

Get Prepared  
Get Free  
Get Stronger

# Overcoming the Porn Habit



John Williams & Cheryl Roth

PureMind.online



# Overcoming the Porn Habit

Online pornography is a powerful temptation. It's free, it's always available, and it's easy to watch in secret. Once you start though, it's extremely hard to stop.

What makes online porn so addictive? The parts of your brain that are wired for seeking a mate and seeking true love get overstimulated and desensitized at the same time. You get pulled into an unending cycle of exaggerated arousal and masturbation. You become dependent, because nothing else provides that same rush and release.

Yet, you want to stop, because you know it's not real love. Not only that, it's diminishing your ability to relate to the opposite sex normally, and to enjoy life. It's taking over.

But it doesn't have to be that way. There is hope and there is help. PureMind.online wants to help you find the power to overcome the porn habit.

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**Get Stronger**

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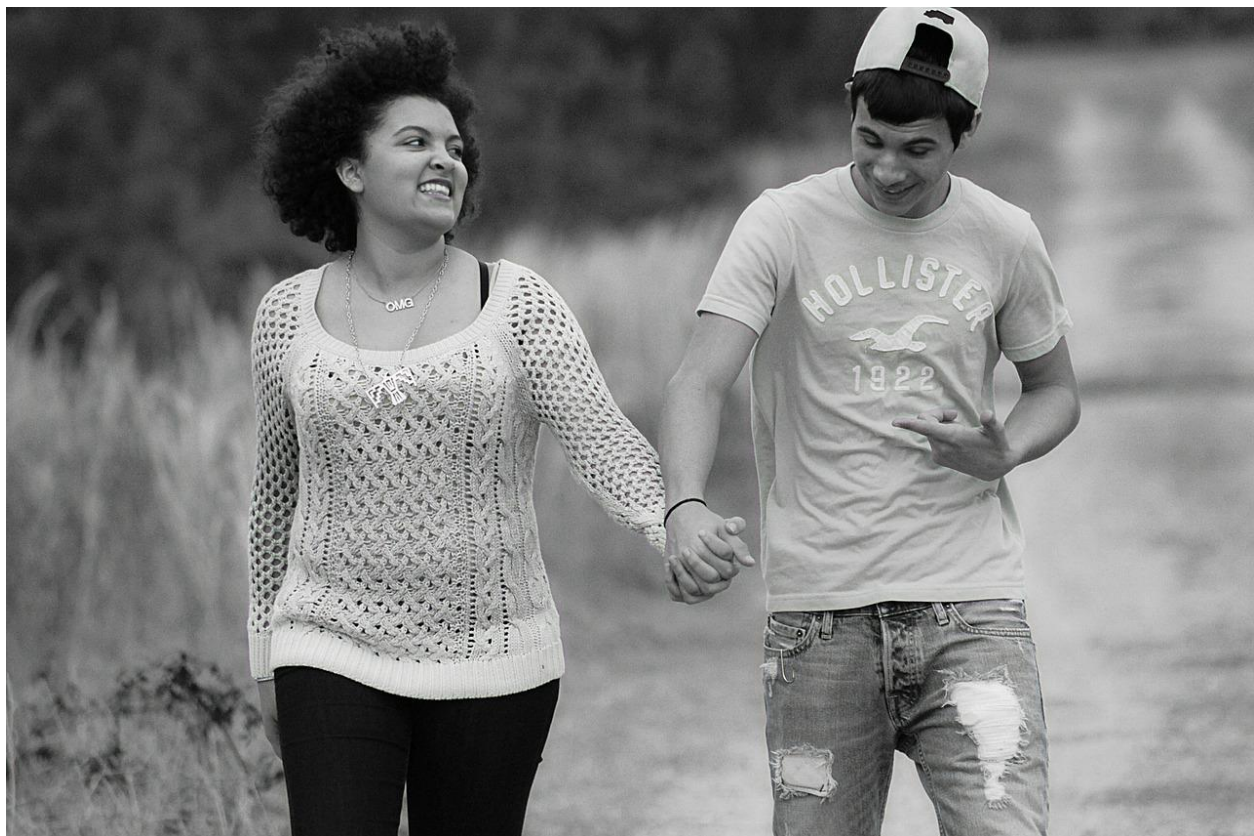
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## Get Prepared

Whenever someone fails to fulfill their intention it's usually because they didn't prepare well.

If you decide to travel to a foreign country, it would be a good idea to learn a few things about that country first. Maybe how to say a few words in the native tongue, where the best sites are, places to stay and methods of transportation. You should also check into visas, vaccinations, money exchange and weather. The less you prepare, the more troubles you are bound to have.

In the same way, anytime you want to take on a new challenge or make some changes in your life, you'll need to start with some learning.

