

The Problem of Pornography



T. J. Davidson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	THE PROBLEM OF PORN
6	POISONOUS POWER OF PORN
10	PORNOGRAPHY ADDICTION
13	THE 3 "A"s OF ADDICTION
16	BREAKING THE HABIT

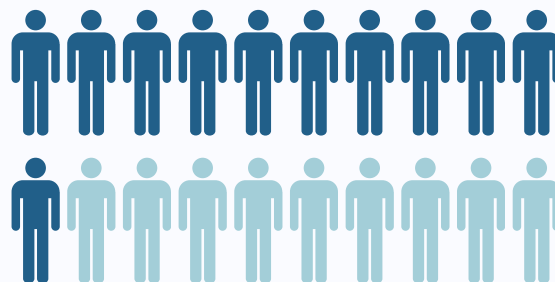
THE PROBLEM OF PORN

Pornography is one of the most dangerous problems in teen culture today. I have been in youth ministry for over 12 years and this is a persistent perennial problem that has continually been an issue for teens. According to PornHub's latest report, there were 28.5 billion visits to their site last year (2018), or an average of 81 million visits per day. Pornography is an enormous problem. We can't sweep under the rug. We have to deal with it.

During my entire time in youth ministry, I've always known teens who have struggled. I have been in youth ministry long enough to see teens grow up, go to college and get married. And one thing research tells us along with my personal experience - you don't grow out of pornography. If you don't deal with it as a teen, it follows you to college and follows you into your marriage. I've seen it time and time again. One startling statistic that makes pornography so dangerous is 27% of teens say porn is very bad and 16% somewhat bad. [1] That means 57% are neutral; they don't have an opinion or think might think it is good and healthy!

"We must get teenagers to realize how morally, physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually harmful pornography is."

57% Almost 6 in 10 teens don't think pornography is bad!



There is no way we can battle against pornography when almost 6 out of 10 teens don't even think it is a big deal. You can tell a teenager not to drink the poison, but that is not helpful if they think a bottle of cyanide is a glass of water. If teens don't think pornography is bad, they have no impetus to stop. And this trend is on the rise. In 2017, 36% of Americans thought pornography is morally acceptable compared to 43% in 2018. In just one year, there was a 7% increase in those who thought pornography was ok. This is also up from 30% in 2011.[2]

There has been a steady increase in the level of acceptance of pornography over the past 8 years, and it seems this trend will continue. This is the first problem we have to face with pornography. We must help teenagers realize how morally, physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually harmful pornography is. Until they realize how harmful it is they will have no reason to try to break the habit.

[1] <https://www.barna.com/research/porn-in-the-digital-age-new-research-reveals-10-trends/>

[2] <https://news.gallup.com/poll/235280/americans-say-pornography-morally-acceptable.aspx>

The implications of this are huge. When we don't even recognize sin as sin we can't win. I remember the first time I played paintball, I was with my cousins. I had never played in my life and they grew up right next to an army base. They gave me a gun pointed to the woods behind their house and told me to wonder out there and we would try to shoot each other. I did not know much about paintball but I knew it hurt so I put on my thick puffy orange jacket and headed out. I wandered in the woods for a few minutes and all of a sudden I was being pelted with paintballs. They first started coming straight ahead of me but then they were coming from the sides and back. My problem is that I couldn't see anyone. I just saw logs, trees, and bushes.

Apparently, they had put on their Ghillie suits and blended in like snipers into the landscape. It was impossible to shoot them because I could not even see them! I learned two things that day: don't wear bright orange jackets for paintball, and you can't hit what you can't see. There is no possible way we can't fight against pornography and its affects if teenagers don't even believe it is wrong. You can't change anything with that mindset. While all sin is bad, sexual sin holds a special place among sins because it wreaks havoc in people's lives and leaves long term affects. **1 Corinthians 6:18** says it so well, **"Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body."**

When we don't
even recognize
sin as sin we
can't win.

