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**DRAFT**

**RE: Rodney Michael**  
**Birthdate: March 15, 1964**

## **EVALUATION CONTEXT**

Kelly Clark, Attorney, retained me to provide a clinical evaluation of Rodney Michael, who was allegedly sexually violated by two Boy Scout troop leaders. I was asked to evaluate his general psychological functioning and to comment, to the extent possible, on the sequelae of the sexual abuse and its likely impact on his functioning. I did not review any documents prior to the evaluation nor have I reviewed any documents at the writing of this report.

## **EXPERTISE**

My Curriculum Vita is attached to this evaluation. I have worked clinically with adult survivors of sexual abuse since 1984. From 2001 – 2005, I was Executive Director of the Trauma Treatment Center of Manhattan Institute for Psychoanalysis in New York City. I have taught doctoral and post-doctoral courses in the theory and treatment of early sexual trauma. My co-authored 1994 book, *Treating the Adult Survivor of Childhood Sexual Abuse: A Psychoanalytic Perspective*, is considered a classic in the field; I have published and lectured widely in this area. In 2002, I was the only psychologist chosen by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to speak to them at their June Meeting in Dallas on the long-term impact of sexual abuse by priests. Based on that speech, I also spoke in August 2002 to the Annual Assembly of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and later consulted with the Northeast Region of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the New York Province of the Society of Jesus, and the Middle Atlantic Province of Capuchin Friars. In October 2009, I was the keynote speaker at the

Annual Meeting of the Southeast Region of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, lecturing them on both the impact of sexual abuse and, specifically, on the impact of clergy abuse. My co-edited book, *Predatory Priests, Silenced Victims: The Sexual Abuse Crisis and the Catholic Church* is being sold here and in Italy. My book, *Perversion of Power: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church* was published in 2007. I have served as an expert witness in the following instances:

2011: Expert witness, IN RE: John Doe vs. Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte, NC 11-CVS-13854

Expert witness. Clinically evaluated Jane Doe, sexually violated by a teacher, prior to the filing of a lawsuit against a school board.

Expert witness. Clinically evaluated Jane Doe, sexually violated as an adult by a Catholic priest. Made two statements at a mediation session; one regarding the clinical evaluation of Jane Doe; the other regarding the responsibility for abuse held by the archdiocese in question.

2007-2010: Expert witness, John Doe v. Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte, NC; Capuchin Franciscan Friars Province of the Sacred Stigmata of St. Francis, and Robert Yurgel, a/k/a Fr. Robert Yurgel, O.F.M., Cap. In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division. Case No. 08-CVS-23161.

2007: Expert witness, Jane C.R. Doe v. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Orange, et al., Orange County Superior Court Case No. 05CC00148.

Expert Witness, John A.A. Doe v. Doe 1, et al., Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. BC307949/JCCP No. 4286.

Work cited in the Appellee's merit brief in the Ohio Supreme Court Case of Doe v. Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 109 Ohio St.3d 491, 849 NE Reported 268 (2006), 2005 WL 2979583 (October 5, 2005). "WL" is Westlaw legal research database. These works were not cited in the Court's opinion.

Works cited numerous times throughout the confidential settlement process in Doe v. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington, Case No. 03-CI-181, Boone Circuit Court, Kentucky. Because the

process is confidential, no public record is available.

## EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Rodney Michael was interviewed and evaluated in four segments over three days. On February 17, 2012, he was interviewed from approximately 12:00PM – 2:00PM. After a lunch break, interviewing resumed from approximately 3:15pm – 5:30pm. He was asked to take with him and complete the Beck Depression Inventory, the Beck Anxiety Inventory, an alcohol use screening inventory, a drug use screening inventory, and the Multiscale Dissociation Inventory (MDI). He returned the completed materials on Saturday morning, February 18, 2012. From approximately 10:00am – 1:30pm, psychological testing was conducted with administration of the Thematic Apperception Test, the Rorschach (Exner scoring), and the House-Tree-Person drawing test.

When the examiner began to write the report on Sunday, March 11, 2012, she realized that her interview notes had been destroyed during home office renovations. All testing data were intact. The interview was therefore repeated at Mr. Michael's office in Cheraw, South Carolina on Tuesday, March 13, 2012 from approximately 10:30am to 1:30 PM.

## PSYCHOMETRIC INSTRUMENTS USED IN THE EVALUATION

***Beck Depression Inventory:*** The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a 21-item test presented in multiple-choice format and measures the presence and degree of depression in adolescents and adults. Each of the inventory items corresponds to a specific category of depressive symptom and/or attitude. Each category purports to describe a specific behavioral manifestation of depression and consists of a graded series of four self-evaluative statements. The statements are rank ordered and weighted to reflect the range of severity of the symptom from neutral to maximum severity. Numerical Values of zero, one, two, or three are assigned to each statement to indicate degree of severity. Studies have supported both high reliability and validity of the BDI.

***Beck Anxiety Inventory:*** Subjects respond to 21 items rated on a scale from 0 to 3. Each item is descriptive of subjective, somatic, or panic-related symptoms of anxiety. Each category purports to describe a specific behavioral manifestation of anxiety and consists of a graded series of four self-evaluative statements. The statements are rank ordered and weighted to reflect the range of

severity of the symptom from neutral to maximum severity. Numerical Values of zero, one, two, or three are assigned to each statement to indicate degree of severity. Studies have supported both high reliability and validity of the BAI.

***Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT):*** the World Health Organization (WHO), as a simple method of screening for excessive drinking, developed The AUDIT. It can help in identifying excessive drinking as the cause of the presenting illness. It also provides a framework for intervention to help hazardous and harmful drinkers reduce or cease alcohol consumption and thereby avoid the harmful consequences of their drinking. It has been found to be an accurate measure of risk across gender, age, and culture; it is both reliable and valid.

***Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST):*** The DAST is a 28-item self-report inventory, developed in 1982 that has held up as a reliable and valid brief screening for drug abuse.

***Multiscale Dissociation Inventory (MDI):*** The MDI is a 30-item self-report test of dissociative symptomatology. It is fully standardized and normed, and measures six different types of dissociative responses: disengagement, depersonalization, derealization, emotional constriction/numbing, memory disturbance, identity dissociation. It also provides a total dissociation score. Studies have found the MDI to be highly reliable and valid.

***Thematic Apperception Test:*** The TAT is often administered to individuals as part of a battery, or group, of tests intended to evaluate personality. It is considered to be effective in eliciting information about a person's view of the world and his or her attitudes toward the self and others. As people taking the TAT proceed through the various story cards and tell stories about the pictures, they reveal their expectations of relationships with peers, parents or other authority figures, subordinates, and possible romantic partners. I taught administration and interpretation of the TAT at the doctoral level for ten years and have administered or supervised close to 1,000 TATs.

***The Rorschach Test:*** This is Herman Rorschach's "Inkblot" test, designed to provide the subject with highly ambiguous stimuli to which s/he tells the examiner what s/he "sees." I scored and interpreted the test according to the system developed by John Exner and now considered the industry standard for Rorschach administration, scoring, and interpretation. The American Society of Personality Assessment affirms that the Rorschach possesses reliability and validity similar to that of other generally accepted personality assessment instruments and its responsible use in personality assessment is appropriate and justified. I taught the administration, scoring, and interpretation of the Rorschach, using the Exner Scoring System, at the doctoral level for ten years and have given or supervised over 1,000 Rorschach protocols.