## Get Aware

### *Learn How the Habit Affects You*

Becoming an expert on yourself is a key part of unlearning unhealthy habits and learning new ones. This includes understanding how you think, feel and what motivates you, as well as learning how the "enemy" affects you.

### **Get Empowered by The Scientific Facts**

All strong habits and addictions have common elements, whether they be sex, gambling, alcohol, marijuana, or cocaine. But internet porn and masturbation have some unique qualities that make them particularly addictive.

Study all that science has revealed about how people get hooked. Learning about the process of addiction and its typical patterns of thinking, feeling and behavior will help you put your own situation in perspective, and guide you on your path towards freedom.

Also, learn how depression can lead to porn addiction, or be the result, and how male depression looks different from female depression.

### **Be Aware of Minimizing**

One of the notorious effects of an addictive habit is underestimating how severe it is, and how bad it's affects are. For example, counselors working with alcohol and drug addicts assume that whatever the user says about how often they use or how it affects them, they add on about 50 percent more.

Users usually hang around with other users, so that makes their habit even more normal looking: "Everybody does this and it doesn't bother them." In fact, it usually takes some substantial time after reducing the habit before your perspective on it gets more realistic.

## **Other classic minimizing comments include:**

1. I can stop anytime I want.
2. I only use porn when I'm stressed.
3. I'm functioning okay, so it's not a problem.

In the meantime, then, just take it on faith that your porn use blinds you at least a little to how bad it is, and try to consider the view that non-users have of what you are doing.

## ***First Step to Win the Battle***

Our efforts to change are constantly sabotaged by powerful feelings outside of our awareness and thus, our control. Emotions move us every moment. Yet often this happens behind the scenes and we can be baffled to understand why we do what we do. This is particularly true of unwanted habits.

### **Identify Your Feelings**

The first task to gain more control is to practice identifying your feelings. What is motivating you right now? Consider four basic emotions: Glad, mad, sad, and scared. Feelings like guilt, pride and disgust can all fit in within these.

You can have a mix of emotions all at the same time. Learning to sort them out and give names to them helps reduce their power.

When you label your feelings, you naturally hold them more at arm's length. You can better recognize that you don't have to act on them, especially if they're based on beliefs that are untrue and unreasonable.



### **Embrace Your Emotions**

Labeling feelings does not mean judging them. Feelings are not good or bad, they exist for a reason; to inform. When feelings cease to inform, and get out of control, they can become a destructive force. But the more you understand and accept your feelings as a useful tool, the better you will be able to manage them.

Start right now. You'll get better with practice.

## *Become Aware of Your Thoughts*

Related to our feelings are our thoughts, and these too can be so fleeting we don't even realize what they are. Again, we can be deeply affected by our underlying beliefs and thoughts, and yet they can work outside of our awareness and control.

### **Identifying Your Thoughts**

It is not external events that create your feelings, but rather what you think about what happened. When someone cuts you off in traffic, you could see it as an insult, or as the result of the person not paying attention. Unreasonable thoughts lead to unnecessarily bad feelings.

It helps to notice what you are thinking when you feel bored, sad, guilty, or angry. At first this may be difficult to notice, so just listen to your own thoughts and write down whatever ones you catch. You'll get better at it over time.



Then examine them. Are they true? Rational? At the very least, question your thoughts and loosen your grip on them as being valid. Learn to dispute them. Your heart will thank you for it.

So, if what's going on in your head is creating unsettling emotions, how can you change this? How can you change your thinking so that you feel peaceful and happy, energized and focused? How can you use your creative and critical thinking capacity to generate positive emotions and accomplish your goals in life?

Your mind is flexible; you can decide to think differently. Learn from the masters, study positive thinking. Try this exercise: Next time you experience anger or frustration, identify the thought behind it. Then try to think the opposite. Try to imagine being someone else who would have a completely different reaction to the situation.

It might seem difficult at first, but keep trying to create new ways of thinking and eventually you will succeed.

## Get Inspired

### *Learn from Successful People*

With insight, perseverance, and support, many people have overcome their unwanted sexual habits and have built productive lives and beautiful families. It is important to hear such stories and keep them in mind to stay motivated, especially as you go through difficult times.

### **Learn and Connect**

At the same, though it is always inspiring to listen to testimonies of those who have become victorious, sometimes it can be more valuable to connect with someone who has simply made progress in the next step of the journey. Connect with others who are making effort as well as listening to success stories.

### **Inspiring Video**

One of the best ways to learn and stay motivated is by watching videos created for that very purpose. Start with the ones below and then visit our [LIVE FREE](#) YouTube channel for more.

