

Introduction to Biblical Counseling

Pornography (Photo Harlotry)

Introduction

- A. In the openness of the 1970s, pornography was viewed as harmless and even beneficial. In less than fifteen years the number of rapes doubled.**
- B. 64% of Christian men (in the church) struggle with sex addiction or sexual compulsion, pornography, compulsive masturbation, secret sexual activities (six out of ten). 25% had affairs (sexual intercourse), 14% had sexual contact short of intercourse (Secrets p. 132, 133). 25% have abused alcohol or drugs; one third have not reached out to anyone for help because of embarrassment.**
1. One popular evangelist was observed by our LFM team watching porn in an internet café.
- C. Nearly every book in the New Testament commands us to avoid sexual impurity.**
1. Matt. 5:28; Mark 7:21-23; Acts 15:29; Rom. 13:12,13; I Cor. 5:11; I Cor. 6:13; II Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:16,19; Eph. 5:3,4; Col. 3:5,6; I Thess. 4:3-5,7; Heb. 12:16; I Peter 4:3; Jude 7; Rev. 2:1-4
- D. Your sexuality and spirituality (not your ministry) are very closely linked together. The way you are sexually is a defining statement about your spirituality (Breaking, p. 161).**
1. The use of pornography and genuine spirituality do not co-exist. The Apostle John clarified that reality in his letter.
 - a. I John 1:6,8, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
 2. Sexual purity is God’s will for all.
 - a. 1 Thessalonians 4:3, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification (holy character): that you should abstain from sexual immorality;”
 3. If you claim to be a child of God and have a strong expectation of His return, you will make every effort to purify yourself because He is pure.
 - a. I John 3:2,3, “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

E. Two general approaches to sex addiction

1. **Religious** – It tends to focus on the sin only and considers past or present personal pain irrelevant.
 - a. True, Pornography is sin yet there are often circumstances to consider that have to be addressed to end the sexual bondage. This is not an excuse for sin but an explanation of its source.
2. **Psychological** - It focuses on past or present pain but does not believe in the existence of sin (Breaking Free, p. 25).
 - a. Guilt for sexual sin is just an over sensitive conscience.
3. As a general rule pastors study theology but do not understand the dynamics of human behavior. Psychologists study people but do not know Biblical theology. A better balance is to study theology and people to learn how to apply Biblical theology to man's needs which is the focus of the New Testament epistles and the book of Proverbs.

F. There are many doors to the same building of illicit sexual behavior and slavery.

1. What would lead a man to be sexually obsessed? True, the first source is obviously, sin. But there are many ways he may have been set up or led into immoral sexual activity. This is still wrong and he is still responsible for his behavior. But it is important to realize the many doorways that lead into the building of sexual obsession. You need to know them now in order to shut them later.
 - a. One pastor compulsively put on lipstick, then masturbated. Events in his childhood set him up for this perverted sexual activity.
2. Compulsive sexual habits are the result of thousands of undisciplined naïve, curious sexual choices. In time, habits become obsessions that result in addictions.
 - a. It is important here to get a sexual history. Why? You do not know how to close the door if you do not know what door he entered.

Section I

OPEN DOOR TO POROGRAPHY

I. Open the door (set up sources for out of control sexuality)



A. Unintentional exposure to porn/sex

1. Sources of exposure can be siblings, parents, neighbors, relatives, friends, teachers, religious leaders, babysitters, grandparents.
 - a. Result: Boys soon learn to view nude women as objects to be used for pleasure instead of people to be respected.
 - b. ill.: Uncle Mac - garage walls full of nudes.
2. Random exposure: books, magazines, nude pictures left around and children find them.
3. Surfing the internet, stumble across porn, out of curiosity start viewing it, then, they get hooked on the pleasure (visual candy) sensation the porn produces.
 - a. That is why every computer needs a filter.
4. Adults inappropriately exposing themselves to young children.
 - a. Nude mother sunbathing caused son to have an obsession with female body.
 - b. A mother attending to her personal hygiene with the bathroom door open.
 - c. Dad shaving while nude with the bathroom door open.

B. Curiosity and experimentation – childhood exploration that discovers pleasure sensations from masturbation or oral sex.

1. Children “playing nasty”, innocent, not incest, not sex abuse.
2. But, For some, these activities were the beginning of a lifetime of sexual obsession, guilt and shame.

C. Sex abuse (molestation)

1. Nationally (USA) one out of every three women has been sexually abused. In California, U.S.A. it is one out of two. One out of every six men has also been sexually abused.
 - a. One out of 25 females are victims of incest, involuntary intercourse; 25% experienced other sexual abuse. One out of 50 males had intercourse with their mothers or step mothers and many young boys were abused by homosexuals (Jerks, p. 85).
 - b. In I Cor. 5:1, a man was having sex with his mother (step mother). This was prohibited in the Law (Lev. 18:8; Deut. 22:22). Since Paul said nothing about disciplining the step mother, it may indicate she was not a Christian.
2. Sources: Parents, siblings, babysitters, relatives, friends, neighbors, strangers, teachers, religious leaders, Sunday school teachers, sponsors, club leaders.
3. Sexual abuse by adults does not stop with old age. The phrase, “dirty old men” validates that reality.

- a. Many grandfathers believe their very young grandchildren are too young to remember the sexual abuse and they are too young to be negatively influenced by it.
 - b. ill.: Amber's story, sexually molested by grandfather.
 - c. ill.: Janice's grandfather
4. Children who were sexually abused can confuse sex as love (instead of power, revenge, control) so they become obsessed with sex to feel "loved." This has been the door-way of many into homosexuality.



- b. The Hebrew word for "incest" is "confusion."
5. Molestation can affect what objects of lust one gravitates toward in his sexually obsessed future.
- a. One young man stole female underwear to masturbate with (fetish).