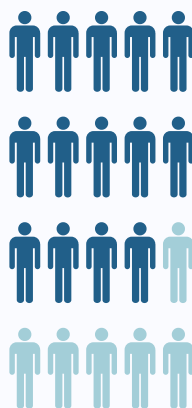
While we mourn these stats, unfortunately they make sense given our current cultural climate. Our culture is becoming ever increasingly sexualized. More and more shows are crossing lines and pushing boundaries. A Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that the number of sex scenes on TV has nearly doubled from 1998 to 2005, 70% of shows contain some sexual content and those shows average 5 sexual scenes an hour.[3]

It is hard to find TV shows that are not provocative. My wife and I really struggle to find clean shows to watch. We watch much less TV than we did 10 years ago and yet we struggle more than ever to find an appropriate show to watch. I am also shocked to find how many Christians will openly admit to watching TV shows that contain full nudity, explicit sex scenes, and depict sexual violence as the norm. Unfortunately, many teens give into the temptation to watch the latest sex filled show. Teens struggle to find appropriate shows to watch so instead of consuming less TV they give in and watch the inappropriate sexually explicit shows.

[3] Exploring the Dimensions of Human Sexuality, Jerrold S. Greenberg, Clint E. Bruess, Sara B. Oswalt, 2016, pg 694.

One of the major problems is that their parents are not monitoring what they watch and are ignorant of the sexually explicit material allowed in shows today. With the availability of parental controls and looking at watch history, there are no reasons why parents should not be able to monitor their kids viewing habits. Because of this proliferation of pornographic programs, teens are much more likely to take it a step further and seek out online pornography. Once a teens desires have been aroused and the seed has been planted, our culture continues to water that seed until is sprouts. Then that teen looks for sexual gratification on the internet or in real life.

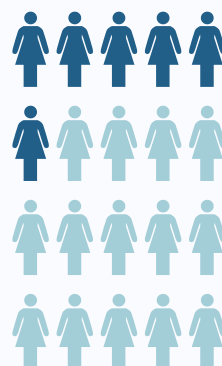
From a Barna study done in 2016 they found that 67% of males and 33% of females use porn. [4] This tells us some important things. Two out of every 3 men look at porn. This is not as high as some numbers I've seen but it is still alarming. Also, this is not just a male problem. One out of every 3 females look at porn. For some parents this is a wake-up call to realize that your daughters are not immune to this epidemic. While pornography used to be a solely male problem, every year the percentage of female users is climbing. This is a problem affecting all of our young people. Even if our teens are not directly involved, pornography has so shaped culture, how teens interact, and the conversations they are willing to have, that it is an issue for all of us.



A Barna Study found

67%

of males and



33%

of females use
pornography.

[4] <https://www.barna.com/research/porn-in-the-digital-age-new-research-reveals-10-trends/>

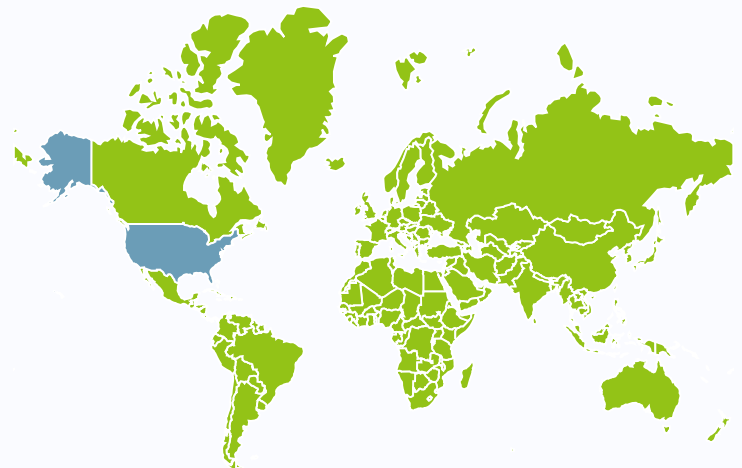
POISONOUS POWER OF PORN

The biggest danger of pornography is that it separates us from God. This separation grows exponentially worse with pornography's habit forming nature. When a person looks at pornography a flood of chemicals including Oxytocin and Endorphins are released in the brain that carve out neural pathways that encourage repeated actions. Your brain says, "that was good, I enjoyed that, let's do it again." So not only does this sin drive a wedge between us and God, but it encourages addictive behavior. As you repeat the action, those neural pathways get strengthened and become increasingly habit forming.

Pornography thus becomes a downward spiral that picks up speed and drives us further away from God the longer we engage it. However, being spiritually harmful is not the only negative effect of pornography. There is a high price to pay for looking at pornography. Viewing pornography affects you in every facet of your life. It affects you relationally, emotionally, and physically, also. Consider these statistics:

"Pornography thus becomes a downward spiral that picks up speed and drives us further away from God the longer we do it."