- Story of a young married man who turned his life around, as a promotion of a recovery program, at [Proven Men](#)
- Story of success of a married man using accountability software, at [Covenant Eyes](#)
- Motivation from a man abstaining from porn at the 60-day mark, at [Black White Guy in America](#)
- Testimonies of those who have abstained from the habit for a length of time, at [Cure the Craving](#)
- Evidence that masturbation is unknown among some peoples of the world, at [HowtoStopMasturbation.com](#)

## Get Connected

A youth pastor who remained a virgin until his marriage at 30 said, “Whenever I got a sexual urge, I took it as a signal that I needed other people, and I reached out to my friends and family.” Sex-related habits are most clearly a substitute for our need for true love. So, strong and healthy relations with others is the best remedy and protection.

### *Loneliness Is a Trigger for Porn Use*

In addition, the use of porn is associated with greater loneliness, since it interferes with connecting with other people on an emotional and spiritual level. On the other hand, getting companions to join you in the change effort will greatly increase your chances of success.

Immerse yourself in activities you enjoy doing with friends, not to run away from your problems, but to increase the ways that you connect and interact with people. One benefit of

this might be that you have less time and energy to engage in porn. Another benefit is that you may experience greater emotional satisfaction. Although these activities may not eliminate your desire for porn, they most definitely are part of the process of healing and restoring relationships.

### **Remember the centrality of love**

All difficult habits are responses to the absence of something healthy and necessary in our lives. The most critical need of all is that of true and unconditional love.



Unconditional love is care and affection given without our “earning” it, when we have revealed our uglier side, when we feel unlovable. It is love and respect given because we are family, or human, or because we are a child of God. It is concern expressed when we are giving nothing back and may even be bothering the giver in some way.

When we feel loved in this way, we can manage just about any stress. When we fear

losing other’s love or God’s love, we are easily stressed and unconsciously constantly looking for comfort and relief.

Perhaps the most important resource to help us overcome this habit is the giving and receiving of true love.

### ***Expand Your Social Circle***

A brick needs six other bricks to stabilize it within a wall: two on each side, two above, two below. So, it is best to have at least six people in your life that you are close to in those positions.

### **Examine Your Relationships**

Check your range of social contacts. Do you have two close friends? Do you have good friends of both genders? Are any of these people someone you could confide in?

Consider vertical relationships—elders and youngers. Do you have older people you can go to for support? Are you mentoring or caring for someone younger than you?

If you find that you are lacking relationships, try to pinpoint the cause. Are you an introvert, shy or not outgoing? Do most of your relationships revolve around something online like gaming? Maybe you’re just very busy with work or school and you live far away from family.

Try to think of new ways to make friends. Look for new social activities like clubs or sports, or get involved through volunteer activities. Working on your social circle takes time, but it is one of the most rewarding and impactful pursuits in your recovery.



## **Give and Get Support from People Like You**

Many experts swear, "You can't overcome this on your own." We are not meant to be self-sufficient when making this kind of change.

And the most valuable kind of support is to be with those with whom we are completely honest, who see us with all our flaws and painful secrets and who can still accept and appreciate us. This is what a peer support group can provide.

Besides, we all have a powerful need to belong. When we feel part of a group, we feel stronger.

Nothing is more helpful than being able to be frank about ups and downs with others who understand, to celebrate our victories and strengths, commiserate about our fears and failures, and compare notes along the way. And it is healing and inspiring to provide a boost to others when they need it.

Having a sexual habit can alienate us from the essential groups we belong to: Family and church community. It can lead us to hang out with those who readily accept us, but who may have an unhelpful influence on us.

Finding a support network of others working to improve themselves is tremendously valuable. Check out 12 Step and other groups, both in person and online.

## **Get Informed**

### *Understand How the Habit Works*

The way a well-formed habit works has been studied. Something that makes you think of it is a trigger—seeing something, feeling something (like rejected). After the trigger, your reactions might go something like this:

1. Emo response: curiosity or excitement, simultaneous with—
2. first thought: "what if I search for" curiosity, it will do no harm (permission beliefs)
3. Chemical release: anticipatory chemical release, leading us to go to the satisfaction
4. Body language: trembling, feelings in groin, sweating, dilated pupils
5. Battle, inner debate, second thoughts about the temptation: "no one will know", "i always have to give in anyway", "i hate to go to my spouse and get rejected" vs. "I hate this, my wife does not like this, it does not make me happy". Which thought wins?
6. Behavior chosen, action of the habit

Recognize this process and learn how to prevent or disrupt it.

### **Learn About the Recovery Process**

It's one thing to learn about your habit and how it affects your mind and heart, your relationships and even society. It's another thing to understand about how change takes place and the path of healing and recovery from the habit and its effects. Just as you wouldn't think

of renovating your garage without understanding how it's done and what to expect, so you need to become familiar with what it takes to renovate yourself.

Whether it's quitting smoking, going to the gym or learning to play golf, change is a process, not a one-time event. It involves predictable stages. And each stage needs different resources for progress to happen.

