. Four cases emerged from analysis: 1) The offender had adequate resources to meet pro-social goals: the good guy beset by trouble; 2) The offender had adequate resources to meet pro-offense goals: the repeat offender; 3) The offender had inadequate resources to meet pro-social goals: the people pleaser; and, 4) The offender had inadequate resources to meet pro-offense goals: the pretender (see Table 1).

Table 1: Capabilities in relation to pro-social and pro-offense goals

CAPABILITIES	GOALS	
	PRO-SOCIAL	PRO-OFFENSE
Sufficient	The Good Guy Beset by Trouble	The Repeat Offender
Insufficient	The People-pleaser	The Pretender

The good guy beset by trouble. This offender had adequate resources to meet his pro-social goals. He used his capabilities to return to socially responsible behavior. He admitted to his offense.

He verbalized remorse for the trouble he had caused his victim, his family, and society. He had a supportive family, multiple competencies, and a realistically positive self-appraisal. He sought sex-offender treatment.

One such offender was a 46-year-old white male who had been convicted of second-degree sexual assault and assigned to a low risk assessment level (Level 1). He had completed high school, along with 3 years of college, was currently employed, and was divorced. He acknowledged that he had molested his son 13 years ago, when the child was 4 years old. He reported that he and his son got into the bed together, at which time he took off his underwear and they started "tickling each other." He initiated the abuse by touching his son's penis and allowing his son to touch his own erect penis. The offender stated that he began the interaction because he was concerned that his son's mother was molesting him and he thought this would "get him to talk about it." He denied any other encounters with his son or other victims or any sexual interest in young boys in general. The offender had a history of substance abuse, including alcohol, marijuana, and crack cocaine, for which he had received treatment; he denied use at the time of the offense. He had received psychiatric treatment for depression, which he said was related to being fondled at the age of 4 by a neighbor. He expressed remorse for his offense and empathy for his victim, saying that he was willing to participate in sex offender treatment.

The good guy beset by troubles had resources that laid a foundation for saying and doing what is generally seen as "right" and pleasing to society. He expressed conventional views of intimate relationships (*Marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman*) and spiritual or religious matters (*I think it is normal to believe in life or God*). When discussing his job, he saw himself as a hard worker (*The worst thing about me is I work too much*) and hoped others viewed him in the same manner (*I wish people felt differently about my job*). His education, accomplishments, talents, and family achievements met or exceeded the social norms (*The best thing I ever did was make music*). He saw the law in a good light (*The law is for us all*). His family of origin was available and supportive (*My family is caring*). His recreational activities were aimed at pleasing others (*I really like to play and sing music*).

The "good guy" was motivated to act in a way that would protect society from his deviant thoughts and behaviors. His values included fairness and ethics in life (*It's not fair that some have to hurt financially*). He described himself as a good person overall, with irrelevant or trivial flaws (*The worst thing about me is that I talk too much*). He discussed sex with modesty and propriety (*Masturbation is for older people*). The general population and norms of society were seen positively, with the goal of benefiting others (*I think it's ok to try and get along with everyone*).

The "good guy" also demonstrated willingness to change his thoughts and behaviors. When discussing his offense, he expressed regret and acknowledged his wrongdoing (*The worst thing I ever did was touch my son's private parts*). He discussed the changes he would like to make in the world, not only for himself, but also for the world as a whole (*If I had my way, life would be better for most people*). The attitudes of others towards him were important and taken into consideration (*People tell me to be careful*).

The repeat offender. This offender had adequate resources to meet his pro-offense goals. He used his capabilities to please himself and denied committing an offense. It is likely that he threatened or blamed his victim for the offense. He isolated himself and had a condescending attitude towards others. His competencies were related to personal abilities rather than social accomplishments. He had an unrealistically positive self-appraisal and he flatly refused to participate in treatment.