D. Wounds (sexual or non sexual)

1. Sexual addiction can come from emotional wounds from childhood. Wounds need to be healed, then, grieve the loss and fill that lack in a healthy relationship with another man.
 - a. Sexual sin can grow as a result of bad or broken family relationships (Every Young Man's Battle, p. 120). To avoid emotional pain of the past.
 - 1) Type A wounds: physical and emotional
2. When parents fail to affirm or nurture (type B trauma), they have failed in their God-given function. That deficit is often what the child seeks to fill in adulthood with something sexual (Breaking Free, p. 81).
 - a. When normal needs for nurture acceptance and love are not met growing up, they do not cease to exist; they simply change forms and illicit sex is just one form.
 - b. You stay stuck emotionally at the point of the time of the loss or pain.
3. Many sexually involved people have been wounded by maternal (mothers) abandonment, by physical or emotional abuse or over control.
 - a. The root of the sexually addicted may be that they have experienced some form of abandonment.

4. Wounds from rejection especially by a woman may result in the seeking out of a pornographic lover who always smiles with approval, never rejects or abandons, always supports the man's pride, always says, "Everything will be all right." No perceived risk is present while they participate in the sexual activity.
5. Womanizing and porn could be a wrongful attempt to get some nurturing they lacked.
6. The sex addict's need is often not sex (though he believes it is). His need is for love – a need he perceives is unmet. He is in a constant state of "hunger" looking for something to satisfy it (Breaking, p. 26).
7. If he does not take an honest look at how these wounds and deficits of the past were created (open door), his is doomed to continue seeking false solutions in the present (Breaking Free, p. 77).
8. Christians will not get their wounds healed if they mask them by sex every time the wound comes to the surface and it is not dealt with Biblically.
 - a. Revelation 3:17, "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'--and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked..."
 - b. Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;"
 - 1) "To heal the brokenhearted" not in best New Testament texts.

E. Generational pattern (behavioral curses)

1. Many sex addicts are the second or third generation of the same behavior.
 - What you live with, you learn.
 - What you learn, you practice.
 - What you practice, you become.
 - What you become has consequences.
(anonymous)
2. Your task is to honestly explore your birth family behavior for painful events (traumas), patterns that may have helped form you in a negative way which led to your addiction (bondage).
 - a. The birth family member must be forgiven and the lies they instilled must be renounced and replaced with truth. (More in Part III)
3. Failure to see how your parents may have hurt you may cause you to hurt your children in the same way. The abused become abusers.
 - a. Ex. 20:5, "you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me,"

- b. Whether the hurt was intentional or unintentional, it still feels the same and needs to be dealt with. Old Testament law required a sacrifice for unintentional sin (Lev 4:2; 5:15).

F. Loneliness, internal longings and boredom (Big One)

1. Addicts tend to be lonely to the core (Breaking, p. 13)
 - a. This may explain King David's sexual abuse of Bathsheba (II Sam 11,12).
 - b. Many Filipino women living in China, away from their families are living in crowded dorms develop lesbian patterns.
2. The root of loneliness can be a birth family issue too.
3. Behind all the sexual acting out that the sensual symbols fail to satisfy is a deep longing, i.e., parental love, nurturing, acceptance and affection. You will not shake the sexual cravings until you face what is behind them (open door). What do the cravings mean to you?
4. Sexual obsession can be an attempt to avoid the feelings of loneliness by mood altering.
 - a. Eph. 5:18, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,"
 - b. Promiscuous girls are not looking for sex. They are using sex to find love while feeling lonely and to be accepted.
 - c. Venezuela is called the "Fatherless country." It has the highest number of out of wedlock births than any other Latin country.
5. Men caught up in the cycle of sexual addiction isolate themselves from others because they believe they will not be loved and accepted if people knew them as they really are. Compulsive sexual behavior becomes a way to medicate the loneliness they carry and to create a counterfeit intimacy (Secret Wars, p. 142).
6. Loneliness is not a call to act out sexually; it is God calling you to Himself.
 - a. Matt. 11:28,29, "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

G. Abandonment / neglect / rejection / worthlessness (Trauma B)

1. The addict has a strong need for security by attachment but he fears attachment because of his fear of abandonment if he gets too close so he attaches himself to sex instead of a real person. Through sex he experiences a "high" that substitutes for the real attachment (Breaking, p. 151,152).
2. A common thread that runs through almost all men's lives with sexual problems is their lack of adequate nurturing in early childhood. Sexual addiction can be a developmental issue – something was failed to put in place.

3. Sex can be an anesthetic to deal with a sense of worthlessness or rejection.
4. The sex addict believes down deep he is not worth loving so he pushes away any attention expressed to him by others.
5. Pornography, masturbation and adultery often co-exist and provide false intimacy.
6. A sense of rejection can lead one to become an approval junky and illicit sex can be one vain attempt to get that acceptance. Flirtatious eye contact with women can be an attempt to get a silent signal of approval in return (Secret Wars, p. 80). Flirting will always cause pain to your wife.

H. Loss of power/control

1. When feeling powerless as a kid, you may have made a promise to yourself to take control in your life by taking control of others. So, pornography can give you an artificial sense of power over the woman.
 - a. Do you use sex to get a sense of power and control over others which can result in relational possessiveness?
 - b. The need for power and control are the roots of a misogynist relationship where the wife is controlled and made responsible for the man's emotional security.
2. Out of fear of women, do you depersonalize them as sex objects; which gives you a feeling of power over women to compensate for your fear of them (Secret War, p. 131)?

I. Rebellion

1. In a radical attempt to get independence, a kid can act out sexually and view his sexual behavior as his proof of independence and freedom which in turn becomes a life long habit of both rebellion and sex.
 - a. Scripture labels rebellion to the sin of witchcraft (I Sam 15:23).

J. Revenge

1. Revenge is rooted in bitterness resulting from a wounded heart. Anger blocks out the ability to think so the angry person does the next dumb thing.
 - a. Prov. 14:17, "A quick-tempered *man* acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated."
2. He will abandon himself to reckless sexual behavior that becomes a habit that can result in an addiction.
 - a. Rom. 12:19, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord."

K. Stress (Big One)

1. Unmanaged stress is also one of the biggest factors leading to destructive sexual habits because it builds inside until you seek release in the pseudo comfort of illicit sex (Secret Wars, p. 143).
2. Do you use illicit sexual behavior as a temporary “time out” from stress? (Affairs too)
3. Utilize God’s provision to deal with stress (Phil. 4:6,7).