***House-Tree-Person Drawing Test:*** This is a projective drawing test in which the examinee is asked to draw a house, a tree, a person, and a person of the opposite gender. S/he is then asked to describe the drawings, e.g. the age of the person, what s/he is like, etc. This test's reliability and validity is not as well established as for those others used. It was included to provide only secondary, confirmatory data, not primary interpretative data. I taught administration and interpretation of the HTP test at the doctoral level for ten years and have given or supervised over 1,000 HTP protocols.

## **MR. MICHAEL'S PRESENTATION AND EVALUATION BEHAVIOR**

**February 17 and 18, 2012:** Mr. Michael presented to both February sessions neatly, casually, and appropriately dressed. He is a substantially overweight 48-year-old, balding man with brown remaining hair and glasses. His wife, Tonya, accompanied him and remained in the waiting room or left the building and returned after I met with Rodney.

Rodney was clearly anxious about the interview and testing. It was difficult for him to retell the story of his life, particularly the abuse, and he often became emotional, tearing up at more painful elements of the narrative. He was also uncomfortable talking about sexual matters with a woman. Growing up and continuing to live in a small, South Carolina town, Mr. Michael is conscious of the rules of polite behavior in this culture so it was anxiety-provoking for him to speak with me about private and sexual events in his life. Often, he called me "ma'am," a typically respectful way for a man to address a woman in the South. At the same time, it was clear that he wanted to cooperate fully with the demands of the interview and testing. Despite his discomfort, he appeared to push himself to be forthcoming and complete in his responses to questions and to test stimuli. Rodney has a good sense of humor, which he sometimes used self-deprecatingly to ease his tension. It was painful to witness his distress as he described the alleged abuse and his perception of the impact those events had on him and, at the same time, he evoked admiration for his courage and willingness to engage in a difficult and stressful process.

During the Saturday morning testing session, Michael's discomfort increased markedly. The more unstructured the task, e.g. the Rorschach, the more this man was visibly distressed. He repeatedly apologized for the images he perceived, many of which were sexual, and said how difficult it was for him to relate his responses to a woman. Frequent reassurances of the professional nature of the task and of my familiarity with a wide variety of test responses and life experiences were mildly helpful, but he remained upset both by what the test stimuli evoked and by the need to share that material with a female. At the same time, he remained determined to be as open and complete as the tasks required.

**March 13, 2012:** Perhaps because he was in his own environment, Mr. Michael appeared somewhat more relaxed during the second interview. He spoke a little more freely and completely, especially about issues not directly related to the abuse. When the interview turned to the sexual abuse, however, he clearly became more stressed, tearing up at various points. He also became tearful when discussing how much he wants to be more present for his wife, children, and grandchild than he has been in the past. It was poignant to observe his love for his family and his regret that his emotional and psychological states have prevented him from being fully the husband and father he wants to be.

## **CLINICAL INTERVIEW**

### ***Family of Origin***

***Siblings:*** Rodney is the eldest of three children, the youngest of whom died almost at birth.

Kenny is Rodney's younger brother by about 14 months. They have always been close, played sports together as children and adolescents, and were in scouts together. Both were "real boys" who played hard outside and were harmlessly but persistently mischievous. Today, Kenny lives in Chesterfield, SC about 12 miles from Cheraw. He is married for the second time with four children, the oldest of whom is from his first marriage. Rodney describes his brother as a "Marlboro Man" type of person, with a good head on his shoulders.

Kenny Michael also was sexually by both Mr. Hebbard and Mr. Hodge while in Boy Scouts and Rodney believes his brother was abused more severely even than he was. Kenny has acknowledged the abuse to Rodney, but tends not to talk in detail about his experiences.

Kenny worked as an investigator in the local solicitor's office for many years and thus was in regular contact with one of the alleged abusers, Jay Hodge, solicitor for a number of those years. Kenny has told Rodney that he did not come forward about his abuse because he was always afraid of Mr. Hodge. Several months ago, Kenny lost his job in the solicitor's office and believes that Mr. Hodge is responsible for that. A friend of Rodney Michael's reported to Rodney that the friend indeed overheard Mr. Hodge talking to a companion in a diner, saying that Kenny Michael would be fired "at election time," which is when the termination took place. Today, Kenny Michael is unemployed and keeps busy working on pieces of property that he owns.

Perrin Michael, Rodney's sister, was the youngest Michael child, but died

after 23 hours of life.

***Parents:***

*Mother:* Mrs. Michael is described as “the sweetest lady I know.” Rodney reports that she “knows what to say” and is able to “read “ him well. She comes from a large South Carolina family and has had an “uneventful life,” according to her son. Mrs. Michael is a “good Christian lady” who attends Baptist church services twice on Sundays and once on Wednesdays and who brought her children up as involved churchgoers. At 68, she still works in the family insurance agency and is well liked in town.

Rodney feels that his mom was able to attend to her children both as a family manager and as an emotionally attuned parent. It was Mrs. Michael who thought something was wrong with both boys at the time of the abuse by Mr. Hebbard and it was her persistent questioning that resulted in their disclosure (described more fully below).

Today, Mrs. Michael is supportive of Rodney’s legal efforts regarding the abuse and wants very much for him to heal.

*Father:* Mr. Michael was the “disciplinarian” of the family and was not as talkative as his wife. He spent lots of time with his sons, however, coaching them in sports, taking them fishing, and vacationing with them. This man worked in insurance and real estate and still does at 68, saying that he does not want to retire. Rodney feels that his father instilled a “good work ethic” in his sons and Rodney had enormous respect for him. Like his wife, Mr. Michael attends a Baptist church three times a week. He is not as talkative with Rodney about the abuse, but also wants him to heal.

Rodney reports that both parents worked hard to provide a good childhood for their boys. When the Michael sons attended private school from grades 7-12, their parents commuted thirty miles each way to facilitate a good education for their children. Rodney feels that, “I couldn’t have had a better atmosphere to grow up in.”

***Education:*** Rodney attended public school in Cheraw until 7<sup>th</sup> grade when his parents enrolled him and his brother in a Baptist school in Hartsville, SC 30 miles from Cheraw. Although it was initially hard to leave his friends, he says that he and Kenny quickly adapted to their new surroundings, becoming very involved in sports. Rodney played soccer and says he excelled in that sport. To make participation in school and sports easier for their boys, the Michaels moved to Hartsville at some point. The parents commuted to Cheraw for work and everyone went home to Cheraw on the weekends. Rodney reports that he was a

mediocre student, just doing enough to get by and that his first priority was sports.

After graduating from high school, Rodney work with his father for two years and then, after marrying his wife Tonya, enrolled in McKenzie College in Chattanooga, TN where she was also in college. He worked at night yet was on Dean's List with a major in Forensic Accounting. Despite his academic success, he stopped college with only one semester left, returning to Cheraw when his wife graduated from her college. This is an oft-repeated pattern in Rodney's life – working hard and nearly attaining a major success, then letting it pass by him.