- Between 14,500 and 17,500 sex slaves are trafficked into the U.S. each year. Another 300,000 American children are at risk for trafficking each year.[5]



- Sexually explicit media content skews children's world view, increases high-risk behaviors, and alters their capacity for successful and sustained human relationships.

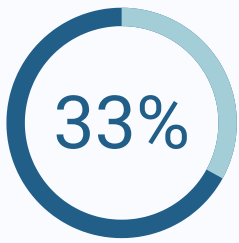
[6]

- Pornography addicts are 300% more likely to cheat on their spouse.[7]

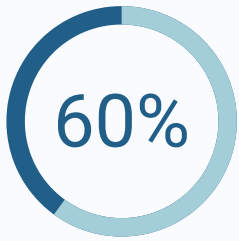
[5] Convergence Summit, How Does Porn Driving Sex Trafficking?, April 13-14, 2011 available online at <http://www.covenanteyes.com/convergence/social-justice/> (accessed Feb. 26, 2013).

[6] Villani, Susan. "Impact of Media on Children and Adolescents: A 10-Year Review of the Research." Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry 40, April 2001, 392, 399.

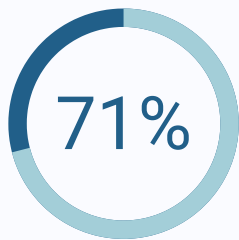
[7] Steven Stack, Ira Wasserman, and Roger Kern, "Adult Social Bonds and Use of Internet Pornography," Social Science Quarterly 85, (2004): 75-88.



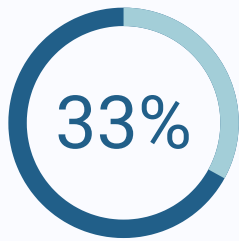
- 1/3 of porn addicts lose their jobs



- 60% of porn addicts have significant financial loss



- 71% of those who used porn experienced sexual dysfunction.



- 33% reported difficulty having an orgasm. [8]

- Pornography addicts are twice as likely to get a divorce.[9]

- Severe clinical depression is twice as frequent among internet pornography users.[10]

- Sexual addicts are 23 times more likely than those without a problem to state that: "discovering online sexual material was the worst thing that had ever happened in my life." [11]

- Heavy exposure to pornography leads men to judge their mates as sexually less attractive.[12]

- A 2006 -2008 survey of youth aged 10-15 found that youth who reported exposure to pornographic materials were 6.5 times more likely to report sexually aggressive behavior.[13]

- Excessive Pornography can cause Erectile Dysfunction. (See explanation below).

[8] <https://www.recoveryranch.com/relationships/psychological-side-effects-of-pornography/>

[9] Perry, Samuel L., and Cyrus Schleifer, "Till Porn Do Us Part? A Longitudinal Examination of Pornography Use and Divorce," *The Journal of Sex Research* (2017): 1-13.

[10] Michele L. Ybarra and Kimberly J. Mitchell, "Exposure to Internet Pornography among Children and Adolescents: A National Survey," *CyberPsychology & Behavior* 8, (2005): 473-86 (479).

[11] Donald W. Black, Laura L.D. Kehrberg, Denise L. Flumerfelt, and Steven S. Schlosser, "Characteristics of 36 Subjects Reporting Compulsive Sexual Behavior," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 154, (1997): 243-49 (247).

[12] Dolf Zillmann and Jennings Bryant, "Pornography's Impact on Sexual Satisfaction," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 18, (1988): 439.

[13] Ybarra, Michele L., et al. "X-Rated Material and Perpetration of Sexually Aggressive Behavior Among Children and Adolescents: Is There a Link?" *Aggressive Behavior* 37, 2011, 1, 3, 7.

Getting Technical

"When people start watching porn, there is a huge flood of dopamine in the brain," explains Dr. Elizabeth Waterman, a psychologist at Morningside Recovery Center in Newport California. "Over time, the receptors that were once very sensitive become less sensitive, and normal physical intimacy does not produce enough dopamine to stimulate the dopamine receptors." In other words, the more porn you watch, the more – and harder and more graphic – porn you need in order to get it up. If the trend continues, men can find themselves physically unable to maintain an erection, much less enjoy sexual contact with another person.[14]

Look over the list again, it is a depressing list. Pornography can affect every area of your life. Pornography increases chances of adultery, causes marriages to fail, affects the ability to have healthy relationships, and promotes child sex trafficking. It is a miserable master. No good thing comes from pornography. Even if you did not believe in God, and even if you didn't care that pornography wrecks your relationship with God, teens should still stay away from pornography for its other negative effects.