### *What's the Change Process?*

Think of any change you've made, like losing weight. At first, you may not have felt any need. Then, you started toying with the idea and investigated the possibility. Next you began to prepare by learning about diets and exercise. Maybe you bought some equipment, a diet book, or joined a gym.

Finally, you acted, started a new routine of eating differently and exercising. Then it was a matter of maintaining the new lifestyle. And if you got off track at some point and gained weight, you had to restart the process.

It's basically the same when trying to overcome unwanted sexual habits. You will face different challenges and need different things at various stages, and it's helpful to understand all of this.

### **Change Is a Natural Part of Learning**

Here's another way to look at change. From the day you were born, you've been changing. Some of those changes happened without much effort on your part. Some changes happened because of your response to expectations from family, society and culture you grew up in. This is the natural process of growing up.

During your teen years, you probably started to think about what you wanted your future to look like. What kind of job would you have as an adult, and where would you live? Where would you go to college to prepare for this future life? You were beginning to take responsibility for initiating changes to create the life you envisioned.



Everyone goes through this process throughout life. It's not natural to stay the same, to never learn or grow. It's far more natural to always seek improvement, new knowledge, new experiences, and greater happiness.

### **Struggles indicate a need for change**

Difficult emotions, unhappiness and physical illness or pain all have a purpose, they let us know something is wrong. When something's not working, or you're struggling and conscience stricken, it's a good sign that it's time for a change.

## *Anticipate Relapses*

When learning any new skill or behavior, it's inevitable to slip up occasionally and revert to old habits. Relapses are common in the beginning of the process of change. This usually happens during times of high stress when you just go without thinking for what is familiar and comforting.

### **A Slip Up Is Not Failure**

This slip up or lapse can be minor—like grabbing a donut when on a diet. You can quickly get back on track, or you can spiral downward rapidly. Before you know it you're back into your full-blown habit, called a relapse.

Getting smart about these lapses and relapses is vital to long term success.

### **Bouncing Back from a Relapse**

A relapse happens when your new coping behaviors get overwhelmed by too many stresses at once. You backslide to what soothed you in the past. The key is to know how to pick yourself up and get back to where you were, without missing a beat.

A big part of this is cultivating constructive thinking. Instead of, "oh, I failed again," you can think, "I did very well, since I had been porn-free for 12 days before I caved in."

Also, it is crucial to see any backsliding as a learning experience. What happened? What was the crack in my defenses? How might I prepare better for that kind of thing in the future?

## **Get Committed**

### *Reframe Your Journey*

What would compel you to be committed to a cause? You can find your strongest motivation by using your imagination.

### **Taste the freedom of having overcome**

Relax in a calm place and as vividly as you can, imagine five or 10 years from now, being free of this habit. Picture all that you will gain--within yourself, for the ones you love, and the dreams you will realize. Let yourself enjoy the rewards of your struggle in advance by savoring the feelings of freedom and power.

Write your vision down, to remind yourself why the struggle is worth it. Read it whenever you feel like giving up.

## Your struggle is a hero's journey

When you can see your life's challenges as a heroic struggle towards victory, it can give you the strength to stay committed. Having a personal vision keeps the day to day challenges in perspective.



Think of some triumph, large or small, you have already had in your life. Recall a time when a problem seemed like an insurmountable mountain. Maybe it was passing a class, making a friend, or winning a job, or a spot on a team. What led to your success? How do you look back on that experience now? A few years from now, you could be in the same position with your current challenge.

Imagine yourself in the future telling of your recovery to others. See yourself as fighting for your life, or fighting for those who love and need

you. View your difficulties as given to prove how strong and courageous you are, and to dramatize your ultimate success.

Now claim every day to day setback and victory as part of your compelling story. Setbacks can lead to new insights that will make you stronger. Don't get into guilt. Use every aspect of your struggle as training to achieve your goals and realize your dreams.

## Get Specific

### *Study the Habit Thoroughly*

Before embarking on any effort to change old routines, it is best to plan well for the challenges ahead. Many an individual who now says, "I can't change," is someone who tried to stop foolishly. Closer to the truth is: "I can successfully change—if I prepare realistically." Then get specific information that will help you change.

Overconfidence is a common mistake. If you impulsively try to stop your habit without realistic support and anticipating setbacks, you risk a crash and burn that will erode your hope and motivation. Take the time to learn everything you can about the habit and how it affects your life.

## Know Thyself

Self-knowledge is critical—if you want to defeat your enemy then you need to “know your enemy”. Examine your habit as a scientist would, over time and in different circumstances. Get specific details about what’s going on in your life that makes it hard to quit.

A key element to understand are your “triggers”—the circumstances that cause you to give in to the habit:

- When does it get less frequent?
- When does it get worse? What time of day? What time of the week or month?
- What are you thinking and feeling beforehand?
- What do you tell yourself before you do it?
- What do you say to yourself afterwards?

