

# RELIGIOUS TRAUMA: THE PERSISTENCE OF PURITY CULTURE

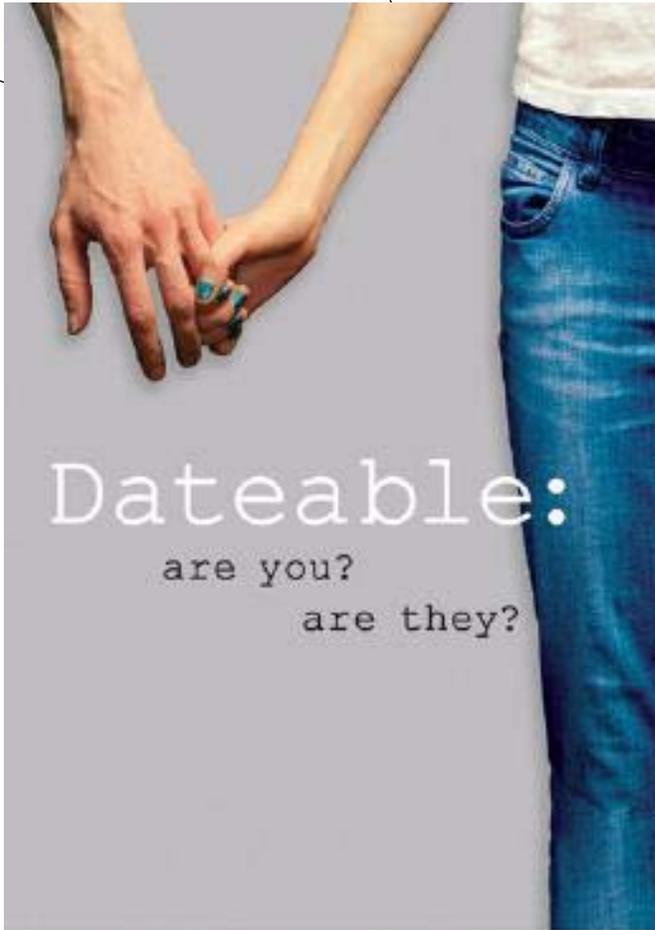
Caroline Winzenried



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# PURITY CULTURE TENETS

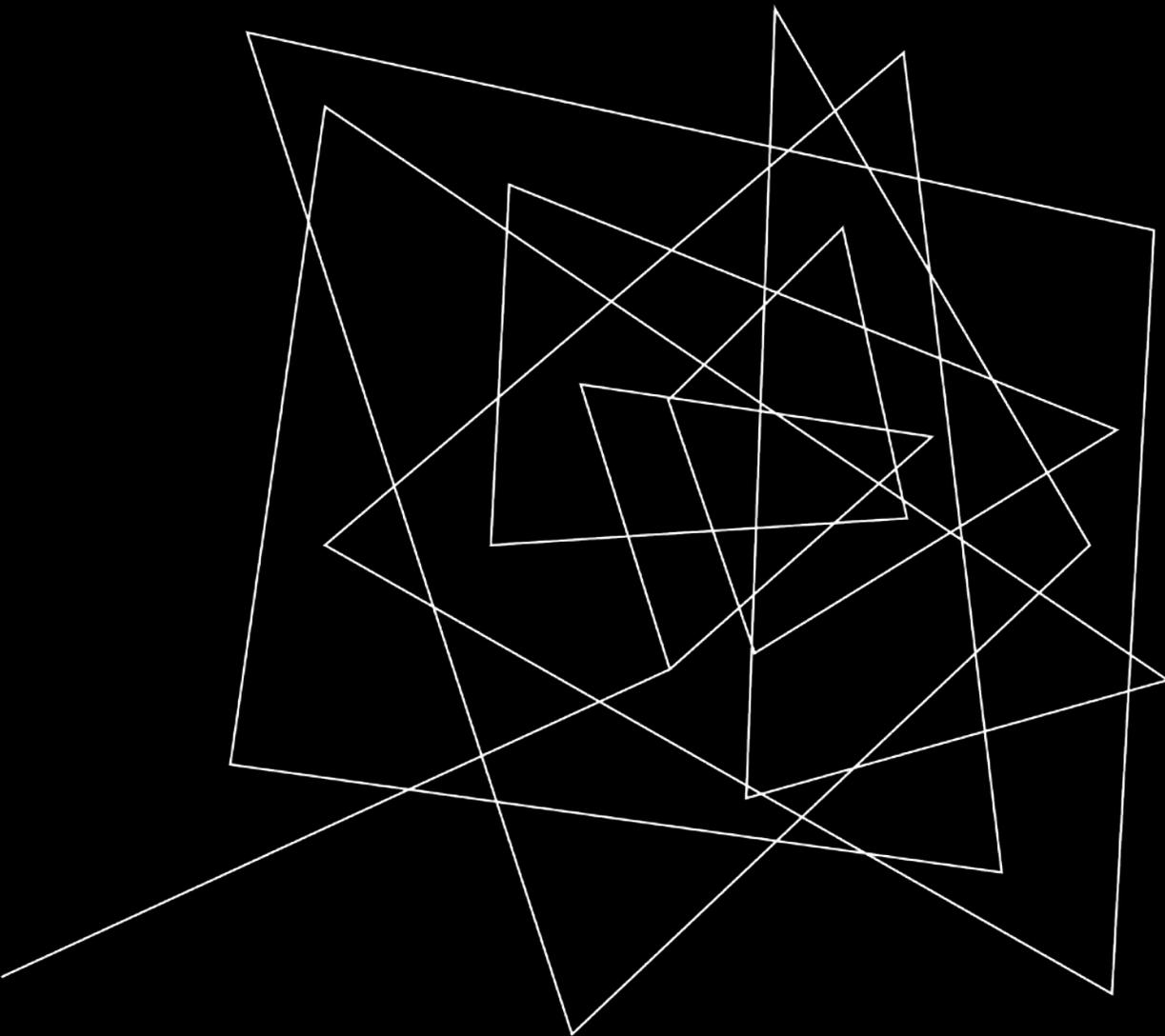
- Sexual contact before marriage is a sin
- Your body belongs to your future spouse
- Men cannot control their sexual urges
- Women bear responsibility for managing men's sexual urges