L. Fear of intimacy (fear of failure, disclosure, rejection)

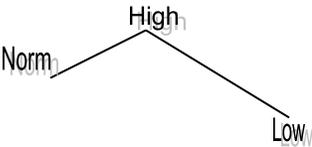
1. Do you have a deep longing for intimacy with a woman but are afraid of it? It may be scary when you have never seen it modeled in your birth home or in your adult experience.
2. Take baby steps toward it with your wife.

M. It started early with chemical sexual arousal –with brain pleasure (candy), chemical pleasure firings in the brain, sex hormones begin to develop.

1. Chemical arousal can start at puberty - strong hormones can build a strong, secretive, seductive pleasure through masturbation.
 - a. Premature sexual arousal can happen to a child before puberty. The child may not know why it feels good to touch himself but will seek after it.
 - b. This self induced pleasure can be interpreted as a source of power and control in an over protective, controlling home environment.
2. Sexual compulsion can be a “psychological” addiction as a result of habits, rebellion and immature character. But repeated sexual behavior actually alters the brain chemistry itself physically. These sexual practices through the years create in the brain chemical releases upon which the addict becomes dependent. (Adrenaline junkies do the same thing.)
 - a. Usually at the core of most all addictions (chemical or behavioral) is an addiction to adrenaline; a surge that delivers a feel-good signal to our brain and body. (Secret, p. 105).
 - b. The sexually induced drug that you produce in your body serves the same function as alcohol. It numbs the feeling you can’t stand to feel. But as with other addictions, the problems only get worse.
3. Over time the brain is forced to accommodate (adjust to) this constant release of opioids (opium like neurotransmitters). The brain then creates neural pathways (memory traces) to handle the more rapid flow of the opioids. Then the sex addict becomes dependent upon the intense pleasure that these chemicals create. It has been said that the only experience more pleasurable is heroin use even though there is a big emotional crash after its use.
4. Yes, the compulsive addict is responsible for his behavior. But this may explain why it is difficult to stop in spite of Christian beliefs. Long term sexual obsession will be hard to stop, but the mind can be reconditioned with a lot of hard work and a

willingness to stop feeding it and choose to break off the porn totally. Completely now (Breaking Free, p. 44-49).

- a. Romans 12:2, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
 - b. Joshua 1:8, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”
5. The sexual chemical dependence dulls the conscience and emotions (loss of sensitivity). The result is a need to actually feel something. You may actually seek out a greater emotional high (more sexual activity). When the old sexual activity gets boring, then, you might try more risky fantasies and behaviors.

- a. All addictions have a long term diminishing return.
 
 - 1) What thrills one day becomes boring the next day.
- b. The loss of sensitivity usually shows up most in relationships.
 - 1) Family needs just fade away from your thinking.

6. Addiction to chemical highs grow as a result of sexual stimulation:

- a. Source: viewing sexually charged pornographic images (candy) stimulates the pleasure sensors of the brain.
- b. Hormones called epinephrine are secreted (released) into the blood stream from those visual images (pleasure source).
- c. Epinephrine then locks into the emotional memory whatever stimulus is present at the time of the emotional excitement.
 - 1) This explains why the memory of sexual images remains in the brain long after you have stopped actively pursuing sexually stimulating images.
 - 2) And because memories are stored in many parts of your brain, your memory can be sexually triggered by a sight, smell, taste, color, time of day, week, month or season.
- d. In fact, just the thoughts of anticipating looking at photo harlots or anticipating an encounter with a prostitute will heighten sexual stimulation. It is a form of sexual foreplay.
- e. Most sex addicts are not trying to heal a past pain but are compelled by the chemical high (brain drug) accompanied by the sexual gratification to avoid feeling past or present emotional pain or negative emotions (loneliness, boredom, shame, guilt, fear).
 - 1) Sensuality can be a temporary “pain killer” but does not address the source of painful memory. It only post pones dealing with it.

7. The addictive nature of the chemical high responses in the brain's pleasure center springs a tight cord of bondage around the brain to sexual activity (Battle, p. 119). But they can still function.
 - a. But if the intentional sexual stimulation and lustful fantasies are stopped cold turkey, the chemical memory traces in the brain begin to be reversed but will go through the discomfort of withdrawal.
8. When you start the "hunt" or prowl, neurotransmitters are released in the brain and adrenaline is released into the bloodstream. Non-substance addictions (stress, spending, sex addiction) are just as powerful as their chemical counterparts (drugs, alcohol) (Breaking, p. 42).
9. You may still love your wife but can become addicted to the sexual chemical high. Strong sexual emotion can block out logic or normal affection. Weak people can still love. Strong emotions are not subject to truth or reality.
 - a. You can create a secret life in one area of your life by compartmentalizing it. You have the ability to separate your sexual addiction from your love for your wife and kids.
 - b. Wives can love their husband and kids and be addicted to an eating disorder.
10. If the sexual release is blocked, males experience a growing physiological pressure which cries out to be released. Two seminal vesicles (small sacs containing semen) gradually fill to capacity. This results in the male being hormonally hyper sensitive to all sexual stimuli (Battle, p. 64, 65).
 - a. God has designed this pressure to be released through normal sexual relations with your wife (I Cor. 7:3-5).
 - b. God has also designed the body to release this pressure through night time emissions or through an overflow into the urine.
 - c. Single people do not need to masturbate but can be pure by guarding their eyes, keeping their minds pure and guarding their hearts (Prov. 4:23).

N. Many knew (know) that illicit sexual activities and habits were wrong.

1. Many who slid into sexual destruction were reading their Bibles and praying. But if he is living out a false sense of himself (I'm bad, unworthy, unlovable), carrying a lot of unacknowledged emotional pain (rejection, abuse), is in a marriage with a lot of conflict, non-intimate communication and living an out-of-control life style, he is very vulnerable to a sexually addictive syndrome (pattern).
2. Many sexually controlled men had Christian parents.
3. Many are Christians themselves. (62% of Christian men in one survey)
 - a. The book of Romans was written to Christians who had sexual struggles (Chapters 6, 7, 8).
 - b. The Apostle Paul knew his sinful behavior was wrong.

- 1) Rom. 7:19, "For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice."