If those statistics are not bad enough look at how harmful pornography is to the brain:

Dopamine - is the "feel good" hormone that motivates people, helps them to focus on tasks, and propels them to action. When we look at pornography, huge amounts of dopamine are released and our brains can become "addicted" to that dopamine fix. This causes us to feel unmotivated to do anything else except look at pornography and get our next "fix." [15]

Oxytocin - is referred to as the bonding hormone and causes people to feel intimate with one another. Oxytocin is released with two people kiss, when a parent holds a new born baby, and also during sexual intimacy. The problem for the porn user is that, instead of bonding to a mate or learning to bond with women, they learn to bond with a screen. When a real woman comes along, they have a hard time forming lasting relationships, and sex becomes more difficult because they have trained their brain to react to a screen instead of a real person.

Testosterone - Known as the male hormone, produces sexual desire and arousal. With increased pornography use testosterone levels rise causing a chemical imbalance. This also causes a guy to become hyper sexualized. It becomes hard for him to control sexual fantasies and even modest women become provocative.

[14] <https://www.mensjournal.com/health-fitness/are-you-watching-too-much-porn-20130821/>

[15] <http://anthologycw.com/about-us/does-porn-really-change-my-brain/>

Cooledge affect - The Cooledge affect describes our propensity to novelty.[16] We like things that are new and different. This is especially true with sexuality. Like other drugs we can build up a tolerance, to pornography and we have to look to more extreme forms of pornography to get the same fix. The more a person looks at sexual images the more novel the images need to become. This causes people to go from softcore porn to hardcore to violent pornography. This leads the viewer to seek out extreme forms of pornography such as bestiality and pedophilia.
[17]

The Cooledge affect causes some men to have performance issues because normal interactions no longer suffice. “Virility is important for almost every man I know. The rise in porn-induced erectile dysfunction is something to be alarmed about. Frequent porn use leads to frequent masturbation and erections which can increasingly only be induced by hardcore pornography. Porn viewing then becomes a sort of psychological conditioning which creates performance anxiety.”[18]

[16] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00224499.2015.1025123>

[17] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20980228>

[18] <https://www.stevenaitchison.co.uk/pornography-erodes-masculinity/>

Pornography Addiction

If we are going to tackle the problem of pornography, we have to realize just how addictive, it is. About 200,000 people in the United States are diagnosed at “porn addicts.” This is defined by spending 11 hours or more per week looking at pornography. If your teen is viewing this much pornography, they need help from a professional. I would suggest taking them to see a counselor.

Viewing pornography activates the same brain regions that are activated when a person craves drugs such as alcohol, cocaine, and nicotine.[19] This means that consistent pornography use can be as addictive as drug use; the habit is just as strong and just as hard to break. Consequently, pornography must be quit cold turkey.

The children’s book “If You Give a Mouse a Cookie” speaks to this notion. The book says if you give a mouse a cookie, the mouse then requests a straw (to drink the milk). After you give him the straw, he then wants a mirror (to avoid a milk mustache), afterwards, he then needs scissors and then a broom. The point of the story is to be grateful for what you have and the point is driven home by using the foil of the mouse who always wants more.

Scary Fact



Viewing pornography activates the same brain regions that are activated when a person craves drugs such as alcohol, cocaine, and nicotine.

This is pornography. By its very nature it always wants more. It is never satisfied. The more you give into the craving the bigger the craving gets. “In a simple scenario, the brains says, “I saw porn. I masturbated. It felt good. In the future, let’s do it again. Really, I need this again. I’m not sure I’m getting what I need. How about a little more?” Mix in the anxiety and excitement of using the forbidden, the fear of being caught, and even secrecy, and the brain learns even faster during these intense emotional bursts. With each repetition the brain receives powerful cocktails of signals and hormones that ensure future cravings.”[20]

"Viewing pornography does not satiate the desire it only increases it."