The exemplar repeat offender was a 62-year-old white male convicted of two counts of first-degree

sexual abuse and was assigned to a moderate risk assessment level (Level 2). He had a high school diploma and was currently unemployed due to disability; he had been a welder earlier in life. He had been married twice, with both marriages ending in divorce. He was charged with touching the vagina and taking pictures of an 8-year-old female acquaintance who he had known for 6 months. The offender threatened to "kill her parents and her uncle" if she did not comply. He denied the offense, but admitted to being "affectionate" with her. Twice during the interview he mentioned that the victim "came onto him," and he admitted to sending her mail while he was incarcerated, but said that he did not know why he did this. He denied other victims or sexual interest in young girls, but the victim's mother said that this was not his first victim. He denied any history of substance abuse, personal history of abuse, or psychiatric treatment. He refused to go to sex offender treatment, said he was "forced to" plead guilty to the offense, and that he would "rather flatten his sentence than go to [treatment]."

This repeat offender's background fostered an apathetic attitude towards offending. His view of marriage was that it might be acceptable for others, but his own experiences with it were negative (*Marriage is ok for some people; the worst thing I ever did was get married a second time*). He was reluctant to speak about spiritual matters or comment on his own work ethic. When identifying his competencies, he did not mention social accomplishments, only personal abilities (*The best thing I ever did was quit smoking*). The law was seen as wrong, and viewed as more harmful than helpful (*The law is not always fair*). He demonstrated minimal attachment when discussing his family of origin (*My family has been separated for over 20 years*). Recreational activities were done alone (*For fun I sometimes do artwork on envelopes*).

The capabilities of the repeat offender were self-focused and aimed at pleasing himself. He expressed concern about what was right and fair only in regard to his own benefit (*It's not fair that some people get by with everything*). In describing himself, he listed capabilities that were so extreme that they became his flaws (*The worst thing about me is that I'm too kind and too thoughtful*) - otherwise his flaws were minimal (*I get in trouble because I don't say the right thing at the right time*). Recollections of past experiences that provoked feelings were used to blame others for his actions (*I regret meeting some of the people I did*). His sexual comments were vague, in an attempt to appear minimally deviant (*Sexually I get excited by having sex with the right person*). The offender's intent to avoid disclosing information was apparent in his comment on his ability to share (*I have never told anyone my worst fears*). He had a condescending attitude towards others (*Most men who are locked up deserve it; I think it is normal for people to judge others*).

The repeat offender's goals were difficult to attain as long as he was incarcerated. However, upon release into society, he was prepared to focus on his pro-offense goals (*I was sad when I got caught*). He had minimal insight into the severity of his offense and expressed no remorse concerning the victim (*My sex offense was uncalled for*). He expressed no need to be understood by society, or to understand anything for himself (*I don't understand all things in life*). Any changes the offender would make in this world were focused on himself, in relation to his incarceration (*I can't seem to stop thinking about being free again*). He did not care whether others thought negatively of him, but easily identified with what good they might think of him (*Most people don't like me; most women like me*).

The people-pleaser. This offender had inadequate resources to meet his pro-social goals. He used his capabilities to talk the talk, but not walk the walk. He admitted to his offense, but rationalized his behavior. He would have liked society's trust, but he was evasive and manipulative. He wanted positive social and family relationships but his self-perception was grandiose. He appeared to actively participate in treatment but had no true insight.

This offender was a 40-year-old white male convicted of first-degree sexual assault and assigned to a moderate risk assessment level (Level 2). He had a high school diploma, was currently employed, and had been divorced once, as a result of his offense. He was convicted of molesting his 13-year-old stepdaughter on three separate occasions. After the offense, he "hugged and thanked" his victim. He blamed his offense on the lack of intimacy between him and his wife. He denied other victims or sexual interest in young girls, but admitted to being sexually attracted to the victim once he started the offending behavior. He denied any history of substance abuse. He reported a suicide attempt following his sex offense conviction. His family reported that he had a problem with aggression and he reported that he had attended family therapy treatment with his son to "seek a connection with him." He expressed no remorse for his victim, was evasive and manipulative while discussing the offense, and refused sex offender treatment.