O. Differentiate between an excuse and an explanation.

1. If an addict excuses his wrong behavior because of what was done to him or around him, he is totally wrong to do so.
2. If he explains that what was done to him or around him has resulted in his wrong behavior, this is appropriate.
3. But now that he understands why he is doing what he is doing, it is his full responsibility to deal with it Biblically and end the sinful, selfish, erotic behavior.
 - a. A father may have introduced him to porn and set him up for a career in porn. It is still the son's responsibility to deal with his father's sin and now his own sinful habitual sexual habits.
4. An addict may claim, "It's my wife's fault." "If she would lose weight or have more interest in sex..." etc. The truth is sexual addiction is never about the wife. It is about the husband. True, she can have an influence but a genuine sex addict's sexual brokenness involves issues that predate his wife. Since she is not the cause, she cannot be the cure. She can't fix him or make him better (Breaking, p. 197). Many men who are morally failing regularly have beautiful wives.

Section II

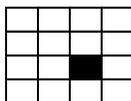
SECRET LIFE OF PORNOGRAPHY

II. Life behind the door

A. Secret life (hidden dual life)

1. Definition: Secret life is any activity that violates our conscience that we deliberately keep hidden from our spouse or best friends. This results in a break in our relationship with God (because we are now living in darkness, I John 1:5-10) and with those from whom we are hiding the habit. The ultimate consequence is enslavement (addiction) (Secret Wars, p. 168).
 - a. It is a vain effort to mix God's standards with our standards.
 - b. The secret life hides the rotting of your soul in darkness.
2. High levels of conflict and resentment holds down expressing needs and emotions. // Physical intimacy can still be there but no emotional vulnerability is present. The husband does not think it is safe to talk to his wife or close friends about his pain so it stays inside. If he takes steps toward substance abuse or sexual temptation, he condemns himself to fight alone, and few men win that lonely secret battle (Secret Wars, p. 172) (CF Gal. 6:1,2).

3. Because you tend to think in boxes, (or compartments), you can construct one box of a secret life but be transparent in all the other boxes (areas). // Compartmentalization is one of the most sophisticated mechanisms your mind uses to accomplish self deception and maintain a secret life. As an addict, you make strong public statements against immorality to hide your sexual struggles.



- a. You have disassociated (separated) your evil sexual secret life from your public righteous life. Your task is to “pull yourself together” and become one totally open person.
- b. Demas was very active in ministry with Paul outwardly but secretly he had a strong love (draw) to the materialism of this world. Those desires finally got the best of him and he left the ministry and chose to follow after his selfish desires (II Tim. 4:10).
4. God refers to a secret life as darkness (I John 1:6) and since God is light (I John 1:5) anyone who claims to be living in fellowship with Him while maintaining a secret life of sexual impurity is a liar. Furthermore, the spiritual activity you are displaying now is a counterfeit truth or spirituality. No outward display of spiritual or religious behavior or activity can make up for the fact that your life is a lie and you are a liar and that only leads to more shame. God hates liars and they are singled out to be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8). Now dear friend, choose to walk back into the light of truth by admitting your sexual bondage and ask God to heal the wounds or to break the habit and choose purity and holiness for your personal benefit and God’s glory (Matt 5:16).
- a. Remember, your habitual illicit sexual practices tend to make you a pathological liar. You are lying to yourself, your wife, your kids and friends. Everything about pornography is a lie. Why? Satan and his demons are behind the whole industry and practice of porn. One indication of it is the practice of lying. He is the father (reproducer) of lies (John 8:44).
5. In order to maintain your secret life, you have to develop the habit of lying to yourself, your family and friends. God emphatically commands you, “Do not lie to one another” (Col. 3:9). He firmly commands you to “put off” (take off your filthy clothes of sexual sin) and “put on” (freshly washed clothes) the new person you really are (Col. 3:9.10).

B. Pornography (sex with photo harlots)

1. In pornography, women are portrayed as very simple. They are always in the mood for sex and they never say, “No.” They have no sexual needs – or needs of any kind of their own. All they seem to care about is the man’s pleasure. They require no commitment, no sacrifice and little money. When a man is finished with them, he turns off the video or closes the magazine and they’re gone. What could be easier? (Why Does He Do That?, p. 184).

- a. Self absorption, self-deception, rationalizations and masturbations are common behavioral patterns for men who use porn (an Affair, p. 103). It is one form of narcissism (self-centeredness).
2. The women in the pornographic pictures or videos are photo harlots. God equates photo prostitution and adultery to literal adultery.
 - a. Matthew 5:27-28, "'You have heard that it was said to those of old, *'You shall not commit adultery.'*' ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."
 - b. Sensuality begins in the heart (looking lustfully) which follows with the act.
 - c. These photo harlots become like "a harem of imaginary brides." The harem is always accessible, subservient and calls for no adjustment. His harem always adores him, always displays perfect love, makes no demands on his selfishness. Again, what could be more simple? (An affair, p. 111).
3. Porn fantasies seem to be more satisfying than real relationships with all their demands, challenge, possibilities for rejection and a lot less work.
 - a. When you eliminate "junk sex" (pornography) you develop a deeper craving for "real food" – your wife (Battle, p. 34).
4. Porn is a form of idol worship. Its use is to fill an inner emptiness. The use of porn is taking a deep hunger for love to a sexualized goddess (Breaking Free, p. 56).
5. One can lay the photo harlots' images over real people images in fantasies of the mind.
6. Indulging in pornography is like getting a fix of cocaine. You feel high. When you come down, you feel awful and you say, "I'll never do that again." But then, you want the fix (high) again so the cycle continues.
 - a. Pornographic images are permanently burned into your mind. They are record both by chemical and electrical transference. Memory is not a spiritual function. It is a physical function.
7. The sexually obsessed person will look at sexualized images of femininity to affirm to himself that he is accepted and desirable.
8. Pornography fits the mind set of a physical or emotional abuser. The women are available, submissive and reduced to a body and her sex organs. She is depersonalized. The man owns her because he bought the magazine, video or computer. Porn has shaped their image of women since teen or pre-teen years. Porn is filled with abuse of women. Men force women to watch porn to wear them down so they will be willing to perform the distorted sexual acts he wants them to perform (Why Does He Do That?, pp. 184,185).
9. Masturbation provides the pay off of photo harlots. You get to skip all demands that a mature relationship requires like love and honor. You have adopted the playboy philosophy, "Use 'em and lose 'em."
 - a. Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her."