**Career:** Returning to Cheraw after leaving Chattanooga, Rodney went into business with his father. They worked hard and eventually had their own insurance agency, real estate company and consumer finance company; Rodney also owned over 100 rental properties. Rodney worked long hours, exhausting himself in building up and running these businesses. His wife would remark that he “seemed to be running from something” and he now realizes that his obsessive involvement with work was a way to defend against remembering and processing the sexual violations.

Rodney's career is poignantly replete with repetitive patterns of nearing “big” success then losing it. For example, he built the insurance agency up to be the second largest writer of a particular kind of car insurance in the state. Then, he “crashed” with “physical exhaustion and mental fatigue” and stopped attending to the business. Eventually, accounts dribbled away and the agency did not achieve the level of activity it was primed to do. Similarly, the insurance agency once was the top insurer of independent car dealers in South Carolina. After two years in that slot, Rodney also stopped nurturing that business and it dropped off. Again, Rodney worked hard to build up the finance company, designing his own computer program to help manage it, but it too went under in 2008 from lack of attention. In real estate, Rodney had built a large commercial real estate business but let it collapse. Finally, he also lost all of his rental properties after he had a yearlong emotional collapse several years ago. Rodney is now bankrupt, with his bankruptcy hearing held in mid-March 2012.

Today, Rodney is performing technology work for United Country Real Estate agents and has designed a unique computer program the company wants him to expand and promote. He believes it could be very successful, but is terrified of repeating the “build-up and crash pattern (my words)” that has haunted his career. At present, he is building websites for people and holding back on what could be a successful venture with his real estate program. Although his family wants him to run with the business and to be successful, he does not know if he is healed enough to carry something through to completion and is determined not to put his family through another cycle of ups and downs.



***Friendships with Men:*** Except for his brother, Rodney never has had a close male friend. In high school, he tended to make friends then let them go at some point. As an adult, he felt friendships would interfere with his work. Today, he spends most of his time with his wife, children, and grandchild. He does today have one friend, a local doctor, who is his medical doctor, confidante about his psychological states, and who he considers a friend. This man has been accessible to Rodney through his periods of severe depression.

***Relationships with Women:*** Rodney dated some in high school, but did not have a long-term relationship until he met his wife, Tonya, at a wedding. They married two years later. He was attracted to Tonya for her “sweet demeanor,” which reminded him of his grandmother, a beloved figure in his life. According to Rodney, Tonya also is a “decent, well-grounded, and attractive” woman who has stood by him through all his turbulent times. Tonya is a successful real estate agent. Although Rodney says they have a stable companionship at this time, they have not engaged sexually for over a year. He has no sexual desire at this time and is fearful of destabilizing a comfortable relationship by trying to reintroduce sex into the marriage. Sex makes him “feel dirty” and he also wants to avoid the abuse memories that can flood him during sex.

***Children:*** Rodney and Tonya have four children:

*Zachery:* is 22 and about to graduate from Pensacola Christian College in Florida with a major in history and political science. He will be married in June and hopes to go to law school in Florida, eventually entering politics. Rodney describes Zachery as a driven kid who goes to school full-time, works on political campaigns, and is deeply involved in faith-based charity work, having traveled to Africa four times to do mission work. Rodney is very close to Zachery and reports that he can talk to him about personal matters. In turn, Zachery feels that knowing about the abuse has helped him make sense of his father’s life and he wants his father to heal.

*Courtlyn:* is 21 and is described as very intelligent young woman who did well in school and very well in gymnastics. Intending to go to the University of Georgia, Courtlyn became pregnant and instead is now obtaining an on-line degree and wants to go into sports marketing. Rodney feels that he mishandled Courtlyn’s pregnancy. He felt responsible for allowing her baby’s father into her life and distanced from her and from her son, Brayden, when he was born. Today, he and Courtlyn are close and Rodney describes his grandson, saying, “He’s my heart.” Rodney feels that it was a growing relationship with Brayden, now 4 years old, which drew Rodney out of the depression he suffered several years ago. Brayden and Courtlyn live with Rodney and Tonya and Rodney reported with pride that they are taking care of their daughter and grandson. Brayden is clearly the apple of Rodney’s eye and he loves spending time with

boy.

*Addison:* is 18 and will graduate from high school this year to attend Horry-Georgetown Tech in the fall to study forestry. Rodney says Addison has “always been my little buddy;” they enjoy fishing and hunting together. Addison is passionate about forestry and wants to own a timber management business one day.

*Liz:* 16, is in high school and is, according to Rodney, a “great kid.” She wants to attend Pensacola Christian College like her big brother Zachery has.

All four children have attended private school.

Rodney acknowledged that it is his family that motivates him to go on in life and to heal from the sequelae of his abuse. He feels he owes it to them to be their “lighthouse” and perceives that he has let them down because of his problems. Rodney says his family is “absolutely fantastic” and that he “couldn’t ask for a better opportunity to be a daddy than what they provided me.”

***Spiritual Life:*** Rodney described himself as “churched all (his) life.” Church was vital to both his parents and was also the center of their social lives. Until his major breakdown in 2008, Rodney was very involved in his church, attending three times a week and participating in many service activities. He did not go to church for about a year, then returned, but now only goes once a week on Sunday morning. He appears to be concerned about the kind of influence church could exert on him, although it was difficult for him to clearly articulate what he means by that. He expressed some fear of being “brainwashed” and reports that he wants more balance in his life than he had before. Citing a perceived hypocrisy between what is taught at church and how folks live, he stated that he wants to be “careful about who to trust and who to allow to influence” him. I sensed there is more to this story, especially since his family has expressed concern about his lessened church involvement, but he was not forthcoming when I tried to probe this a little further.

***Hobbies:*** Fishing is a passion for Rodney. He does a little hunting and enjoys anything related to technology, especially web strategies.

***Drugs and Alcohol:*** Rodney has never taken illegal drugs and does not drink at all.

***Self-Destructive Behaviors:*** This man has never cut or burned himself, but does pick at his scalp, sometimes causing sores to emerge. Formerly a very active and trim man, he is now sedentary and has gained over 75 pounds in the last few years. He knows he eats to literally “stuff” feelings that frighten him.

***Mental Health History:*** It sounds like Rodney has experienced a number of

periods of major depression he labels as his “crashes.” The most recent one, in 2008, was especially long lasting and debilitating. It appears to have been triggered by the impending failure of the consumer finance company. Money from the real estate business had been shoring up the finance company in anticipation of a big deal closing that Rodney expected to save the situation. When that deal fell through, Rodney was devastated that his pattern of building up a business then allowing it to fail was happening yet again. On a Wednesday night when his family was at church, Rodney apparently took a gun and drove out to his hunting club. He seems to have been in a dissociated state and does not remember taking the gun or driving to the club. As he was sitting in the car with gun in hand and crying, he looked up to see his brother knocking on the window, also crying. Rodney does not know why or how his brother showed up at that moment.

