

Pornography: Breaking Free

By Jim Seghers

Addiction to pornography is a very serious problem that traps many boys and men and some women in its deadly clutches. The following steps will break this addiction.¹

Get Rid of All Pornography

Destroy everything connected with pornography. Until this commitment is made, the situation is hopeless. Put filters on your computer or get the computer out of your home if it continues to be a source of temptation. Don't play around with this stuff. It's deadly.

It Begins and Ends with Grace

Those trapped in pornography feel they are helpless to break away from this addiction. They are right! Jesus instructed us: "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). However, what is impossible to you is easy for God. Rely on his help. That's why St. Paul could declare, "I can do all *things in him who strengthens me*" (Phil 4:13). That requires becoming a man of prayer. Make it a scheduled part of your date. For Catholics using the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a must. It produces miracles.

Reorientate Your Understanding About Sex

Growing up is always a challenging task especially when one has embraced an adolescent understanding of human sexuality. I highly recommend that you read the *Good News About Sex & Marriage* by Christopher West. Although it is written from a Catholic perspective, its biblical basis will appeal to Protestants as well as Catholics.

Get Help

Find a priest, pastor, spiritual director or Christian counselor who will support and guide you through this difficult period. Avoid anyone who takes the attitude that pornography is no big deal.

Control Beginnings

Temptations are easy to combat at the beginning. However, once the imagination becomes fully engaged it is very difficult to combat. Consider King David's fall (2 Sam 22:1-26). It began with a glance. The glance led to a stare. The stare led to lust. The lust led to a summons. The summons led to adultery. The adultery led to murder. Had he stopped at the glance adultery and murder would never have occurred. In regard to these temptations he who runs away will live to fight another day.

Don't Give Up

Falls are discouraging. Therefore you will be tempted to give up. Resist that tendency with all your might. Falls should remind you of your helplessness and motivate you to rely on God and not on yourself. If you persist a time will come when this addiction will be out of your life forever.

Get Your Wife to Help

¹ Many of the ideas presented here are drawn from Steve Wood's 12-Step program. Anyone interested in this subject should check out the Family Life Center International web site at www.familylifecenter.net.

If she doesn't already know, confess your addiction and ask for her help. Admitting the addiction will release some of its hold on you. Begin to pray together as a couple. Ask her to pray for you during the day. If you are single ask your parents to pray for you. You needn't go into specifics. Ask them to pray for a special intention; for example, you want to commit your life to Christ.

Read Sacred Scripture

Began a daily meditative reading of Sacred Scripture. I particularly recommend the Gospels with an emphasis on the Passion accounts. The more you reflect on the Passion the more you will understand the horror of sin, and the more determined you will become to avoid it.

Find Healthy Interests

Exercise is a good starting point. Even walking on a daily basis can be a great help. If T.V. is a problem get rid of the cable or satellite hook-up, or eliminate it all together. Consider a reading program that will expand your thinking. A good place to start is Christopher West's *Theology of the Body for Beginners*. Develop friendships with men and women you will motivate you by the example of their lives to live a faithful Christian life.

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