Justin Lookadoo and Hayley DiMarco

## SENSE OF WORTH: “YOUR BODY IS NOT YOURS”

“Would you buy a beat-up, old, used car at a new car price? Every new sexual experience when you are not married puts another ding, another scratch, another scar on who you are. You keep running your car into other people, and then you wonder why no one treats you special.” (Lookadoo & DiMarco, 2003)



## SENSE OF WORTH: “DIRTY”

In Purity Culture, you're either a virgin, or you're not—you're pure or impure.



# SHAME



# SEXUAL DIFFICULTIES





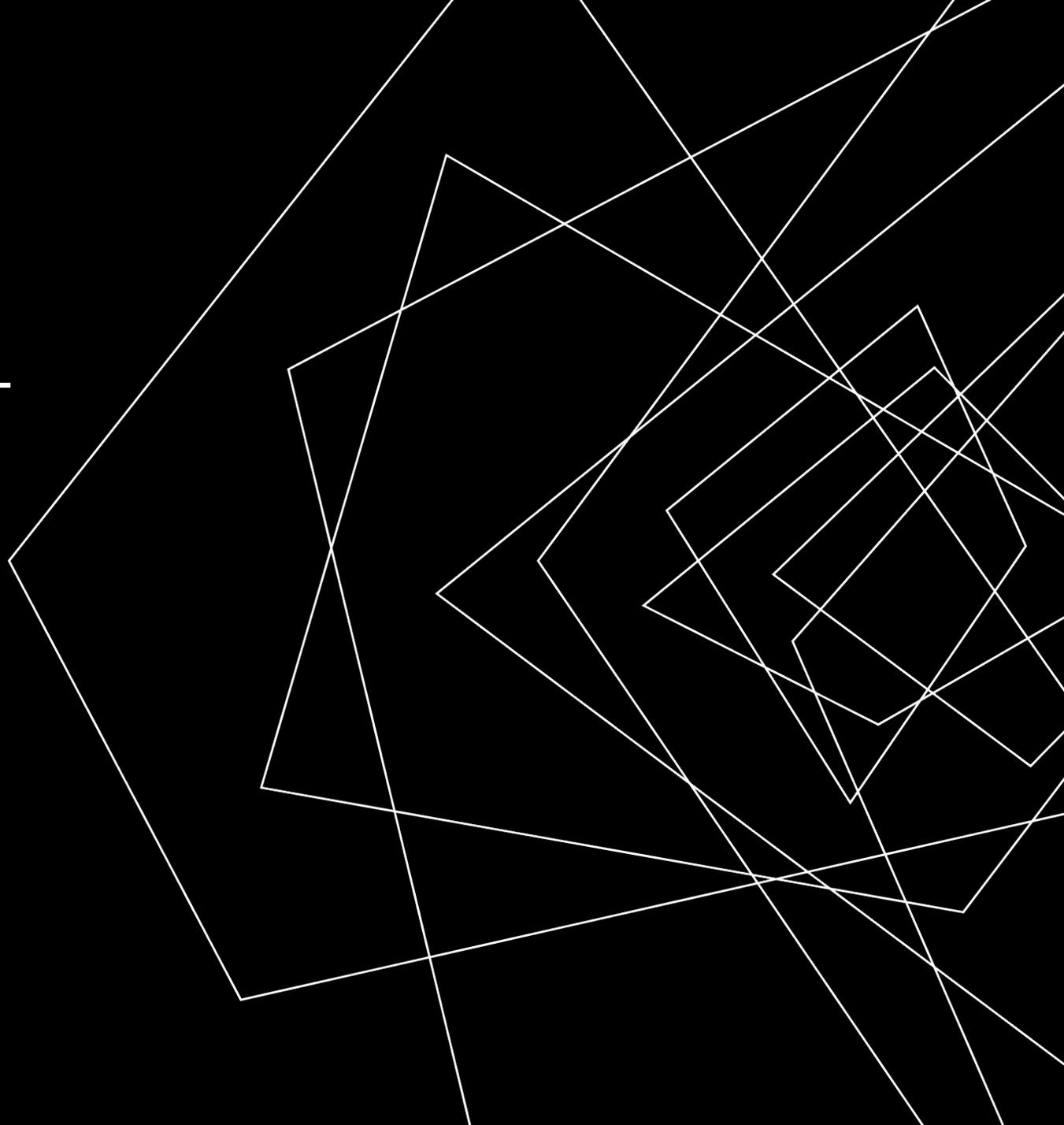
# SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