And you need to know your honest thoughts and feelings around the habit: Why do you like the it? What do you fear losing if you give it up?

Why do you dislike the habit? What motivates you to change? What do you fear you will lose if you don’t change?

## Get Free

### Get a Program

“No one overcomes this by themselves.” That’s what ex-users and experts repeatedly report. Studies show that those who have most successfully changed unwanted habits need a clear process, structure, information, social support and sometimes individual coaching.

### *Work with The Experts*

Brain and addiction research have now produced programs, both in person meetings and online, that have proven to be highly effective with thousands of men and women. PureMind.Online recommend that you investigate and adopt one of the following programs as a centerpiece of your change efforts.

These programs feature engaging research-based video education, interaction with other learners like ourselves, and often have a coaching component. They are affordable (\$50 per month or less), and one is free for those under 21. Some offer separate programs for pornography and masturbation.

## Recovery Programs

Different programs will appeal to different people, that's why we're offering options. Follow the links in the list below to discover one that's a good fit for you.

- Introduction to the Candeo program, at [CandeoBehaviorChange.com](http://CandeoBehaviorChange.com)
- Fortify, the program of Fight the New Drug, for adults and teenagers and free for teens, at [Fight the New Drug](http://FighttheNewDrug.com)
- Strong faith- and science-based program with options for individual and group mentoring, at [Bravehearts.org](http://Bravehearts.org)
- x3Pure video workshop program, a Christian approach, at [X3workshops.com](http://X3workshops.com)
- An approach using mindfulness, at [The Mindful Habit](http://TheMindfulHabit.com)
- Christian telephone counseling and support, including same sex attractions, at [Healing for the Soul](http://HealingfortheSoul.com)
- Stories illustrating the Mormon Church's Addiction Recovery Program meetings, at [Addiction Recovery.LDS.org](http://AddictionRecovery.LDS.org)
- Kingdom Works Studios: Conquer Series
- [Pure Mind Sexual Integrity Mentors](http://PureMindSexualIntegrityMentors.com)

## Get Boundaries

### *Get Rid of Negative Influences*

Among addicts there is a saying, "No playground, no playmates, no playthings." This refers to getting rid of the unnecessary and unwanted influences in your life, the invitations to temptation. When you become serious to gain freedom from the habit, make your electronics safer and cut off from people who encourage porn use.

### **Make Your Media Safer**

Time to clean house. Delete any favorite sites from your computer and smartphone, clear out your history, cookies and cache. Scan your computer for malware from porn sites, and start all over.

Make your computer less convenient to use but putting it in a public area of your home. Avoid using it for recreation; find healthier things to do.

Here's the difficult part; get real about your music and movie habits. Get rid of the soft-porn music videos, songs and movies. You know what they are; the ones that act like triggers. The stimulate you sexually or lead your thoughts and feelings in the direction of temptation.

## Get Monitoring Support

Secrecy is the enemy of this kind of change. It is the anonymity that helps drive porn use. So, you need to let someone know what you are doing.

Use your laptop on the kitchen table. Move your office or even just the desk to a place where others can see you. Do whatever it takes to give yourself less inclination to go to that porn site.



Install software that reports your web browsing to someone you trust and who will not judge you, but will help you become accountable. Just knowing that someone will ask about your choices helps you to make better ones.

## Recommended Software

- [Covenant Eyes](#)
- [Fortify](#)

## *Hang Out with Different People*

Let's face it– the people you spend time with have an impact on your life. Get boundaries because anyone can be influenced, no matter how independent you are. Research shows obesity, infidelity, divorce and all kinds of other behavior is contagious. People attract and hang on to others who have a common base. It's easy to think, "everybody does this" because you subtly avoided those who don't!

## What Are Your Friends Into?

Look honestly at your friends and associates. Do some of them encourage porn-viewing,



masturbation and a casual attitude towards sex in general? Would they support your efforts to change? If not, you need to distance yourself as much as you can.

That might be very difficult because you like your friends. You don't want them to feel hurt and you don't want to judge them. But there is a time in everyone's life when they must make hard choices. If you were a recovering alcoholic, would you

hang out at a bar?

## **Choose Your Standard and Act Accordingly**

And remember, boundaries you are not willing to enforce are not boundaries. Unless you can speak up and act to let people know what you will, and will not accept, then you have no real standard. Without a standard, you are at the mercy of what everyone else chooses to do.

Anyone who wants to make a positive change in their life will face some opposition. That opposition comes from two places; within yourself and from others. It's hard enough to deal with the opposing forces within without adding external temptation. You're trying to train yourself to think differently and feel differently, so why put yourself in situations or with people that will cause you to regress?