Rodney does not remember what happened next. His first memory after seeing Kenny in the window is waking up the next day at home. His dad, wife, and doctor friend told him he needed help and persuaded him to admit himself to Three Rivers Behavioral Hospital in Columbia, South Carolina where he remained for five days. During that time, he began to remember some of what had occurred and was “scared to death.” Returning home, Rodney says, “it all fell apart” and he spent the next year basically not functioning at all, lying in bed or on a couch and not talking to anyone except his wife, father, and doctor. During this time, he was still suicidal and feels he would have taken his life had he the means. When he looks back now, he feels he was in a daze for most of that year, not caring about anything, as his business failed and he was disengaged from his family.

It was when Brayden reached out to Rodney that he began to emerge from the depression. He says he felt that Brayden needed him in a way that others did not and he wanted to come through for his grandson.

Rodney takes 50mg of Zoloft daily, prescribed by his doctor and friend. He thinks he may need an increased dose or different medication but is afraid to destabilize himself by changing medications. He has never been in psychotherapy.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE NARRATIVE**

Rodney Michael allegedly was sexually abused by two Boy Scout leaders. Boy Scouts was an important activity for him and his brother and he was involved in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Eagle Scouts for many years. Scouting was a source of esteem, achievement, identity, and fellowship for him.

*Abuse One, Mr. Hebbard:* When Rodney was 11-12 years old, Mr. Hebbard, a single, devout Catholic who was also involved in a number of youth recreational leagues, was a Boy Scout leader for Rodney. Rodney has clear memories of Hebbard and of the two times the man abused him. (His mother says there were three times, but Rodney only remembers two). Both times, the abuse occurred at a camping trip to Huntington Beach State Park. The first time, Hebbard entered Rodney's tent, rubbed his leg, opened his underwear, and fondled his genitals. On the second occasion, Hebbard repeated the behavior, this time masturbating Rodney. Rodney remembers that he became aroused that time. Rodney is aware that Hebbard also abused his brother and at least two other boys.

Mrs. Michael suspected something was wrong with her sons and continued to question them until they acknowledged what Hebbard had done. She, in turn, told Mr. Michael and they both reported it to the pastor of the Presbyterian church where the scout troop met. That pastor removed Hebbard as leader of the troop, but the police were not called and there was no publicity about the abuse. Hebbard is dead now.

*Abuse Two, Jay Hodge:* Jay Hodge was the leader of the same troop when Rodney was 13 or 14 and quartermaster of the troop. The first time Hodge violated him, Rodney was alone in a room in the church working on supply issues. Hodge approached him from behind, rubbed his shoulders, then the inside of Rodney's thigh. At the time, Rodney was confused, not knowing if this was affection or if something that was wrong.

On a subsequent camping trip to Camp Bob Cooper in Santee, Rodney, as quartermaster, arose early to prepare supplies for the day and was alone in the storage area. Again Hodge approached him, touched Rodney's penis arousing him, and masturbated him. At this point, Rodney says he blanks out and cannot remember the rest of the incident.

Hodge regularly invited scout members over to his house to have them to work there. One day, they were asked to pump out his swimming pool. Rodney entered a basement apartment to get something. Hodge was there, again touched Rodney's penis and masturbated and, this time, also took Rodney's hand, placed it on his (Hodge's) penis, and forced Rodney to masturbate him. Rodney ran from the room and vomited outside. He went home and quit scouts, never attending another meeting, although he was close to an important achievement in Eagle Scouts. He now realizes that this began his pattern of building up something but not being able to complete it or reach a pinnacle of success.

Kenny remained in scouts and was also abused by Hodge, although he has not spoken about the details of it to Rodney.

Rodney always has remembered Hebbard's abuse, but was amnesic for Hodge's until 2010. He always was intimidated by Hodge, however, and was uneasy in his presence.

In 2010, Rodney was hired by the solicitor's office to institute a new network administration system that linked several counties. To do so, he had to access the computers of everyone in the network, including those of Hodge and Hodge's boyfriend, also an employee in the solicitor's office. On the latter's computer, Rodney found graphic pornographic images of older gay men. Rodney informed the new solicitor about these images and was told to look carefully at all computers. When he did, he found images of young boys swimming, horseback riding, at camp on Hodge's computer. There were also pornographic images of males who either were adults made to look adolescent, or adolescents made to look somewhat more mature. At that point, Rodney began to feel uneasy for reasons he did not understand then.

Sometime after that, both Kenny and Rodney were contacted by the FBI, which apparently already was investigating Hodge. When Rodney turned the material from Hodge's computer over to the FBI agents, he was exposed to it again and began to recall his abuse. His memories of Hodge's abuse are now as clear as those of Hebbard's.

Hodge is reportedly a very powerful political figure in South Carolina who is connected to many levels of politicians. Although Rodney has been contacted by the FBI, Chief of the Supreme Court, Assistant Attorney General, his State Senator, and the US Attorney's Office, no action has been taken against Hodge. Rodney feels quite sure that his brother's job loss is related to Rodney's seeking out legal counsel about his abuse.

When asked what he hopes to achieve through the legal system, Rodney responded that he wants justice for him and his brother and exposure of the abuse so that others who may have been hurt may be empowered to come forward.

## **CLINICAL & PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT**

### **COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING**

Mr. Michael appears to be of average to above average intelligence. He is articulate, has a good vocabulary, and an engaging sense of humor.

Test data indicate that Rodney's thinking is moderately to severely disrupted by the press of emotions against which he expends great energy to

keep at bay. In order to manage and limit the stress he experiences when emotions flood him, he tends to narrow his cognitive focus to limit the amount of stimulation or complexity he has to process at any given time. While this can successfully lower his stress levels by simplifying cognitive stimulation, it is an artificial simplification that can lead to impaired judgment or dysfunctional decision making. Think of looking at a landscape through binoculars that focus only on one part of what is there to be seen. While that one aspect of the field is clear and in sharp relief, the rest of the landscape is unavailable to be cognitively perceived and analyzed. It is simplified in a way that may leave the viewer with an insufficient appreciation of the entire field and thus can lead to judgments or decisions based on only a slice of potential information. This is a chronic situation for Rodney. To open his range of cognitive vision and processing, however, leaves him vulnerable to flooding with emotions that frighten and confuse him. If and when he contacts strong emotion, his reasoning is likely to become increasingly detached from actual events, situations, or data leading to faulty conclusions and/or behaviors that do not fit well with the reality he is in.

Part of what contributes to Rodney's cognitive constriction is his tendency to view the environment as demanding, ungiving, and threatening. Testing indicates that he maintains a hypervigilant, constant scanning of incoming data in order to protect himself from potential danger. This saps considerable cognitive energy that could be directed more productively were he not exhausting resources in this way. He has a negative perception of what the world is willing to offer him and is likely to anticipate gloomy outcomes to plans or decisions. In his interviews, Rodney mentioned that on a number of occasions, he has been close to closing very successful business deals or moving his career in promising ways, but then somehow sabotages those potential achievements. It is entirely possible that this repetitive paradigm stems from his inability to imagine a positive future or a situation in which the environment supports and celebrates his accomplishments. Rather, he sees mostly a foreshortened future devoid of joy or ease and may unconsciously engage in a self-fulfilling prophecy by sabotaging success. At least in this case, he can control the outcome rather than leaving it to the vicissitudes of a world he does not trust. This pattern is also a symbolic reenactment of his withdrawal from Eagle Scouts just prior to a major achievement after Hodge abused the boy at Hodge's home.