The people-pleaser's resources were insufficient to support his attempts to appear pro-social. He had the means to achieve pro-social goals, but cooperating with society was not his main focus. His marriage might have originally been a strong point in his life, but was now viewed as a weakness (*I hate what my ex-wife has done to me and my son*). There was minimal discussion of spiritual matters. Competencies at work were important (*I am the kind of person that works hard*) and he was able to demonstrate some insight into his downfall (*I don't understand everything*) as well as his capabilities (*The best thing I ever did was become a father*). His view of the law focused on how it had affected his own life (*It's not fair that women are given custody most of the time*). His family of origin might have been supportive (*My family supports me*), but the offender was slow to identify their shortcomings (*My father is good - though the offender had been physically abused by his father as a child*). Also, his pro-social insufficiency was shown in his enjoyment in isolative recreational activities (*For fun, I sometimes drive my old Mustang*).

The people-pleaser attempted to convey an intent to comply with social norms, but his capabilities were insufficient to meet his pro-social goals. His values were aimed at what "shouldn't" be in life, instead of what "should" be (*I have never told anyone to lie for me; no one should have to live in fear*). His perception of himself was that he was amiable, but he still got into trouble (*I can remember when things were better; I get in trouble because I try too hard*). When recalling emotional situations, he was able to admit to the unhappiness that was a result of his offense, perhaps in relation to his victim as well as himself (*Deep down, most everyone regrets an earlier decision they made in life; I just can't help feeling depressed about the situation I am in*). He attempted to cover his pro-social insufficiencies by providing socially acceptable comments about sex (*When it comes to sex, I am normal; sexually I get excited by being with a woman I love*). He commented very little on his ability to share his thoughts and feelings with others. He appeared to be insightful about the general population and norms of society and saw that both good and evil exist, perhaps even contradicting one another - which was symbolic of how he viewed himself (*Everyone lies about money; most women are loving and honest*).

The goal of the people-pleaser was to protect society from his offense, but this was difficult for him to attain, since his real aim was to protect himself from his offense-related thoughts and behaviors. He felt definite remorse for his offense and regret for the consequences it caused (*My sex charge has been used to keep me away from my son; the worst thing I ever did was the reason I am here today*). However, he was quick to rationalize the situation and explain his side of the story (*I wish people felt differently about being personally responsible for their reaction; if only others understood the lies I have had to endure*). His desired changes were directly related to the results of his offense (*I secretly wish to get custody of my son.*) Through it all, he made little reference to the importance of society's view of him, but demonstrated an intent to appease society.

The pretender. This offender had inadequate resources to meet his pro-offense goals. He used his

capabilities to continue his offense-related patterns but his conscience troubled him. He admitted to his offense, but focused only on how it had affected his own life. He felt that he had been treated unfairly and just wanted others to like him. He had incongruent values and a history of failed relationships, but a good family background and positive competencies. He denied the need for treatment.

The offender was a 42-year-old African-American male convicted of rape and assigned to a high-risk assessment level (Level 3). He had a tenth grade education, was employed at the time of the assessment, and was divorced because of his history of substance abuse. He reported that he began "dry humping" his 5-year-old daughter on top of her clothes, causing her vagina to bleed, which he claimed was from the "friction." The offender said that at the time he thought, "it was something she wanted." He admitted to trying to also molest the victim's older sister, and to molesting his previous wife's daughter, though he was very evasive about his sexual interest in young girls. The offender reported a history of substance abuse, including alcohol, prescription pain medications and cocaine, for which he had received treatment; he admitted to use during the time of his offenses. He had received psychiatric treatment for bipolar disorder and two suicide attempts. He reported that his aunt had sexually molested and had intercourse with him when he was 6 years old. He had received disciplinary action for his sexual behaviors while incarcerated, had a history of buying the services of prostitutes, and demonstrated no empathy for his victims or motivation for sex offender treatment.