## **New Friends, New Life**

So, if you're ready to create the life that you want to live – then start choosing to hang out with the people that support the path you want to be on. Your future happiness and success depends on the choices you make in the present.

## **Get Accountable**

### *Find a Support Network*

We all have a powerful need to belong. When we feel part of a group, we feel stronger. Being accountable means being responsible, liable, and answerable to others. This is a natural responsibility because we are always in relationship with others.

### **Don't Alienate Yourself**

Having a sexual habit can alienate you from the natural groups you belong to: your family and church community. It can lead you to hang out with people who have similar habits, and that's not going to help you.

Finding a support network of others working to improve themselves is tremendously valuable. Check out 12 Step and other groups, both in person and online. Check out our Forum.

### **Track Your Actions**

One of the simplest ways to practice accountability is simply recording your own progress. In this case, it is not deceiving others that you are trying to avoid, instead it's a way to confront self-deception.

How well did you manage yourself today? Before going to bed, make a notation on an app or a wall calendar. This can be as simple as a plus or minus sign (or zero if neither up or down). Or it can be more elaborate, like a dated checklist.

Monitoring progress like this can be eye-opening. Over time, you may see an overall upward movement unnoticed amidst the many ups and downs. You'll learn that certain circumstances



contribute to the habit getting better or worse, and this will be helpful self-knowledge. And just knowing you are keeping track of your progress is proven to assist in reaching goals.

- A recommended recovery tracking and check in phone app, at [rTribe.com](http://rTribe.com)
- How to track habits effectively, at [LifeHacker.com](http://LifeHacker.com)

## *Enlisting the Help of Others*

A key to the success of successful business persons is to know what strengths they have, what they lack, and to make sure they have others that can make up for their lack. They also use others—superiors, assistants, even customers—to stay accountable to their own quality performance goals.

### **Find an Ally**

It's a wise choice to enlist the aid of others in helping to overcome a weakness. It can be as simple as asking a friend to check your progress every week. Or it can be as involved as having your online activities electronically reported to your pastor.

For example, Kevin Thompson, the pastor of the Bay Area Family Church in California, has been serving as an accountability partner for years for scores of young people and adults struggling with porn use.



If you know your internet browsing habits are being supervised, or you are going to be asked about them regularly, you probably won't venture onto porn sites. The porn habit thrives on secrecy.

And that secrecy means you are alone and getting defeated.

An ally on your side can make a world of difference.

### **Ask for Help**

So, you must confide your problems to someone else and ask for their help.

This involves getting past your false pride, your dread of being controlled, your love of privacy, and your fear of losing love and respect. When you can admit to yourself that you have little pride in having this habit, it will be easier to ask for help. Consider these points when facing down your pride:

- that you are already being controlled by your habit
- that your privacy is an illusion since you can't keep it secret forever
- that you already can't receive the love and respect you desire because you feel undeserving

People feel honored when someone asks for their assistance. And they are far less judgmental than you might think. Take a risk. Ask someone you trust; let them in on your struggle.

Learn more about finding an Accountability Partner at [PureMind.online](http://PureMind.online)

## **Get Honest**

### *Be Real with People You Love*

The preoccupation with porn and masturbation means that your heart is diverted away from loved ones. They can feel this, even if you've hidden the habit and they don't know the reason why. It's true if you're married and have children, or if you live with parents and siblings.

More to the point, when your spouse or engaged partner discovers your sexual attention and energy is being directed towards others, whether digital "others" or not, they can rightly feel betrayed. They doubt themselves— "why aren't I good enough?"

And then in your efforts to protect and justify your cherished habit, you tend to make it all worse by minimizing the problem, and denying the damage they feel.

### **Tell Your Partner**

Being honest with your partner (and perhaps parents, or a trusted elder) is essential to provide the motivation to change. To create the kind of intimacy with your partner that is needed for lasting love you need to be honest.

If you are engaged or blessed in marriage and have not yet revealed your porn problem to your partner, you may feel like a confession is the hardest thing you could do. Countless excuses crop up to delay it. Yet think of the alternative: living in secrecy until it's accidentally discovered. And it will be, one way or another.

You and your mate can never have a strong and intimate connection if there are such secrets. The deception of maintaining such a secret usually hurts the partner more than the actual problem. Would you marry someone you felt you couldn't trust?

### **Take Care in How You Share**

Cultivate an unselfish motive. It must not be done in a way to simply unburden yourself at the expense of our partner. It needs to be done from the heart of wanting to stop the habit and repair the damage.

Pray for courage and the right heart, for yourself and your partner. Find a circumstance when they have the time and privacy to process what you will tell them. Let them freely express their thoughts, even if it hurts.



If possible, make a change plan beforehand. After you have told them your problem, let them know that you have a program you are following to overcome your habit, and someone to support you, apart from your mate. Knowing you are taking steps to change will be reassuring to them. If possible, share what you are learning as you go.