Rodney's cognitive functioning is also diminished by his intensely negative view of himself (to be discussed at length below). Because his self-worth is so depleted, he is likely chronically to underestimate his capabilities when he is assessing a decision. This too may contribute to his self-reported failure to make the most of business opportunities; he literally cannot foresee himself succeeding. Thus he becomes overly cautious in implementing decisions or plans.

Test data suggest that Rodney has an ambivalent coping style, which means that his thinking and coping strategies are inconsistent and vulnerable to error.

At times, he may engage thinking and feeling as well as seeking out the advice of others before making a decision. At other times, he is as likely to shut off feelings and other people, using only his own somewhat impaired cognitive processing skills to reach a conclusion. For example, one day he might think how pleasant it would be to have a hammock strung between two trees, imagining and feeling the contentment of swinging on a hot summer day, perhaps with a grandchild. In this mode, he might further consult his wife about the idea, asking her to join him in a fantasy that leads to detailed planning and construction of the hammock. On another day, his wife might come home to find a hammock hanging lopsided in the backyard and Rodney down in the dumps because his unshared plan did not work well. These contradictory coping styles are likely to leave those around him perplexed and to confuse him as well.

The feelings most likely to overwhelm his cognition are anger and those connected to sexual imagery or feelings. Rodney exerts strict control over these affects and images in his waking life lest they destabilize him. Often, he is successful and may appear to others as a somewhat distant, but tightly controlled individual. Because he actually does have a surfeit of psychological resources, he is able often to control his mind from wandering to places that upset him and/or to deny and suppress angry and sexual feelings that shame him and make him feel even worse about himself than he already does. That control comes at a high cost, though, and deprives him of cognitive flexibility, decisiveness, and confidence that would be more commensurate with his apparent intellectual potential. In addition, he is often flooded with these images and affects in dreams that disturb his sleep, leaving him exhausted.

Rodney's cognitive functioning is also destabilized by his tendency to dissociate in a variety of ways. He feels depersonalized often, meaning that he does not feel fully in his body; fully the person he thinks of as "Rodney Michael." Rather, he may feel like he is floating outside his body or experiences himself as mechanical or robotic. Similarly, he also experiences the world as derealized with some frequency. At these times, familiar people or places may feel unfamiliar and strange, not quite right, and thus a little frightening. Finally, Michael may blank out occasionally, losing time and not being sure how that time was occupied. All these dissociative tendencies interrupt smooth and continuous cognitive processing. In addition, for someone who feels that he needs to tightly control himself, dissociative events would be frightening and disruptive of clear thinking.

Finally, Rodney is seriously depressed according to test data, scoring at the highest range of the Beck Depression Inventory and also scoring positively on the Rorschach's Depression Indication. Depression, of course, slows thinking and clouds the depressed individual's judgment.

In summary, Rodney Michael is a natively bright man whose ability to fully engage and adaptively use his cognitive functions is seriously and negatively

affected by a number of factors, including negative views of himself and the world; the press of intense internalized feelings, especially of anger and sexuality that he works hard to keep at bay; a cognitive constriction that mimics his emotional constriction; an ambivalent coping style; depression, and the frequent interference of dissociative mechanisms.

***Impact of Sexual Abuse on Cognitive Functioning:*** It is clearly established that sexual abuse affects every domain of functioning in many survivors, including cognition. It is probable that a number of Rodney's cognitive dysfunctions are related to his abuse.

***Narrowing Cognitive Focus:*** The tendency to narrow cognitive focus is, in Rodney's case, an attempt to prevent his cognition from being flooded with strong emotions, especially anger and sexual material. Both the anger and the sexual material are related to the sexual exploitation he experienced by the two Boy Scout leaders, especially by Hodge, and by his perception that the latter has never been brought to account for his actions. In general, sexual abuse survivors may similarly narrow their cognitive focus to avoid unwanted and threatening images, feelings, and memories.

***Hypervigilance:*** Hypervigilance towards a world perceived as always potentially dangerous is a common cognitive activity among sexual abuse survivors.

***Sense of Gloomy, Foreshortened Future:*** The sexual abuse survivor often feels that s/he will not live as long or as well as other people. Early experiences of betrayal trauma are in part an attack on hope and it is frequently challenging for survivors to embrace and sustain hope.

***Nightmares:*** Rodney's dreams are often laden with images of danger to him or loved ones and in which he or they are victimized or killed. In addition, some dreams are more like flashbacks. Both these phenomena are paradigmatic of sexual abuse survivors' nightlives.

***Dissociation:*** Dissociation long has been held to be a hallmark of trauma. Recently, researchers have identified five specific factors to dissociation. Rodney scored high on a measurement of these factors, three of which affect cognition.

***Depersonalization:*** In depersonalization, the individual has episodes in which s/he experiences the self as somehow changed. Examples are a sense of floating above the body, witnessing the body from outside of it, or feeling robotic or mechanical. These are states often engendered by and during intense betrayal trauma and they can persist after the trauma itself has ended. If triggered by something in the environment that is even loosely associated to the trauma, the survivor may depersonalize to distance from the concomitant



thoughts, feelings, and body states.

*Derealization:* In derealization, a familiar environment may be experienced as unfamiliar and uncanny; surroundings may seem dreamlike. This is reminiscent of the sense a sexually abuse youngster has right after the abuse. A place once safe and familiar has been rendered strange and threatening by the abuse. Depersonalization and derealization often co-occur and both are associated with earlier trauma.

*Memory Disturbance:* Memory disturbance is also a stereotypical sequela of abuse. Traumatic experience often is processed, stored and retrieved by the brain differently than other experience. When an external or internal event triggers the material in the traumatic memory system, the individual may not remember what s/he says or does in that state after s/he return to a state of mind in which the “regular” memory system dominates. Sexual abuse survivors thus frequently have blank spells in which they lose time and do not know what they did during that time. They may “come to” somewhere and not be sure how they got there or remember it in a dreamlike way.

In summary, Rodney Michael’s cognitive impairments are consistent with those considered to be paradigmatic of sexual abuse sequelae.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

This man actually has a surfeit of psychological resources. He is able to tolerate stress levels that would bend most people. It is a tribute to his resilience, in part engendered and nurtured by supportive parents, brother, and wife, that Rodney was able to keep a career and family going as long and well as he did before having some kind of breakdown. It is poignant to consider what Rodney could have accomplished were his resources not so singly marshaled to ward off frightening emotions and to maintain a constant state of preparedness against potential danger. It may be helpful to think of a dam whose walls are always pressured by the volume of water it holds at bay. It looks strong and invincible to observers. At some point, however, weeks of storms and melting snow from a fierce winter increase the pressure at the dam’s walls at the same time that a hairline fracture of a few stones appear. The dam breaks and the waters roil out, flooding everything in their path. Rodney’s baseline psychological resources are like the walls of the dam and, at some point, the combination of environmental pressures and his own vulnerabilities intersected and he crashed, flooded by emotions he had spent decades holding off. The dam, of course, is built to hold back water. Humans, however, need flexible psychic walls to function optimally. Unfortunately, because of his abuse and the sequelae of it, Rodney has spent most of his life exhausting his inner resources to maintain control over destabilizing thoughts, feelings, memories and images and to protect

himself from a world perceived as always potentially threatening. He had little left to plan creatively, think imaginatively, engage ambitions successfully, or be interpersonally available to others.