————— T.J. Davidson —————

[19] Love, T., Laier, C., Brand, M., Hatch, L., & Hajela, R. (2015). Neuroscience of internet pornography addiction: A Review and update. Behavioral Sciences, (5), 388-423.

[20] The Porn Circuit, <https://learn.covenanteyes.com/porn-circuit/>, 6.

Like all highly addictive drugs, the more you use it the more you want it. Viewing pornography does not satiate the desire - it only increases it. Muscle memory is the phenomenon where through repeated action your muscles can learn to do a skill without you thinking about it. A professional basketball player can drain 3 pointers without thinking about it because they have done it so much. A chef can dice a carrot without even looking. And what happens with the muscles happens with the brain.

The more one looks at pornography the brain remembers that habit and it becomes more ingrained in the brain. Neural pathways are being formed and reinforced and grow stronger with prolonged pornography use. Pornography is not something you slowly lessen it is something you must quit completely. Also, the earlier you quit the better. The bonds of the neurotransmitters get stronger and stronger the more you look.

How do you know if you are addicted?

The Cyber Pornography Use Inventory was created to measure how addicted a person might be to pornography. Here are 6 of the questions from the survey. If a person answers true to any of the questions this indicates a problem might be present.[21]

1 I believe I am addicted to Internet pornography (Compulsivity)



2 Even when I do not want to use pornography, I feel drawn to it (Compulsivity).



3 I feel unable to stop my use of online pornography (Compulsivity).



4 At times, I try to arrange my schedule so that I will be able to alone in order to view pornography (Access Efforts).



5 I've refused to go out with friends or attend certain social functions to have the opportunity to view pornography (Access Efforts).



6 I have put off important priorities to view pornography (Access Efforts).



[21] Grubbs, J.B., Volk, F., Exline, J.J., & Pargament K.I. (2015). Internet pornography use: Perceived addiction, psychological distress, and the validation of a brief measure. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy*, 41(1), 83-106.

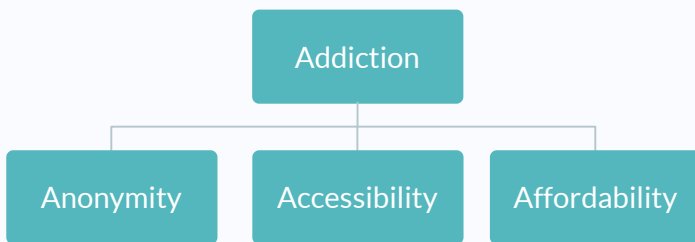
If you answer true to any of these, that does not necessarily mean that you are an “addict” in the clinical sense. It does however indicate that you have looked at pornography enough that neural pathways have formed and been strengthened from repeated use and it will be hard to stop. A great tool I have found online that incorporates these questions is found here

Another very easy way to know if a teen has a serious problem with pornography is to see if they can go without looking at it for 14 days. [22] If a teen is addicted (not in the clinical sense, but in the “oh man you got serious issues” type of way) their brain will go through withdrawal and will be screaming at them to get its fix.

[22] Mark Laaser, Personal interview, January 2013. Dr. Laaser, M.Div., Ph.D., is the founder and president of Faithful and True and the author of Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction, The Seven Desires of Every Heart and other books.

The Three 'A's of Addiction

If you want to stop you have to know about the 3 "A"s that drive addiction: Anonymity, Accessibility, and Affordability. [23] Addiction is like a 3-legged stool and if you want to break the addiction you must tackle the legs holding it up.



Anonymity - Viewing pornography has become a completely anonymous endeavor. A person can look at it without anyone else ever knowing. When things are done in secret there is no accountability and temptation becomes much stronger. For a person who wants to break the habit there are two ways to bring this anonymous behavior into the light.

1) Accountability partner - Find someone you trust such as a friend, mentor, or minister and tell them your struggle. Have them check in with you and see how you are doing. It is best to find someone who is not struggling with pornography. If your teen is looking for a partner it is probably best it is not a parent. If you are a parent have a partner besides your spouse. Covenant Eyes has a great free ebook on Accountability partners I encourage you to check out. <https://www.covenanteyes.com/accountability-partner-ebook/>

Accountability partners is a voluntary relationship and the weakness is a person can lie to their partner. This is why accountability software is a must. I believe every home and every device in America should have accountability and filtering software on their devices. Just look up "Internet filtering software" or "Internet Accountability software" and you will find a plethora of choices.

