

Lesson 1:

Introduction to Sexual Addiction

"Pornography is the addiction of choice among Christians."

Marnie Ferree

Shocking Statistics

Every second of every day, there are over 28 thousand Internet users viewing pornography.¹

It may be a revelation to many readers, but every second of every day, there are over 28 thousand internet users viewing pornography.¹

On one end of this spectrum there is an 8 year old boy who is about to unintentionally end up on a pornographic web site unnaturally starting his sex drive. This will skew forever what he finds arousing and will lead him to experience the first of thousands of drug like highs through masturbatory fantasy.

Immediately following this high, he will be introduced to feelings of guilt and shame that will grow more toxic with time, and settle in deeper and deeper after each repetition.

On the other end of this spectrum you have an older man, who has been addicted to pornography for years, who after binging on violent pornography for days is no longer aroused by a virtual experience and angrily grabs his keys, drives around looking for anyone to sexually act out with, regardless of age or willingness.

First exposure to Pornography on the Internet is at about age 8-11.²

We have been inundated with news about the sexual misconduct of professional athletes, Hollywood stars, well known ministers, and national politicians. Reports of sexual crimes and sexual abuse have become common place. Word is spreading about the thousands of young girls and boys being sold as slaves in a global sex trade. What rarely is reported however, is the role that pornography played in leading these people to the point where they ultimately acted out sexually.

We now know that the average age of first exposure to internet pornography is somewhere between the ages of 8 and 11. The largest consumers of pornography are males between the ages of 12 and 17.³ More than 70% of men ages 18 to 34 visit a pornographic site in a typical month.⁴ In 2004, there were 420 million pornographic Web pages;⁵ 2.5 billion pornography related emails were sent each day.⁶ There were 100 thousand Web sites offering illegal child pornography,⁷

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and 72 million annual worldwide visitors to pornographic websites.⁸

We also know that pornography is just as big a problem in Christian circles with study after study showing that over 50% of Christian men regularly view pornography.⁹ And it's not just a problem for men as seen by the roughly 9.3 million females who view internet pornography each year.¹⁰

Statistics from the US department of Justice show that 90 percent of predators who molest children have had some type of involvement with pornography.

***Over 50% of Christian men
regularly view pornography.⁹***

According to Charles Keating of *Citizens for Decency Through Law*, 77% of child molesters of boys and 87% of child molesters of girls admitted imitating the sexual behavior they had seen in pornography.

It is clear that we are in the midst of an epidemic. It is also clear that the majority of those searching for freedom are finding others with their heads buried in the sand, unwilling to acknowledge the problem. People who are themselves lost in the same problem not knowing where to go for help, and others who want to be helpful but feel overwhelmed and unconfident about how to provide relief.

***Roughly 9.3 million females
view pornography every year.¹⁰***

The good news is that there is help. The good news is that there is hope. There really is freedom from sexual addiction.

This DVD series and workbook are designed to help those who are currently struggling with pornography to find a lasting freedom. It is designed to provide answers and resources to spouses of pornography addicts and to parents whose children are already struggling.

It is also designed to give tools to those who are in the position to help others know how to do so confidently and effectively.

With interviews from some of the most respected experts in the field and testimonials of some who know first hand the devastation that pornography can cause – this series will provide the answers you are looking for to find help, healing, and true freedom from the Mouse Trap.

What is sex addiction?

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Sex addiction is an umbrella term that covers many types of behaviors, but the most common type of sex addiction is pornography.

Pornography is the addiction of choice among Christians.

Sexual behavior is categorized into distinct types with a common set of issues which are important to understand.