- b. 1 Peter 3:7, “Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”
 - c. I Cor. 7:3, “Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.”
9. Admit to yourself that photo prostitutes do not and cannot satisfy because all addictive behavior has a diminishing return.
- a. Pornography over stimulates the sexual pressure to the point where it is difficult for it to be handled through God’s natural release of nocturnal emission (or “wet” dreams) (Every Young, p. 131).
10. Addiction to porn can be passed on generationally as junior discovers his dad’s stash of porn which plants seeds in his heart that grow and bear their diabolical fruit years later (Breaking, p. 141).
- a. Exodus 20:5, “you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me...”
 - b. Pornographic stimulated lust destroys the very thing you are seeking to achieve; warmth, love, acceptance, intimacy, fellowship, bonding, freedom, control, guiltlessness, shamelessness, integrity, respect, honor and admiration.

C. Masturbation

1. Not mentioned in Scripture.
2. It is “fantasy intercourse” by yourself.
3. Masturbation can be a false attempt to nurture oneself and by definition is counterfeit sex.
4. It is a false sense of intimacy. It is easily attained.
 - a. Loneliness, insecurity and broken family relationships are usually stepping stones to masturbation. You are replacing a lost intimacy with a false intimacy of masturbation. One of your first tasks is to ask yourself what relationship you are replacing with masturbation (Every Young, p.120).
 - b. Men primarily give and receive sexual intimacy prior to and during intercourse. But when masturbating while looking at a photo harlot, you can have an orgasm and feel a false intimacy followed by guilt, shame and despair (Every Young, p. 123).
5. Masturbation can be a symptom of uncontrolled eyes and free-racing thoughts (Battle, p. 112).
6. Masturbation is a choice; you are not a victim because of emotional trauma.
 - a. God does not excuse your immorality because you were abused.

7. The false intimacy found in pornography and masturbation will push out true intimacy that should be reserved for your wife.
 - a. No wife (or any other woman) can compete with “a firm, beautiful made-up, air-brushed center fold photo.” No woman stays 22 years old for 40 years regardless of cosmetics, surgeries and transplants. You and your wife’s bodies are “perishing” (II Cor. 5:16).
 - b. Studies indicate that repeated exposure to pornography results in decreased satisfaction with one’s sexual partner (An Affair, p. 75).
8. The addict says he needs more sex, yet the more he masturbates, the more his sexual energy is drawn away from his wife and she, then, feels rejected.
 - a. Do you require more sex because of the sex drive God gave you or because you’ve built in a bigger sex drive because of porn, videos, internet? What have you done to grow it?
 - b. If you are constantly masturbating, your orgasm sends off a flood of “feel good” brain chemicals – endorphins – into your bloodstream and your body wants that big feel good kick and wants that good feeling again even without any visual stimulation. It is an actual physical craving that turns into an addiction (Every Young, p. 161).
9. When you start with a sexually stimulating image and then masturbate, and feel the warm glow, then you crash back to emptiness, guilt and shame. You forget how awful you feel after you masturbates so you find yourself doing it again.
10. Singles, if you do not get a handle on your sexual purity before you are married, it will crop up after the honeymoon. Wedding passions do not change habits. If you are masturbating now, putting a ring on your finger will not keep your hands off yourself (Every Man’s, p. 41).

D. Adultery (events of)

1. Men who have affairs seek to find comfort from women who will build up their lagging masculinity through their “loving” attention.
2. Adultery is self-destructive.
 - a. Proverbs 6:25, “Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.”
 - b. Proverbs 6:32, “Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he *who* does so destroys his own soul.”
 - c. Proverbs 9:17, 18, “Stolen water is sweet, And bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant.” ¹⁸ But he does not know that the dead *are* there, *That* her guests *are* in the depths of hell.”
 - d. Proverbs 23:27-28, “For a harlot *is* a deep pit, and a seductress *is* a narrow well. ²⁸ She also lies in wait as *for* a victim. And increases the unfaithful among men.”

3. The adulterer falsely believes his “new” partner can give him unconditional love. He later discovers this sexual partner has the same problems or needs his wife has.
 - a. Adultery is never done out of love because genuine love does not seek its own interests to the detriment of others (I Cor. 13:5). It is done because of how the other person made you feel.
4. Affairs do not have to face the reality issues that marriage does.
 - a. Adulterers are not confronted by their selfishness and immaturity because the other person does not want to lose the “relationship.” Both parties are users and unfortunately, losers.
5. Satan comes to the adulterer and whispers in his ear, “You deserve to be loved but your wife does not understand your needs. The other woman cares for you and she knows what a treasure she has in you” (Breaking, p. 116) (Prov. 5:3,4).
6. No wife should be made to share the intimacy of her marriage bed with a photo prostitute or have his emotional delight be transferred to another woman.
 - a. Hebrews 13:4, “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”
 - b. Prov. 5:15-20
7. Close opposite sex friendships are a red light warning that something inappropriate is taking place that could lead to an emotional and/or even a physical affair.
 - a. Deep intimate talk is like pornography to a woman. She is stimulated by words; not visual images.

E. Addiction (habit, obsession)

1. Definition: Sexual addiction is an obsessive compulsive relationship with a person, object or experience for the purpose of sexual gratification. It is seeking an unrestrained gratification of the senses: excessive sensual desire. The addict has repeatedly tried to stop the behavior but is terrified of stopping. He may be driven by inadequate (immature) spirituality and deep unmet childhood needs that are valid but are mistakenly thought (confused) to be sexual needs.
2. Greek word “addicted” (Titus 2:3) means to be brought into bondage, much like a slave.
 - a. “Given too much wine.”
3. Sexual addiction is in some ways unlike drugs and alcohol addictions. There are no needle marks. There is no telltale breath or slurred speech. Sexual addiction is a private thing. You shoot up in the secret places of your mind while you’re sitting in a room full of people (The Affair, p. 19).
4. You may have developed a sexual addiction to deal with something painful that you have not been healed from. It continues to interfere with your life. Your addiction is like a “pain killer.” Your “pain killer” makes you feel better temporarily, but then,