There is no consistent picture of the psychological resources of sexual abuse survivors. This is due in part to the likelihood that an individual's psychological resources begin to form early in life and are to some extent constitutional. It is clear that both Rodney's parents are strong figures able to juggle a number of situations simultaneously, as they did when they commuted long distances for years to facilitate a good education and active sports lives for their sons, so he lived with parents who themselves had impressive inner resources. His mother's persistent questioning of her sons about Hebbard's abuse and his parents willingness to take action to protect their boys is, unfortunately, highly unusual and perhaps more so in a tiny town like Cheraw. Those actions speak to strong and courageous people who risked brooking disapproval to support their children. Similarly, having seen Cheraw, it is remarkable to me that they are today willing to stand up to a powerful public figure, whose office is almost visible from their own in a town with only two "main" streets. Again, this reflects the likelihood of impressive inner confidence and resources.

In summary, Rodney was raised by people who constitutionally and/or environmentally endowed him with inner strengths and resources. The tragedy is that his own considerable mettle has been for so long diverted to erecting and maintaining defensive barriers from inner and outer stimuli rather than being available for him to construct a successful and more enjoyable life. Both the clinical interview and test data suggest that this is directly attributable to the sexual abuse and its sequelae.

## **AFFECT**

Rodney Michael is very depressed. His history is replete with what appear to have been episodic major depressive episodes, including the one that crippled him for a full year and contained his suicidal gesture. Although he does not appear to be in a major depressive episode at this moment, perhaps in part because of his daily ingestion of Zoloft, he remains significantly depressed.

As already discussed, Rodney's inner world is colored by a tremendous amount of anger and negativity that he works arduously to keep at bay because it frightens him. In some ways, his depression is characteristic of the traditional view of depression as anger turned against the self. Since he tirelessly works not to engage with strong emotions during his waking life, his dream life is filled with frightening images of danger, victimization, and helplessness, states he also tries to avoid consciously experiencing. Rodney reports that his wife says he

tosses and turns at night and sometimes speaks in his sleep, which disrupts use of a CPAP machine prescribed for sleep apnea. Further, Rodney is subject to hypnogogic experiences that are terrifying and exhausting. Hypnogogic phenomena occur in the state between sleep and wake. Often, the individual is having a sleep/wake nightmare or flashback and wants desperately to move or call out, but cannot. The sleep loss resulting from his nightmares, disturbed sleep apnea regimen, and his hypnogogic experiences are likely to further sap psychological resources while increasing depression.

Test data suggests that one factor of dissociation, Emotional Constriction, plays a part in Rodney's lack of contact with his emotions. This factor is characterized, for example, by knowing that one **should** feel something but **having** no feelings; feeling frozen inside, with no feelings, even when one intellectually knows the situation calls for affect.

There are 92 identified human emotions and Rodney allows himself access to few of them, especially those that are most intense. To that extent, he is emotionally immature, stuck at an earlier stage of emotional development. He is not adept at using thought, feeling, and interpersonal relationships to guide him in decision making and, since his own emotional development is incomplete, he does not approach complex tasks flexibly and maturely.

Rodney's relationship with Brayden, his grandson, seems to be the one situation in which he can allow himself to be tender, vulnerable, and more fully available to another. He deeply loves his grandson, wants to be available to him, and is able openly to give to Brayden and to receive from him emotionally rich experiences and interactions. His face changes when he talks about Brayden and I could feel the trust, contentment, joy, and compassion inherent in that relationship. It stands in stark contrast to Rodney's more controlled presentation when discussing himself or others.

**Impact of Sexual Abuse on Affect:** Rodney's presentation is somewhat at variance with other sexual abuse survivors. The more paradigmatic picture is of swings between states of hyperarousal in which the person may appear almost manically angry, sexual, or excited and psychic numbing, which resembles depression and involves psychomotor retardation and a lack of emotional arousal. Rodney, however, seems to live more in the realm of psychic numbing. His high score on the dissociation factor of Emotional Constriction may explain this and is characteristic of some survivors who have access to some or all memories of their abuse, but who cut off the affects appropriate to the memories. In addition, Rodney has a capacity, stemming from his intelligence and the quantity and quality of inner resources, to tightly control his emotions in most situations. Finally, his religious upbringing and his continued residence in his hometown probably mitigate against the kind of substance abuse, sexual acting out, temper tantrums, and sequential chaotic relationships frequently characterizing the lives of sexual abuse survivors. Rather, Rodney's

hyperarousal tends to emerge in his sleep when his strong defenses are lowered and emotions can be released, complete with vivid dream images.

The hypnagogic states Rodney experiences are, on the other hand, very consistent with traumatic histories. So many of my sexual abuse survivor patients over the years have dreaded these phenomena, often staying off sleep just so they would not be taken over by a hypnagogic experience. They often are cited as the most terrifying and dreadful symptom of abuse because they so closely replicate the original experience of helplessness.

## **SELF-CONCEPT**

Rodney has an exceptionally negative self-concept. He experiences himself as damaged and impotent in every sense of that word. Although he wants to be manly, strong, and virile – much as he considers his father to be – he does not at all feel that way about himself. Rather, he compares himself negatively to other men in his life, finding himself unworthy. During the interview, for example, Rodney talked often of how much he has let his family down, how much he wants to be a strong provider for them, and how little confidence he has in achieving that goal. In addition, he perceives that he is unworthy of asking his wife for a sexual relationship because of “all (he) has put her through.” In fact, this man thinks of himself as sexually damaged beyond repair and, at the same time, is preoccupied with disturbing and disruptive sexual imagery. On a Rorschach card that often evokes male images, for example, Rodney became disorganized. His attempts to constrict emotion interfered with his ability to provide an answer consistent with the demands of the blot. Instead, he perceived images that were poor fits for the blot, were ruined or dangerous, and were consistent with a sense of body and sexual damage by an external source.

Test data suggest that many of Rodney's perceptions of himself are unrealistic and that he is in fact more competent, more intelligent, stronger, and more capable of tenderness than he thinks he is. His family seems to know this as when they encourage him to try to expand his current business in ways they think he is able to do and would make him feel better about himself and life. Rodney, however, is consumed by negative images of himself and tends to dismiss their support as well meaning, but divergent from his self-assessment.

Rodney's responses to pictures about which he was asked to construct a story consistently illustrated his preoccupation with his abuse, with victimization, and, poignantly, with a hopeless sense that adversity cannot be overcome. In one story showing an androgynous figure slumped over a couch, Rodney said:

“Looking at this, it looks like someone who's been abused .. it

a doesn't feel like the person has any self-worth ... I don't see  
she strength in her to do anything about it." *Examiner: What is*  
happen to her—how could someone she trusted do that to her  
knowing how it would make her feel? She doesn't know if she  
could ever overcome it."