The Ten Broad Categories of Sexual Addiction

1. Fantasy Sex: Sexually charged fantasies, relationships and situations. Arousal depends on sexual possibility.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

2. Seductive Role Sex: Seduction of partners. Arousal is based on conquest and diminishes rapidly after initial contact.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

3. Voyeuristic Sex: Visual arousal. The use of visual stimulation to escape into obsessive trance.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

4. Exhibitionistic Sex: Attracting attention to body or sexual parts of the body. Sexual arousal stems from reaction of viewer whether shock or interest.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

5. Paying for Sex: Purchase of sexual services. Arousal is connected to payment for sex and with time the arousal actually becomes connected to money itself.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

6. Trading Sex: Selling or bartering sex for power. Arousal is based on gaining control of others by using sex as leverage.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

7. Intrusive Sex: Boundary violation without discovery. Sexual arousal occurs by violating boundaries with no repercussions.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

8. Anonymous Sex: High-risk sex with unknown persons. Arousal involves no seduction or cost and is immediate.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

9. Pain Exchange Sex: Being humiliated or hurt as part of sexual arousal; or sadistic hurting or degrading another sexually, or both.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

10. Exploitive Sex: Exploitation of the vulnerable. Arousal patterns are based on target “types” of vulnerability.

Question: What examples can you give that would indicate whether you or your spouse have engaged in this activity?

Dr. Patrick Carnes, Facing the Shadows, Second Edition²⁴

Assessing Addiction

Addiction is easily determined by looking at 10 criteria.

Criteria for Determining Sexual Addiction

1. Recurrent failure (pattern) to resist impulses to engage in specific sexual behavior.

Describe instances when you or your spouse’s behavior have met this criteria.

2. Frequently engaging in those behaviors to a greater extent or over a longer period of time than intended.

Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

3. Persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to stop, reduce, or control those behaviors.

Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

4. Inordinate amount of time spent in obtaining sex, being sexual, or recovering from sexual experience.

Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

5. Preoccupation with the behavior or preparatory activities.

Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

6. Frequently engaging in the behavior when expected to fulfill occupational, academic, domestic, or social obligations.

Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

7. Continuation of the behavior despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent social, financial, psychological, or physical problem that is caused or exacerbated by the behavior!
Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

8. Need to increase the intensity, frequency, number, or risk of behaviors to achieve the desired effect, or diminished effect with continued behaviors at the same level of intensity, frequency, number, or risk.
Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

9. Giving up or limiting social, occupational, or recreational activities because of the behavior.
Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

10. Distress, anxiety, restlessness, or irritability if unable to engage in the behavior.
Describe instances when you or your spouse's behavior have met this criteria.

Dr. Patrick Carnes, Facing the Shadows, Second Edition²⁵

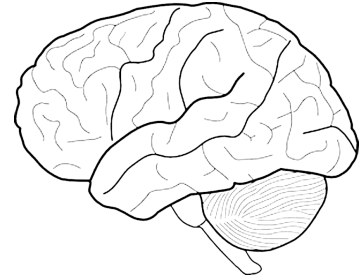
NOTE: If three or more of the criteria are met, it is believed that addiction is present.

Additional resources for sex addiction assessments (online tests) may be found at: www.sexhelp.com

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Understanding the Brain

Although there are many natural chemicals that are released in the brain while viewing pornography, there are five chemicals that play a major role in producing a self-medicated, unnatural, altered state.



What natural experiences have you had in life that have given you your biggest “highs?”

Explain how it would feel at 11 times the intensity.

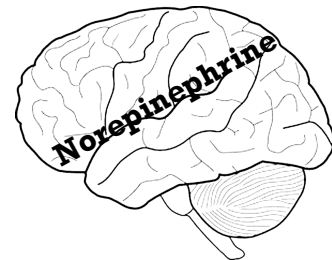
1. Testosterone

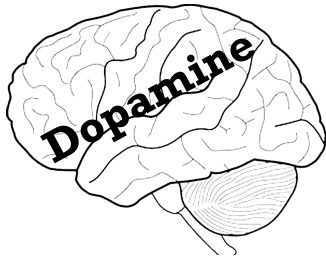
The hormone that promotes sexual desire in both men and women, increases dramatically during the viewing of pornography. The testosterone produces the desire, and the pornography causes more testosterone to be released, engulfing the viewer in what seems to be an unstoppable cycle.