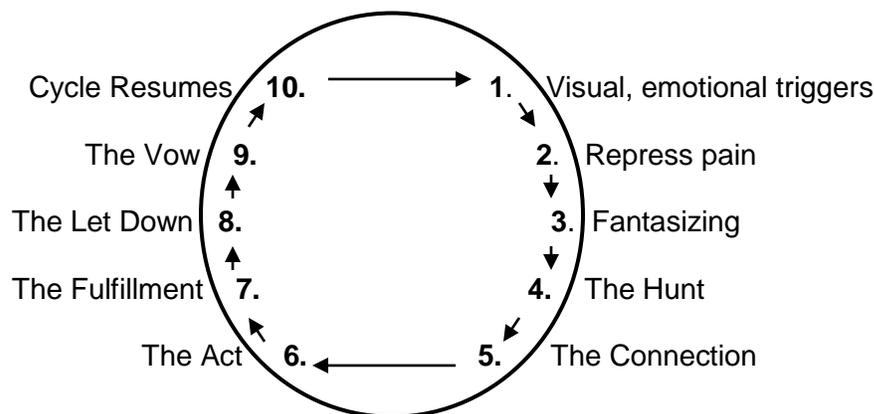
- there is a down side (guilt, shame, disgust, fear). Sex has become a pain management tool which can prevent you from seeking help (Better Life, p. 70).
5. Your task is to determine with a knowledgeable friend if you are struggling with a habit or an addiction. Habits can become addictions.
 6. List of characteristics of one caught in a life style of sexual addiction; obsession, lust.
 - You will lie constantly for fear that someone will see how “messed up” you are.
 - You will lead a double life – one that is “Christian” and one that is hidden.
 - You will get nervous when others discuss sexual immorality.
 - You will be super spiritual and moralistic in order to throw people off your trail.
 - You may be liberal and “progressive” because you’ve given up trying to resist altogether. Morality dictates your philosophy and theology.
 - You will be superficial in your relationships and be what others want you to be.
 - You may appear “outgoing” so that others never guess how afraid you are.
 - You will feel constant guilt about your sexuality.
 - You may wish that God would remove your sexuality completely.
 - You will reassure yourself that you are okay except for “this one area.”
 - You will constantly study others, anticipating rejection or disapproval from them.
 - You will project a false self because the real self is unacceptable to you (and, you assume, to others).
 - Sometimes you will hate yourself and believe that God hates you (Breaking Free, p. 126).
 7. Characteristics of addictive sex (Battle, p. 28, 29).
 - a. Addictive sex is done in isolation and is devoid of relationship. Sex addicts are mentally and physically detached from other human relationships.
 - b. Addictive sex “mere sex,” sex for its own sake (fantasy, pornography, masturbation) even with a partner is mechanical or fantasizing with another person or picture.
 - 1) Fantasies are a great false ego builder.
 - 2) These fantasies are developed from porn magazines, videos, phone sex and the Internet.
 - 3) Pornographic fantasies are idolatrous self-worship with a strong desire for power and pleasure.
 - 4) It is having someone to worship you and serve you; to be at your beck and call any time.
 - c. Addictive sex is secretive. You develop a secret life, a double life with God’s awareness removed from your thinking while you live in darkness (I John 1:6).
 - d. Addictive sex is devoid of intimacy. Sex addicts are totally self-focused and self-centered. They can’t achieve intimacy because of their self-obsession; there is no room for anyone else.
 - e. Addictive sex is victimizing. They are blinded to the harmful effects of their actions because they are obsessed with self-gratification. They are predators.

- f. Addictive sex results in despair, guilt, shame, regretting their sexual experience and leaves you feeling emptier. This opens you up to being triggered again for sexual pleasure to numb the empty feelings.
 - g. Addictive sex can be used to escape (numb) personal pain and problems. The escapist nature of addictive sex is often one of the clearest indicators that the addiction is present (Battle, p. 28, 29).
8. Questions to ask yourself to see if you have opened the door to sexual addiction (Battle, p. 26, 27).
- a. Do you lock on when an attractive woman comes near you?
 - b. Do you masturbate to images of other women?
 - c. Have you found your wife to be less sexually satisfying?
 - d. Are you holding a grudge against your wife – a grudge that gives you a sense of entitlement to look at porn, videos, etc.?
 - e. Do you seek out sexually arousing articles or photo spreads in newspapers or magazines?
 - f. Do you have a private place or secret compartment that you keep hidden from your wife?
 - g. Do you look forward to going away on a business trip?
 - h. Do you have secret behaviors that you can't share with your wife?
 - i. Do you frequent porn-related sites on the Internet?
 - j. Do you watch R-rated movies, sexy videos, or the steamy VH1 channel for gratification?
9. Questions to see if you are inside the door of sexual addiction (Battle, p. 27).
- a. Do you watch pay-per-view sexually explicit TV channels at home or on the road?
 - b. Do you purchase pornography on the Internet?
 - c. Do you rent adult movies?
 - d. Do you watch nude dancing?
 - e. Do you call 900 numbers to have phone sex?
 - f. Do you practice voyeurism?
 - g. Do you go to massage parlors?
10. Addiction is a dragon (Satan) fueled with the fire of lustful images.
- a. Sin is the ultimate addiction (John 8:34).
11. An addict must be constantly fueled through the lust of the eyes and imagination.
- a. A relationship with an addiction (sex, drugs) replaces all human relationships. The new partnership is the addiction and his fantasies (or prostitute).
12. Sexual addiction can be an obsession that keeps the mind off other painful issues.
13. An addict is willing to trade his marriage, family and relationship with God for his lust.
14. Addiction becomes an erotic toxic waste dump that is corrosive and it begins to seep or leak out into other relationships.
15. Sex addiction is progressive.