Unfortunately, you can't demand acceptance, forgiveness or trust. You need to respect their right to choose to accept you as you are or not. However painful that is to you, remember that they are also in pain. Give them time to digest what you've told them. Let them come to forgiveness of their own free will, and expect that it may take a long time—longer than you think is reasonable—to restore trust.

## Get Clean

### *Rebooting Your Life*

How do you get clean? You must make the choice to stop looking at porn either cold turkey or gradually. Regardless of which way you choose, ending porn use, masturbation or other unhealthy sexual habits gives your mind and body a chance to regain its normal responses. It's also an opportunity to undo many of the negative effects. Some people call this process "rebooting."

#### **Rebooting Is a Process**

Experienced booters say that it takes 90-days porn-free for this to happen. So, the 90 days (cold turkey) is the process which will result in a change of your thoughts and emotions. IT could take a bit longer if you do a gradual tapering off, but that might be necessary for some people. Any prolonged period of abstinence—whether 3 days or 30—is helpful and something to celebrate.

Research tells us that it takes at least 60 days to change any habit. That means 60 days of creating new habits, not just avoiding the old habit. You should replace it with something better even though those new activities might not feel better at first.

- Basics about rebooting, at [YourBrainOnPorn.org](http://YourBrainOnPorn.org)

## Expect Ups and Downs

There are different skills needed to run a marathon versus a sprint. The latter requires a burst of speed, the former demands pacing and stamina.

Both are necessary for successful recovery. You will need a surge of strength to get beyond a temptation or stick to the new regimen. Also, you will need to do it over, repeatedly, despite days when you're tired, sad, or can't remember why you want to change.

Don't let the moments of victory trick you into thinking, "I've got this licked." And don't let bad times deceive you into thinking, "It will always be this hard."

Read "Surviving the ups and downs of recovery using mindfulness", at [PaulGarrigan.com](http://PaulGarrigan.com)

## Believe You Can

The first step towards this intimidating goal is to believe you can do it. "Porn free for three months," you may think, "I can't even go three days!"

Just as when you began considering this change process, you need to look for inspiring success stories for encouragement. Also, think about your own history of overcoming challenges. You may have comparable victories in your past—training for a sport, studying a hard subject, learning a difficult skill. You can do this, and we're here as part of your support system.

- How to "reboot" your sexual response and what to expect, at [RebootNation.com](http://RebootNation.com)
- What you might want to include in a go-day plan for abstinence, [Covenant Eyes, habits of freedom](#)

# Get Stronger

## Get Real

Porn, like video games, is escape into fantasy. In gaming, you kill the monster. In porn, you get the girl (or guy). At least with gaming, you need to have some skill. With porn, hundreds of attractive strangers can bare all and give themselves to you, while requiring nothing. A dangerous illusion.

## *Find Healthier Escapes*

Healthy escapes are welcome distractions to help you re-engage with the demands of real life refreshed. The best ones make you wiser and more imaginative, broaden your perspective and sharpen your skills in some way.

### Healthy Escapes Might Include:

- Sports/Dance
- Art

- Crafts
- Music
- Drama
- Books that don't have descriptive sex scenes
- Entertainment that's not porn
- Social activities with friends
- Learn something new
- Explore nature/learn survival skills

Porn however, like any narcotic, gives you a fake pleasure while delivering nothing. In this case, it is the intoxicating illusion of having won someone's love and passion, and being a skillful lover, while feeding your immaturity, isolating you and making you less and less able to learn to be strong, love unselfishly, and experience a fulfilling sex life.

### **Reality Has a Purpose**

As unpleasant and inconvenient as your reality may be, at least it is in this arena where you can find true and lasting satisfaction. Grappling with life teaches what is true, and what works. It's where we encounter God. Every lesson learned, every talent acquired, every step of personal development, every relationship deepened is a substantial gain.

Dwelling in fantasy only postpones these achievements, and invites loneliness, frustration and failure—which in turn, tempts you to escape even more, in a vicious cycle.

Recovering from this habit—and growing into full maturity—means repeatedly choosing hard realities of true love and responsibility over the easy, illusory comforts of porn fantasy.

## **Get Healthy**

### *Take Care of Yourself*

The best way to stop any unhealthy routine is to replace it with a healthy one. If you are always exhausted, stressed, bored, malnourished and isolated, you will turn to your drug of choice to survive. But when you are refreshed, inspired, nourished and connected, you are less interested in false substitutes an exhilarating life.

The sexual habit is a replacement for something missing. Figure out what your needs are and start working to meet them in an authentic way.



## Clean Up Your Diet

Addictive behavior tends to be associated with eating junk food—sugar, caffeine, fats and carbs. This is because of the way it affects the brain. Proper nutrition is a neglected part of helping to restore normal neurotransmitter function, which affect mood, memory and cravings.