2. Norepinephrine

Our naturally produced adrenaline, courses through the body providing energy and heightened awareness. It is also associated with an increase in ones memory capacity, explaining how images can be remembered years after they have been seen.





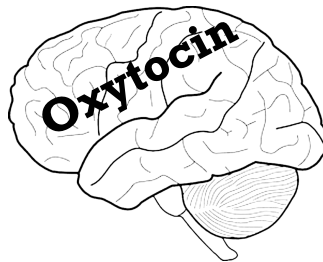
3. Dopamine

Dopamine is connected to the pleasure center and brings about feelings of ecstasy and exhilaration and is understood to be the chemical that promotes

cravings. It brings the viewer to the point where their focus is on nothing else. Everything outside of that craving is compartmentalized away. Time seems to stop and only the fantasy remains. *"The first time they ever saw a pin up or the first time they ever had a sexual experience... 'It lit up my light. It was like the cocaine of choice. I mean, that was it.'"*

4. Oxytocin

Commonly called the cuddle chemical and may be responsible for why sex is often mistaken for intimacy. Oxytocin is what makes you feel connected to someone else. It is a bonding chemical that is released primarily through touch, whether it is sexual or just affectionate touch. It is believed that when someone says they feel in love what they actually feel is oxytocin. During orgasm, a rush of oxytocin is released, bringing a feeling of connectedness that many pornography users are longing for and experience through masturbatory fantasy without having to be vulnerable or connect to anyone.



5. Serotonin

Serotonin is released primarily after orgasm, and brings on deep feelings of calmness and an elevated mood.

Antidepressant medications typically address serotonin levels in the brain by increasing its ability to utilize this

neurochemical. When people seem more relaxed or in a better mood after sex, an increase in serotonin is often the reason.

These five neurochemicals, as well as others, are all part of the cocktail pornography viewers are using to artificially alter their mood and emotions.

More about Dopamine

Food, alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, etc., all increase the level of dopamine in the brain and they do so in different amounts. The harder the drug, the bigger the dose,

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the more dopamine is going to be released.

When you rank a drug for the amount of dopamine it has the potential to release, crack cocaine shares the top spot, along with masturbation to moving pornography. Both have roughly an 1100% dopamine potentiation, which means you can feel up to eleven times better than the best you can feel through any normal activity.

Dopamine loves novelty. It craves it and is never satisfied. The novelty, the WOW factor wears off quickly if someone is looking at a still pornographic picture. Compare this to an endless supply of different images and movies, with full sound, that the Internet can supply with just a mouse click. Different people, positions, body types, situations, etc., is like a dopamine release with each mouse click. No individual, no spouse, no real life experience can compete with the Internet in supplying novelty in that way.

Sex addiction is not about sex

Following is an excerpt from an interesting article by Walter Last giving an example of dopamine and brain experience, *THE NEUROCHEMISTRY OF SEX*. The entire article may be found at <http://www.health-science-spirit.com/neurosex.html>

"In experiments with rats it has been observed that after vigorous copulation with a new partner, male rats soon completely ignore this partner, but when a new female is introduced, they immediately are revitalized - at least sufficiently to become sexually active once more. This can be repeated again and again until the male rat is completely exhausted.

This phenomenon has been called the 'Coolidge Effect' after an American president. On a visit to a farm his wife had been shown a rooster who could copulate with his hens all day-long day after day. She liked that idea and asked the farmer to let the president know about this. After hearing it, President Coolidge thought for a moment and asked: 'Does he do that with the same hen?' 'No, Sir' answered the farmer. 'Please tell that to Mrs. Coolidge' said the president (http://www.reuniting.info/science/coolidge_effect).

Not only has the Coolidge effect been observed in all tested male animals, but also in females. Female rodents for instance flirt more and present themselves more attractively when observed by new males than in the presence of males with whom they had already had sex.

Another experiment indicates that the cause of this effect may be a rush of dopamine. When rats were taught to pull a lever to stimulate their own reward center, they would forgo eating and copulating, and just continue to stimulate themselves until they were totally exhausted."