- a. "Athletes' foot of the mind." It does not go away, it is always asking to be scratched and promises relief, but if scratched it only causes pain and intensifies the itch (Battle, p. 29).
 - b. Mental sexual adventures can start at a very young age and last a lifetime.
16. What the addict calls sexual desire can actually be a mix of childhood needs, a hunger for God, legitimate arousal, conditioned electrochemical responses in the brain and lust. He thinks that one sex act will address all these needs (Breaking, p. 29).
 17. Addicts' coping patterns may have become deeply ingrained as a result of their experience in childhood and adolescence.
 - a. They view women as objects of pleasure and self-gratification and not people.
 18. Addicts are terrified of life without the addiction, just like chemical addicts (alcohol, drugs, etc.). All the rituals, patterns, habits and priorities will change. It will take time to learn how to re-live.
 19. List of characteristics of a sex addict who has moved to truth (into the light) and honesty sexually:
 - You will not need to hide in darkness (I John 1:6).
 - Though you will be concerned about what others think of you, you will not be obsessed with it.
 - You won't need to "turn on the charm" in order to hide your insecurities.
 - As you are open to God's acceptance of you, it will change how you see your brokenness.
 - When you are rejected by others, you will feel pity instead of abandonment, because you will know that they are broken too.
 - You will seek out other honest people whom you can trust with your brokenness.
 - When you fall, you will admit it quickly and get back on track.
 - Better yet, before you fall you will reach out and tell someone that you are struggling. (This is impossible if you have to appear to be a "together" Christian.)
 - You will know that brokenness is a permanent part of the human condition.
 - You will know that your sexuality is broken and will take time to heal.
 - You will be gracious toward other broken people instead of critical and self-righteous.
 - You will publicly share your brokenness (within appropriate bounds) so that others can have hope.
 - You will know that change, growth, maturity and wholeness are a process, not an event.
 - You will be patient with yourself but not permissive.
 - You will live in constant gratitude for a God who accepts you, brokenness and all.
 - That gratitude – not fear and guilt – will be the motive for your obedience. (Breaking Free, p.127)

F. Cycles – Rituals

1. A basic four step addiction cycle: preoccupation, ritualization, compulsive sexual behavior; then, despair.
2. A Sexual gratification cycle that is based on hiding emotional pain. The cycle begins with unmet needs and leads to the following steps. This pattern is strengthened by repetition. (Breaking, p. 40 taken from Stephens Arterburn's "Addicted to Love").



- a. Visual/emotional trigger: visual stimulation triggers a painful awareness of need. It reminds him of his unmet nurturing need. Emotional triggers can be rejection, an insult or being ignored. He has trained himself to run to some sexual stimulation when he experiences negative emotions or stress.
- b. Repression of pain with immediate sexual/romantic longings: Just anticipating the sexual experience can get him by for a time. Most lust-controlled men don't realize they have used these mood altering sexual emotions (lust) until they are well into the cycle. They don't like negative emotions so they run to fantasizing and acting out sexually to accomplish this. Shame and guilt prevent him from getting help.
- c. Fantasizing/planning stage: He goes from repressing his emotional pain to fantasizing and planning. He savors every detail.
- d. The hunt (prowling): Now he moves to the objects of his fantasies. He is a sexual predator. Now neurotransmitters are released in his brain and adrenaline is released into the bloodstream.
- e. The connection: Can be with a real person or a symbol (picture). He experiences the illusion of acceptance. This emotional bonding makes him forget how lonely he is.
- f. The act (masturbation, prostitute): The addictive cycle is building to its crescendo via masturbation or sex with another person. At this point the only thing that matters is the orgasm. This is a release of pent up sexual energy (lust) that has masked the emotional pain underneath.
- g. The fulfillment: At the point of ejaculation the addict feels overwhelming pleasure. He has reached the chemical pay off.

- h. The let down: This immediately follows orgasm. He often forgets this part when in the earlier stages of the cycle. Lowest part of cycle – Result: get help or go back into denial.
- i. The vow: He promises God and self he will never do this again. At that point he is sincere, but he can't admit to himself or others he has a need (Prov. 3:17). He will promise never to do it again, but he is still doing it his way and not getting help or counsel to work with him through the struggle (Prov.11:14; 28:14; James 5:14). The vow is not a genuine change. It is actually an exercise in magical thinking. Real change is much more painful than buying God off with an apology. It is the only part of the cycle that is expendable. It is only a matter of time until the vow will be broken (Battle, pp. 40-43).
 - 1) Remember, the definition of insanity; it is repeating the same unhealthy behavior over and over and each time expecting different results. By this definition, your out of control sexual obsession and behaviors “diagnose” you as insane.
- j. The cycle resumes because his subconscious core belief (his heart) has not changed. He is still going to be secretive, he has failed to admit his own heart condition; he hangs on to his deceptive thinking. It is only a matter of time until he is triggered to feel his unresolved pain and feels he needs to escape once more. The body has been conditioned through repetition.
- k. The frequency of acting out immorally does not determine the presence or absence of an addict. It can be acted out daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually or after years of sexual sobriety. Once the sensual patterns are established, the potential for relapse can last a lifetime.

G. Guilt - true or false emotion (CBS, core belief system)

1. True guilt means you are worthy of blame for a sin you have committed.
2. False guilt believes you are still worthy of guilt after you have confessed it and received forgiveness from God (I John 1:9). You are clean whether you feel it or not.
3. Sadness and regret for a past forgiven sin is appropriate, but sadness can be confused with guilt.

H. Shame (emotion – CBS, core belief system)

1. Every addict struggles with shame.
 - a. Shame after he acts out sexually.
 - b. Inherited shame from Adam's sin.
 - c. Shame created by physical and/or emotional sexual abuse from childhood.
2. All addictions are shame-driven (Jerks, p. 88).

I. Fear of intimacy, of discovery

1. Fear of intimacy can fuel the addiction. Porn allows you to have a false intimacy that does not require any relational effort on your part.

2. Fear of discovery can create a sense of free floating anxiety.
 - a. Masturbation can contribute to fear because it is done in secret and you are afraid of getting caught.
3. Fear of discovery is at the root of the character disorder of perfectionism.

J. Despair / depression (emotion – CBS, core belief system)

K. Anger

1. An addict can have an artesian well of anger but has not been able to express it in a healthy way (Breaking, p. 95).

L. Losses (job, family, finances, reputation, legacy, rewards, ministry)

1. No one truly deals with his sex addictions unless he is about to lose something he is not prepared to live without (Secret Wars, p. 175).
2. Pornography can break the protection a husband should provide for his wife and family.
 - a. One wife reported she was being chased by Satan in her dreams while her husband was sexually active in porn.

M. Obsession

1. All sexual obsessions begin with unhealthy emotional dependency.
2. Obsessions keep you distracted from unpleasant thoughts, past or present.