Like the repeat offender, the pretender's resources supported a pro-offense thinking pattern. However, this offender did demonstrate some concern about how others would think of him because of his offense. His experiences with marriage had not always been positive, but he still understood that they could be (*Marriage is not always a pleasant commitment*). There was not much mention of spiritual needs or goals. His work was relatively unimportant, but he did identify some accomplishments of which he was proud (*I was proud of myself when I was able to provide for my family*). He viewed the law as necessary (*The law is a good thing*), but there were a few changes he would make (*It should not be illegal to smoke marijuana*). He was ambivalent about the resources acquired from his family life: he appeared to have had social support (*My family loves me*), but he had experienced some emotional turmoil (*The saddest time for me was my mom and dad divorcing*). He enjoyed recreational activities that required interaction with others, but not in large groups (*For fun I sometimes play chess or dominos*).

The pretender's abilities appeared to make him capable of continuing his offense-related patterns, but his conscience seemed to haunt him at times. His values focused minimally on what was fair for himself (*It's not fair that I was denied due process*). His view of himself was that he was an overall good person, but he was able to see that he had played a role in his mistakes (*I get in trouble because my mind slips sometimes*). His mistakes troubled him (*The worst thing I ever did was become addicted to cocaine*) and were a source of concern (*I worry about getting into trouble*). Of all the offenders, he saw the least need to sugarcoat his opinion of sex (*When it comes to sex, I lose interest sometimes; I don't think it's weird to masturbate*). He had difficulty sharing any information about his life (*I have never told anyone how much I loved my mom and dad*) and he perceived that others also had issues with being honest (*Most people don't tell the truth about their life*).

The pretender's ability to meet his goals was limited by his perception of his offense and by his desire to appear harmless to others. He focused on the impact of his offense on his own life (*My sex charge has disturbed my future*) and thought he had been treated unfairly (*I don't understand why I was sentenced so severely*). He sought understanding from others (*If only others understood my situation*). This offender wished to change the circumstances of his own life (*I secretly wish I had a*

companion), but did not focus on changes needed in the world. He wanted other people to like him (*I wish people felt differently about me sometimes; most people enjoy listening to me*).

Discussion

The offenders' pro-social or pro-offense goals were demonstrated in their attitudes toward their offenses. Their capabilities of meeting their goals, however, were based on the availability of resources. For example, while the "good guy" and the "people-pleaser" both wanted to please society, only the "good guy" had adequate resources to do so. While the "repeat offender" and the "pretender" both conveyed the intent to re-offend without detection, the "pretender" did not have the ability to do so, because he was too concerned about society's views of him to re-offend and not get caught. Thus, in conclusion, it may be hypothesized that the good guy will not re-offend, and the repeat offender will re-offend but not get caught, because he has adequate resources to do so; in contrary, the people pleaser and pretender will reoffend and get caught because they have inadequate resources to meet pro-social or pro-offense goals.

Implications for Practice

The men in this study seemed to know whether they intended to continue offending or whether they would try to protect society from their behavior. However, like other sex offenders they did not directly reveal their intentions to meet either pro-social or pro-offense goals. Nevertheless, if we can identify the offenders' resources and capabilities, demonstrated by their attitudes toward personal experiences, intimate relationships, and social relationships, their goals will be more apparent. Treatment providers initially should focus on identifying offenders' goals, and then assess the offenders' ability to meet their goals. In particular, an offender's ability to disclose details of the offense and his insight in regards to the effects of the offense contributes to his capability to meet his goal. Revealing his past ability to develop and maintain intimate and social relationships also demonstrates the resources he has available to support himself as he attempts to meet his goal.

After identifying the offenders' capabilities and resources, a treatment provider will have a good sense of whether the offender is sufficiently or insufficiently able to meet his pro-social or pro-offense goals. Treatment plans can then be individualized to increase the offenders' capabilities and resources to meet pro-social goals and minimize abilities to meet pro-offense goals. With a focus on their capabilities and resources, offenders who continue to demonstrate the sufficiency to meet pro-offense goals can be more carefully monitored and further legal and community notification can occur.

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