“I thought that I was the only one [who was masturbating]. I was a bad kid. None of the other kids were bad.” Mark stated that later on he told his older brother about his masturbation habits, and that his brother told him “that it was natural and it was really okay... that was the first time I really heard that I wasn’t the only one and that masturbation was natural.”



# SEXUAL ABUSE & ASSAULT

Kids and teenagers are taught that there are only two types of sex: bad, sinful sex outside of marriage, and sacred, pure sex in the context of marriage. This leaves them without the tools they need to identify sexual abuse and assault.





## CULTURE OF FEAR

“Even now, at 30, I still struggle to be fully present to sexuality because I’m afraid that I will be seen as dirty and undesirable. I know that is a lie but the voices from our past are hard to release.”

## HOW TO HEAL

- Support groups
- Share your story
- Listen to others' stories
- Counselling





# IMMEDIATE SUPPORT

1800RESPECT  
T

1800RESPE  
CT

LIFELINE

13 11 14

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1800 184 527

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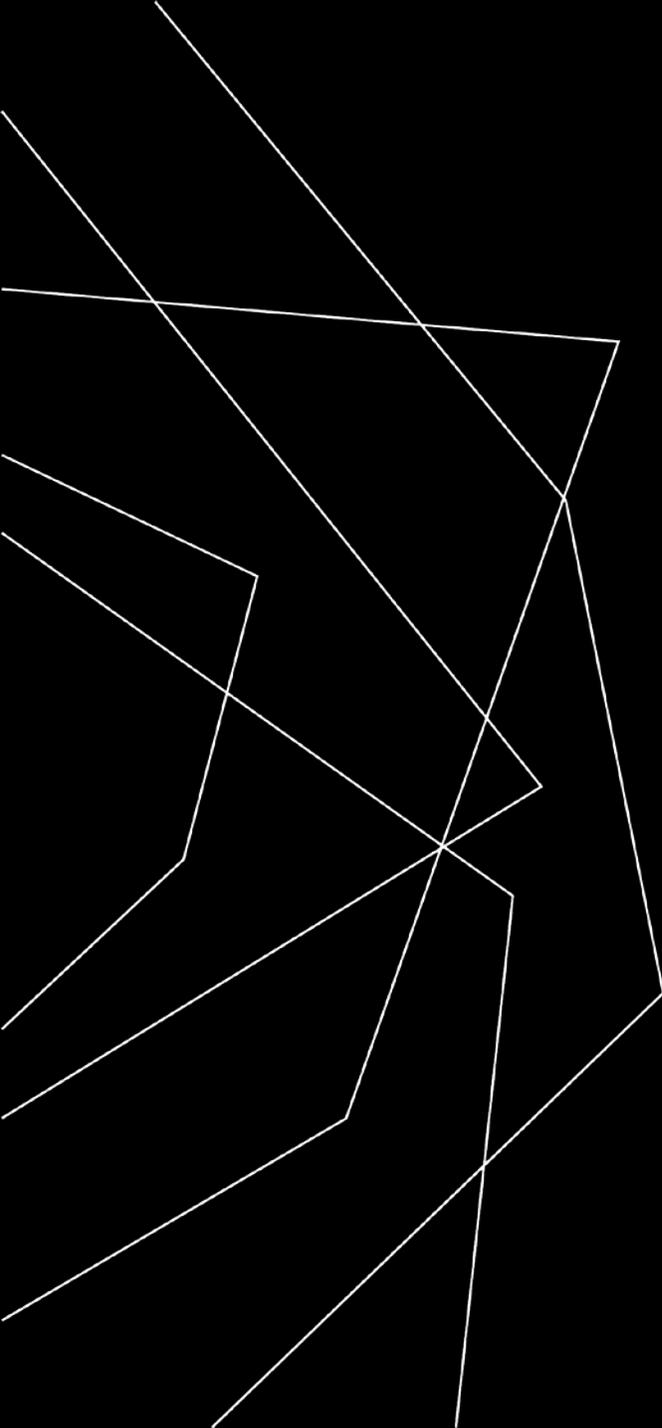
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# THANK YOU

Caroline Winzenried

contact@consideredcounselling.net

[www.consideredcounselling.net](http://www.consideredcounselling.net)

0435 855 382