These services are able to block questionable content and also send reports to designated people. These reports include a person's internet usage and flags questionable websites that were accessed.

[23] The 3 "A's" taken from Mark Kastleman, The Drug of the New Millennium (Orem, UT: Power Thinking Publishing, 2007). Mark adds a fourth A, "aggressive"

While I am a big fan of Accountability Software, no software will be perfect and it is not full proof. Talking with your teen, building a relationship of trust, and keeping open and honest communication is the best way to help fight any problem.

Accessibility - To access pornography a person used to have to go into a store and buy a magazine. It was difficult and could be embarrassing. Now it can be accessed by anyone with a computer or smart phone. In fact 70% of teens who look at pornography are using a smartphone or tablet to do it.[24] It is very hard to limit access to the internet, but there are some very easy things parents can do to limit access for their teens.

Location of smart devices - Make sure computers and smart TVs are in common areas. They are much more of a temptation when they are in locations people can access without anyone knowing. I'm against teens taking their phones in their bedrooms for the same reasons.

Talking with your teen, building a relationship of trust, and keeping open and honest communication is the best way to help fight any problem.

Cellphone restrictions - Cellphones should be taken up at night and put in the parent's bedroom. Many experts agree that putting the phone away one hour before bed is a great habit to get into.[25] Looking at your smartphone at night is not a good idea for many reasons. Using smartphones right before bed causes you to take longer to fall asleep, messes with your circadian rhythm, suppresses your melatonin secretion, decreases your REM sleep, and causes you to feel more tired and less alert when you wake up.[26]

This is a good rule not just for teens but for adults also. But also, as a person gets more tired they are more likely to make bad decisions and give into temptations. It is best to take the phones up, get better sleep, and not worry about making a bad choice.

Affordability - Pornography is not only easy to access and you can do it anonymously, but also it you can look without it costing any money. The most recent studies state that 90% of all pornography that is looked at online is for free. This one is hard to fight against. One of the best ways parents can attack this is through consequences. Parents need to have open and honest conversations with their teens about the dangers of pornography and set ground rules at the beginning. There are several "digital contracts" available online.

[24] <https://readwrite.com/2013/12/23/most-porn-in-the-united-states-viewed-on-mobile-devices/>

[25] <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/put-the-phone-away-3-reasons-why-looking-at-it-before-bed-is-a-bad-habit/>

[26] <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/prescriptions-life/201804/6-ways-night-time-phone-use-destroys-your-sleep>

A digital contract is a list of expectations a parent has with their teen. When a teen gets their Driver's License or first car parents usually sit down with their teen and talk with them. They discuss how the teen needs to be responsible and the expectations the parent has when the teen is operating the car. When a teen gets a cellphone, it is just as big of a responsibility and can cause just as much damage. I would suggest going to Digital Kids Initiative done by CPYU and downloading a copy of their digital contract < <https://digitalkidsinitiative.com/resources/handouts/> >.

Once you talk about expectations let them know the punishment or consequence for breaking the contract or rules. While they can still look at pornography for free, you can raise the price for getting caught at looking. I know several parents tell their kids if the kids come to them first and admit a problem they will not be punished. This encourages openness and honesty in the relationship and is something to consider also.



The Four Triggers

A great way to start breaking the habit is to look at the 4 triggers that can cause a relapse.

The 4 Triggers refer to the state of the person fighting addiction. They are a person being:

Hungry
Angry
Lonely
Tired

Breaking the Habit

Our brains have a high degree of neural plasticity which means the neural pathways in our brain are shaped by our experiences. Consequently, the more we do something we enjoy, whether positive or negative, it will become more ingrained into how our brain functions.

This is why habits, good or bad, can be hard to break, especially sexual habits. The good news is lust, pornography, and other deviant sexual behaviors were learned and they can be unlearned. However, since those pathways in the brain took time to form, they will take hard work and time to unlearn. Not only do we unlearn those behaviors, but it takes time for those neural pathways to weaken.



It seems simple enough, but when these basic needs are not met, we are susceptible to self-destructive behaviors including relapse.

It seems simple enough, but when these basic needs are not met, we are susceptible to self-destructive behaviors including relapse.[27] We see this idea play out in Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Maslow's hierarchy is seen as a pyramid whereby each layer is built on the previous foundation.