You will feel a lot better if you cut down on sugar and junk food, while also increasing your intake of whole foods, especially protein. It will also curb the discomfort you feel while withdrawing from the habit. Get focused on improving your diet by learning about nutrition.

## Rest, Relaxation and Exercise

Neglecting to care for yourself is a common setup for developing some sort of unhealthy coping practice. When you “don’t have time” to get enough sleep, or to socialize and have fun, you will make time to watch porn and masturbate.

The very act of sitting in the dark for hours viewing porn can feed a lifestyle lacking exercise, sleep and sunshine, which will leave you feeling vaguely sick, anxious and dull. The temporary enlivening effect of the arousal from porn relieves this temporarily while it’s actually making things worse.

A classic reminder is HALT: Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired. When you are any of these, you are more vulnerable to bad habits.

To wean yourself off the substitute de-stressor, you need to find constructive outlets to relieve tension and maintain strength. Increasing exercise, turning off screens and getting to bed at a reasonable hour will help make the other parts of your recovery plan a lot easier.

## Get Skilled

### *Learn Something New*

Think about what you want to accomplish in life and how you want to live. Are there things you could be learning that would help you achieve those goals? Perhaps you could enhance some of the skills or hobbies you already have.



Are you unhappy with your job? Maybe you make good money but you don’t enjoy your chosen profession. Maybe you’d like to go back to school, or just take a few classes.

### **Stop Being Entertained**

Watching porn puts you in a kind of trance where time and space seem to vanish, and this provides an escape from unwanted feelings. A

healthier version of this can be found in any engaging pastime, like writing, music, working on cars, cooking and photography to name a few.

The most important aspect of a good hobby is being active, not passive—watching television and otherwise being entertained is passive. You need to experiment to find one or two active hobbies that fit your personality and situation. It's good to make plans to reach goals that are exciting.

Doing anything constructive that you enjoy, and that is absorbing, rewires the brain away from an old habit. If you're not sure where to begin, it can sometimes be helpful to develop an alternate "addiction" temporarily, such as video games or other easy distractions. Only while you're learning to rebalance the rest of your life, and with the intention to find a more healthy and creative pursuit once you've kicked the porn habit.

### **Start Living Actively**

You don't have to be like everyone else, but you can learn from what others do. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money or take a lot of time. Find something that will absorb your interest and focus your time and energy in a more active and healthy direction. The lists in the links below can be a starting point.

## **Get Extra Help**

Athletes use personal trainers to help them perfect their skills. Having someone as a coach to push you past your comfort zone and expose your blind spots is invaluable. So it is with overcoming a habit. Just as an Accountability Partner help you reach your internet use goals, so counselors and life coaches can assist you in getting "unstuck" and realizing your objectives.

### *There's A Personal Story Behind Your Addiction*

You may have challenges that are contributing to your present problems. For instance, you may have experienced head injuries when younger that were dismissed at the time but that are hidden sources of extra burden you are dealing with now. Or, more likely, significant past wounds to the heart and mind from important people in your life, or traumatic events may be driving your habit. This is especially true if you were sexually or otherwise abused or neglected as a child.

Finally, you might possibly be dealing with serious depression or anxiety. If any of these might be the case, consulting a



professional can save years of unnecessary suffering and may make your porn or other habit much easier to conquer.

### **Good Counseling is Available**

Many in-person and online counselors and coaches are highly experienced in helping individuals with pornography and related habits. Online recovery programs also often feature personal coaching or as an additional option.

When looking for help, we suggest asking prospective counselors what approach they use, their level of experience with your problem, and what kind of follow up they might provide. All professionals are obligated to respect the religious beliefs of clients, so don't be shy about explaining your values to the extent this is relevant to you.

- Highly acclaimed Christian counselor, Doug Weiss, for sex-related addictions, at [Heart to Heart Counseling Center](#)
- Bible-based Christian counselors recommended for dealing with porn and related compulsions, at [Pure Community](#)
- Well respected Christian counselors for porn and similar issues, at [Faithful and True](#)

### **Unification Faith Based Counselors**

There are numerous professionally trained Unificationist psychologists, social workers and mental health counselors, as well as gifted pastoral counselors. In addition, there are practitioners of alternative modalities, such as energy healers and those experienced in ancestral liberation. Check out the links below.

- List of trained counselors, at [FFUWP](#)
- Gavin Hamnet, a professional addictions counselor, at [FFUWP](#)
- Examples of alternative healing methods useful in overcoming a porn habit, at [YourBrainOnPorn.org](#)
- Unificationist using Emotion Code to aide in reducing porn habits, at [DebraWilkins EnergyHealer.com](#)

**Get Prepared  
Get Free  
Get Stronger**

**Overcome the Habit**