To another card depicting an older man standing close to and perhaps speaking to a younger man, Rodney said:

"The older guy on the left is taking advantage of this guy and has been doing it for a long time. He is in the young guy's face. He (the young guy) is just listening to the older guy and doesn't have the strength to pull away from it. The young guy looks beat down and guilty; the older guy is sexually abusing him and its been going on for years."

In these stories, we see Rodney's lack of self-worth, his hopeless sense that he cannot recover from his earlier traumas, his sense of impotence of every kind in relationships, and the pervasive danger he perceives in the environment – danger he does not feel competent to fight off effectively.

**Impact of Sexual Abuse on Self-Worth:** It is well established that sexual abuse negatively impacts self-esteem. The victim is likely to feel responsible for the abuse and is often deeply ashamed, carrying the shame better shouldered by the perpetrator. While this is true for both genders, it is particularly true for men who were abused as boys. In our culture, it is unfortunately acceptable for a female to be a victim, but boys and men are not supposed to be vulnerable to sexual victimization. Those that are carry great shame and often feel demasculinized and impotent as "real" men. In Rodney's community, many men are hunters, campers, and fishing enthusiasts, banding together for the hunt or spending days on the river fishing. It would be very destabilizing to gender identity, a secure sexual identity, and ease with a culturally stereotypical masculinity for a boy in Cheraw, SC to be sexually abused. It is almost certain that much of Rodney's intense contempt for himself, his doubts about virility and competence as a man, provider, and sexual being stem from his sexual victimizations.

## INTERPERSONAL PERCEPTIONS

As already discussed, Rodney views others as potential sources of danger, has had few friends, maintains distance from others, and is dedicated to protecting his personal space. While he yearns for nurturing and closeness on the one hand, his negative sense of himself and his mistrust of others mitigate against him opening up to interpersonal relationships that might provide that

nurturing. It is probable that few people really know Rodney, in part because he knows only aspects of himself and judges those harshly, and in part because he does not believe that anyone would have a good faith desire to know him without taking advantage of him or finding him unworthy of their time.

It is heartening that Rodney has been opening up some to his family about his abuse and his present day concerns, and that they have responded with love and support. In addition to his beloved grandson, he feels he has become closer to all his children since he disclosed his abuse and is relieved that they not only accept him, but feel that they understand him and his past behaviors better. He is enormously proud of his children and has let them get somewhat close to him, especially his sons. He respects his wife and is touched by her steadfastness and loyalty, but seems to maintain some distance from her, especially sexually. Because he has so little respect for himself, he may doubt that she truly can love him and want to be with him.

Rodney has an ambivalent attitude towards women. On the one hand, he perceives women as the greatest source of nurturing. In addition, he sees women as able to interpret the meaning of life and life events for him. To him, they have wisdom about life and people and are willing to share that with him. On the other hand and less consciously accessible, he also sees women as figures who could stop abuse, but allow it to continue to happen. For example, in one story about a picture illustrating a young girl with schoolbooks, a man plowing a field, and a woman leaning against a tree, Rodney said the man was abusing the girl and the mother was allowing it to go on when she could actually stop it.

Perhaps with the exception of his father, brother, doctor friend, and sons, Rodney views men with suspicion as potential betrayers and exploiters. They will use another man's vulnerability against him and will take advantage of any weaknesses. In part, Rodney may be defending against his own sense of inadequacy compared to other men by devaluing them and justifying his isolation from them. On the other hand, his violation by two representatives of the Boy Scouts, an organization which was greatly important to him and which endowed him with a sense of identity as a competent and accomplished young man, disrupted his ability to trust men or, particularly, to seek them out as mentors and friends.

Sexual relationships, even with his wife, are fraught with anxiety and danger for Rodney. On the one hand, he has little confidence in his virility or sexual prowess; in fact, that is something he would not even really think about. On the other hand, sex to Rodney means either exploiting or being exploited; there is no template for desire embraced and freely expressed with a loved partner in which both parties abandon themselves to passion. He and his wife have not been sexual for over a year. In addition to the issues just mentioned, Rodney avoids sex because it is likely to evoke flashbacks of his experiences

with Hebbard and Hodge.

Rodney acknowledged that he is more comfortable as the giver, the provider, the caretaker than he is receiving or being cared for. His figure drawings portrayed a “dream house” for him, his kids, and grandbaby that is lovely, surrounded by trees, with horses on the grounds. The tree he drew was to be on the property of the “dream house” where it would be surrounded by other fruit-bearing trees, grapevines, and roses. It is hard to imagine a more gloriously giving environment than the one he would like to provide for his family. Of course, it also means that Rodney would be in control, a more comfortable position for him than one of need, dependency, or vulnerability.

**Impact of Sexual Abuse on Interpersonal Perceptions:** Rodney’s mistrust of others and his sense of the world as a dangerous place are typical of sexual abuse survivors. These individuals tend to develop traumatogenic transferences, meaning that they transfer expectations and fears born of their past victimizations into the present, looking at others with suspicion and the anticipation of exploitation. Some survivors are too trusting of others, opening up to almost anyone who shows some interest in them. Others, like Rodney, are closed off to most relationships. They protect their personal space, avoid intimate relationships, have few close friends, and carefully preserve a distance from others.

Not surprisingly, sexual abuse survivors of both genders experience sexual problems and, often, this is the last realm of functioning to heal. Some male survivors abused by men unconsciously equate the penis with abuse and are sickened by the thought of thrusting into another body. I believe this is a pertinent dynamic with Rodney. At one point in the interview, I suggested this his difficulty achieving and his tendency to sabotage himself just before a major accomplishment could be partially explained by his aversion to symbolically “getting it up and keeping it up,” to thrusting himself in a potent way into success, to “coming” by carrying something through to its finish in a powerful way. He teared up at that point and said that interpretation hit him as holding truth. If symbolic potency is revolting to him in some way, interpersonal sex is all the more likely to be imbued with intense conflict. Like some male survivors, he avoids the conflict by avoiding sex.

## **DIAGNOSIS**

### **DSM-IV Diagnosis**

#### **AXIS I: 296.35 Major Depressive Disorder, Recurrent, in Partial Remission**

- *Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the*

*same 2-week period and represent a change from previous functioning; at least one of the symptoms is either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.*

**Rodney's 2008 "crash" lasted much more than 2 weeks and represented a major change from his previous level of functioning. He had both depressed mood and a loss of interest or pleasure. His description of previous, shorter "crashes" appear to meet criteria for Major Depressive Disorder as well.**

*(1) depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g., appears tearful)*

**Rodney, his family, and his doctor agree that these episodes involve depressed mood most of the day.**

*(2) markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day, nearly every day (as indicated by either subjective account or observation made by others)*

**Rodney loses all interest in almost all activities and interests. For a year during the 2008 episode, he was disinterested in family, hobbies, and his businesses.**

*(3) significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain (e.g., a decrease or consider change of more than 5% of body weight in a month), or increase in appetite nearly every day. **Note:** In children, failure to make expected weight gains.*

**Rodney has gained over 75 pounds in the last few years and is now obese.**

*(4) insomnia or hypersomnia nearly every day*

**During his depressive episodes, Rodney is hypersomniac, sleeping much of the day. At this point, his sleep is markedly disturbed.**

*(5) psychomotor agitation or retardation nearly every day (observable by others, not merely subjective feelings of restlessness or being slowed down)*