The layers are: Physiological needs (air, water, food, shelter, etc.); Safety needs (personal security, health); Love and Belonging (friendship, intimacy); Esteem (respect, self-esteem); and lastly self-actualization (desire to become the most that one can be). Many times addictions are plugging needs in a person's life; they are a way to self-medicate. [28]

Their needs are not being met, their pyramid is lacking and so they are looking for ways to patch the holes. The more a person can reach self-actualization (the highest rung on the pyramid) the less likely they will be addicted. These 4 triggers are the most common needs that are not met that become the stumbling block back into addiction.

These triggers are intuitively self-explanatory but pornography use and loneliness have an interesting correlation. "Pornography use begets loneliness, and loneliness begets pornography use. In Pornography Use and Loneliness: A Bidirectional Recursive Model and Pilot Investigation, Butler, Pereyra, Drap, Leonhardt, and Skinner (2018) surveyed 1,247 participants in English-speaking countries around the world to develop a sophisticated statistical model of how various factors related to loneliness and pornography use.

Overall, they found that porn use was significantly associated with loneliness. In addition, loneliness was significantly associated with pornography use, suggesting a two-way relationship." [29] This goes along with the mounting research that says heavy social media use produces loneliness and depression. [30] This is another reminder that we need to get off our phones and computers and interact with others.

[27] <https://bradfordhealth.com/halt-hunger-anger-loneliness-tiredness/>

[28] We see this happen with mental health patients. cf. Self-Medication of Mental Health Problems: New Evidence from a National Survey - Harris - 2005 - Health Services Research - Wiley Online Library.

[29] <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/experimentations/201803/4-ways-porn-use-causes-problems>

[30] Instagram Use, Loneliness, and Social Comparison Orientation: Interact and Browse on Social Media, But Don't Compare. Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking VOL. 19, NO. 12

Many of these triggers work in conjunction with one another. The key is to find out what time of day or what situations are a trigger for the specific individual and come up with a customized game plan for that person. We will not list all the possible scenarios, but one reason why late night is such a bad time to fight lust is because people are experiencing several of the triggers at the same time. They are tired, but also hungry and lonely. Each person will find that different situations and events will affect them differently and what might be unbearably hard for one person will not be an issue for another.

As Christians we hate sin, or at least we should. And many good churches teach how to deal with sin, as they should. However, there has been a shift that has happened that Dallas Willard in his book *The Divine Conspiracy* describes this way,

“History has brought us to the point where the Christian message is thought to be essentially concerned only with how to deal with sin: with wrongdoing or wrong-being and its effects. Life, our actual existence, is not included in what is now presented as the heart of the Christian message, or it is included only marginally.”

He describes it as the gospel of sin management. We have taken grace away from God and given the power to the people. With this gospel, no longer do we need to be holy by the Holy Spirit we can do it ourselves. You might think I would never do that. But we already have. Many times when we try to deal with lust, we think we can do it on our own. We say, “I will recommit myself,” “I’ll sign a contract with a group of friends and we will win together,” “If I read my Bible enough then I won’t think about it.” All of those efforts are good, but do you notice the problem? We have taken God out of the equation! If we want to fight sin in all of its forms we need God’s help.

It is important to know about the 3 “A”s of addiction and the 4 Triggers of Relapse. These inform us how Satan and sin work. But we must submit to God throughout the whole process. This means we need to do 2 things:

Pray - We need to ask God to help us and our teenager. We need to pray for God’s guidance and strength. Philippians 2:13 says, “for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” This verse tells us that God gives us the will and the want to do His will; he gives us the power and passion to obey Him. So we need to invite Him into the process of battling sin.

Memorize Scripture - Fighting sin and temptation is not just about taking out the bad, it is also about replacing it with something better. Covenant Eyes has a whole ebook on this idea Called "Hobbies and Habits: Learn how healthy hobbies and habits can help you break free from porn." . I would wholeheartedly recommend it. It is a very good book. At the same time we need to fill our mind with God's word. We see Jesus fight temptation by quoting Scripture and the a great way for us to fight temptation is to do the same. Here are a few good ones to get you started:

Memorize these verses, hide them in your heart to help protect you from sin and temptation (Psalm 119:11).

1 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."



2 Timothy 2:22

"So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."



1 Corinthians 10:13

"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."



NEW

Job 31:1

"I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?"