**Especially during the 2008 episode, Rodney showed psychomotor retardation, not leaving the house and lying on the couch when he was not sleeping.**

*(6) fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day.*



**Again, Rodney felt tired all the time during these episodes and he continues to experience a loss of energy for activities that used to give him pleasure.**

*(7) feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick)*

**Rodney felt entirely worthless during his most recent episode and was filled with excessive guilt about his business failing.**

*(8) diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness, nearly every day (either by subjective account or as observed by others)*

**Rodney reports that he was unable to make decisions about anything when he “crashed.”**

*(9) recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a specific plan, or a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide*

**During the 2008 episode, Rodney made a serious suicidal gesture and continued to feel suicidal for a long period of time. Today, he says he is not suicidal, but also can see no real purpose for his life.**

*B. The symptoms do not meet criteria for a Mixed Episode.*

**Rodney’s symptoms do not meet criteria for a Mixed Episode.**

*C. The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.*

**Every area of Rodney’s life was impaired during his “crashes.” During the 2008 episode, he lost his businesses, did not leave the house, and did not speak with many people even in his immediate family.**

*D. The symptoms are not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., hypothyroidism).*

**Rodney does not drink and has an ongoing relationship with a physician who would have been aware of other medical problems.**

*E. The symptoms are not better accounted for by Bereavement, i.e., after the loss of a loved one, the symptoms persist for longer than 2 months or are characterized by marked functional impairment, morbid preoccupation with worthlessness, suicidal ideation, psychotic symptoms, or psychomotor retardation.*

**The symptoms were not better accounted for by a situational factor. They lasted more than two months, were characterized by marked functional impairment, morbid preoccupation with worthlessness, suicidal ideation, and psychomotor retardation.**

**Axis I: 309.81: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Chronic**

*A. The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following have been present:*

*(1) the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others (2) the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.*

**(1) Rodney's sexual abuse by Hebbard and Hodge threatened his physical integrity. Sexual assault is included as an example of this criterion.**

**(2) Rodney experienced fear and helplessness with Hebbard and Hodge. He also experienced horror when Hodge abused him at Hodge's home.**

*B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in one (or more) of the following ways:*

*(1) recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts, or perceptions.*

**Rodney reports recurrent intrusive thoughts about being sexually abused, including images of the events.**

*(2) recurrent distressing dreams of the event*

**Rodney frequently dreams at night about the sexual abuse.**

*(3) acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions,*

including those *hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, that occur upon awakening or when intoxicated).*

**Rodney experiences dissociative flashback episodes in the form of hypnogogic experiences.**

external event. *(4) intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.*

**Rodney reports that he feels upset when Hodge drives by the Michael office.**

*(5) physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.*

**Rodney said during our testing session that he felt sick to his stomach at test stimuli that evoked images of his abuse.**

*C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness (not present before the trauma), as indicated by three (or more) of the following:*

*(1) efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma*

people **Rodney meets this criterion. He works hard to suppress feelings about the abuse and speaks only to a few about it and, then, not in great detail.**

*(2) efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma*

**This criterion does not apply to Rodney.**

*(3) inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma*

years until **Rodney has always remembered Hebbard's abuse in detail. He had dissociated memories of Hodge's abuse for he discovered the pornographic pictures on Hodge's computers, along with pictures of boys engaging activities. Since then, he has gradually remembered more and more of Hodge's abuse.**

*(4) markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities*

**Rodney does not participate in church activities like he used to. He also used to care for himself through proper**

**eating and fitness activities and no longer is interested in either.**

*(5) feeling of detachment or estrangement from others*

**Test data and the interview with Rodney make clear that he is quite detached from other people, except for his family.**

**immediate**

*(6) restricted range of affect (e.g., unable to have loving feelings)*

**Rodney's range of affect is extremely constricted.**

*(7) sense of a foreshortened future (e.g., does not expect to have a career, marriage, children, or a normal life span)*

**Rodney indeed has a sense of a foreshortened future and cannot imagine his life, especially his career, turning out well.**

*D. Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (not present before the trauma), as indicated by two (or more) of the following:*

*(1) difficulty falling or staying asleep*

**Rodney's sleep is disturbed and he can wake up panicked during the night.**

*(2) irritability or outbursts of anger*

**This does not apply to Rodney because he keeps his emotions under such tight control.**

*(3) difficulty concentrating*

**Rodney reports that he is distracted easily and finds it hard to concentrate. In addition, his dissociative mechanisms interfere with sustained attention and concentration.**

*(4) hypervigilance*

**Rodney is exceptionally hypervigilant and expends great energy maintaining alertness to danger.**

*(5) exaggerated startle response*

**This criterion does not apply to Rodney**

*E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in Criteria B, C, and D) is more than one month.*

***These symptoms have extended over years.***

*F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.*

**As this report clearly illustrates, PTSD had disrupted most areas of Rodney's functioning.**

**AXIS II: No Diagnosis**

**AXIS III: Obesity, High Blood Pressure**

**AXIS IV: Problems with occupation, problems with sexual relationship with wife**

**AXIS V: Global Assessment of Functioning Scale: 45 at present**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Rodney has never been in psychotherapy. He very much needs extended therapy with a clinician who has some depth of experience working with men who were sexually abused as children and who suffer from PTSD. He is willing to travel to obtain this help. I recommend that he contact the following therapists to determine (1) if they know and can recommend a therapist somewhere near Cheraw and/or (2) if they could work with him in person or by skype. This report should be shared with any therapist with whom Rodney works
  - **Michael J. Yonkovig, Ph.D:** 1981 J. North Pease Place, Suite 201, Charlotte, NC 28262, 704-366-3818
  - **Richard B. Gartner, Ph.D.:** 14 Fifth Avenue, #G1, New York, New York, 10011, 212-533-0345, [www.richardgartner.com](http://www.richardgartner.com)
- Rodney's depression is severe and I recommend a thorough psychiatric evaluation to determine whether his current medication regimen is sufficiently efficacious. One Charlotte psychiatrist that is thorough and competent is **Scott Lurie, MD**, 1132 Greenwood Cliffs, Charlotte, NC 28204, 704-376-6577. This report should be shared with any psychiatrist with whom Rodney consults.

- It might be helpful for Rodney to read some literature about male sexual abuse. This gives him the opportunity to begin to understand himself better without having actually to speak with someone. I would recommend:
  - Gartner, Richard B. (2005). *Beyond Betrayal: Taking Charge of Your Life after Boyhood Sexual Abuse*. NY: Wiley.
  - Lew, Mike. (2004). *Victims No Longer: The Classic Guide for Men Recovering from Sexual Child Abuse*. NY: Harper Perennial.
- 4. It might also be a helpful introduction to more information about men who were sexually abused as boys for him to peruse the website of MaleSurvivor ([www.MaleSurvivor.org](http://www.MaleSurvivor.org)), a reputable and well-run group for male survivors.

Rodney Michael is a bright, courageous man suffering from severe depression and chronic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. He also has significant inner resources. I sincerely hope he obtains the help he needs to heal into the man he has the potential to be.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea, Ph.D.