N. Need to alter one's mood

1. The sex addict is addicted to the mood-altering experience of sex (the 'highs' just before and during acting out).

O. Fetish

1. A piece of clothing or object may serve as a human representation and can be used as a fetish to which the addict can attach himself mentally and act out by himself (masturbate). This helps him to avoid any risk that a real relationship may have for him.

P. Passivity

1. Passivity is one of the worst problems you can have.
2. It will prevent you from changing your thoughts, behaviors, obeying God.
3. Passive logic, "I can't do anything about it." "Nothing ever changes".
 - a. That is a lie. When you choose to do the next right thing, life will drastically change.

4. Choosing to be passive and not responsible for yourself is one of the root sins that result in sexual addiction.

Q. Darkness (spiritual)

1. Obsessive sexual sin can result in a deep smothering darkness (depression).
2. Living in sexual sin is indeed living in darkness, but one can act like he is living in the light of truth. In reality he is living a lie that he is living the truth. He is not in fellowship with God. He is living a self-deceived life (I John 1:6-10).

R. Hopelessness

1. He views his hopelessness as his justification for acting out.
2. Hope for love may have been shattered in childhood.
3. He has given up hope of his marriage ever being satisfying so he turns to porn or prostitutes.

S. Lies and myths you believe (in the core belief center of the heart or control center Prov. 23:7; 4:23)

1. Lust is always accompanied by deceit (lies) because when we want something badly enough, we will lie to anyone to get it. The first person we lie to is ourselves: 1) We don't have a problem and 2) We can handle this alone (I John 1:8).
 - a. Once your imagination ceases to be based on truth, it will probably slip into the realm of fantasy. Fantasy is a trick of the mind, a delusion. The mind will seem to think the fantasy is true but will not be able to convert it into reality because it is based on a lie (An Affair, p. 90). Fantasy is a form of witchcraft using illusions and delusions to make you feel you have found the truth.
2. Lie: No one is getting hurt.
3. Lie: Men's purity is dependent on their mates' health or desire for sex. Truth: God holds men accountable /responsible for their own holiness.
4. It is a myth that marriage will solve all your sexual addictions.
 - a. No wife can ever compete and win with a young photo harlot.
5. It is a lie and excuse that you are a victim in your eyes and that absolves you from any responsibility.

Section III

CLOSE THE DOOR TO PORNOGRAPHY

III. Close the Door

A. Choose to hate sin.

1. Before you decide to help a sex addict to become pure, ask them or yourself if you are the addicted one, "Why do you want to quit the addictive habit?"
 - a. If the answer is because of either my wife, kids, friends, church, pastor, God or it is self destructive; these reasons are good but usually do not work as a motive to stop.
2. The only real motive is that one sees it as sin and can go on record that "I hate my sin."
 - a. The Apostle Paul acknowledged the motivation to conquer his sin was to clearly state, "For what I will do, that I do not practice; but what (I do) I hate" (Rom 7:15)...(It is) sin that dwells in me" (vs. 20).
 - b. Ps. 97:10, "You who love the Lord, hate evil."
 - c. Rom. 12:9, : Abhor (hate) what is evil."
3. For the sake of God, family, friends, reputation are good reasons to quit. But until you change your core belief (heart) and call it sin and hate it, it will return because the heart still "loves" it, not "hates" it.

B. Choose now to be pure (holiness). // It is a choice.

1. One of the earliest steps to healing sexual addiction is to acknowledge that the immoral sexual behavior is sin; not a disease.
 - a. Ephesians 5:3, "Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people."
 - b. I Peter 1:16, "because it is written, *"Be holy, for I am holy."*
 - 1) Holiness is not another word for legalism. It is conformity to God's character.
2. Take the most courageous step you can take by admitting you are hurting yourself, your relationship with God and your family, then, choose to stop now because you hate your sin and choose purity. Adulthood has three characteristics: choice, responsibility and consequences.
3. Because you have been 1) told by God who also lives inside you to flee from sexual immorality (I Cor. 6:18) and 2) you were bought with a price and that you no longer belong to yourself, you must acknowledge in your heart (control center) you have no right (entitlement) to look or think about immorality. You have no authority outside yourself to do so (Battle p. 142) (I Cor. 6:20).
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, "Flee (keep on running from) sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your

own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

- 1) "Flee sexual immorality" in the Greek is a present command that means it is to be a habitual action. Make it your habit to run like Joseph did (Gen 39:12). You cannot deal with it in a satisfactory (logical) way less than these drastic measures. You will only run if you hate your sin and the consequences of sin.
4. Satan's power of temptation lies in your supposed right (entitlement) to decide to choose to engage in illicit sexual behavior. No circumstance, stress, rejection, abuse, abandonment gives you the right, power or authority to choose it. Remember, as a believer you are not your own. You have been bought with the price of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 5. You will be holy when you choose not to sin. You are already free from the power of sexual immorality but you are not free from the habit (of choice) of sexual immorality until you say, "That's enough! I'm choosing to live pure" (Battle, p. 92).
 - a. Romans 6:1-14
 - b. Ephesians 5:3, "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;"
 6. Realize you have a gain/loss scale in the back of your mind that will control your choice to be pure.
 - a. Gain Loss

 - b. Matt. 16:26, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - c. You have a desire for your personal gain and a fear of your personal loss.
 - 1) Mark 10:21-22, "Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. "There is still one thing you haven't done," he told him. "Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." ²² At this the man's face fell, and he went away very sad, for he had many possessions." He could not stand that loss.
 - d. Sexual addictions highlight the personal gain (sexual euphoria) and minimize the loss (guilt, shame, despair, loss of integrity and relational loss).
 - e. Satan will minimize your losses in your thinking and highlight your gains. But as a result, in time, your losses will overwhelm your earlier pleasurable gains (Prov. 5:1-14).
 - 1) You can choose your sin but cannot choose your consequences (as King David. II Samuel 11:4; 12:7,18; 13:12-15).

- f. Satan reduced the “loss” in Eve’s mind to get her to sin. Once Satan lied and convinced her that she would not die by eating the forbidden fruit, it was then she focused on the personal gain, ate and died spiritually (Gen. 3:1-19).
- 7. Choose to be strong and courageous, to walk pure – you now have power to choose to do that (Joshua 1:9) but you need the support of a Christian support person.
- 8. You are sexually pure when no sexual gratification comes from anyone but your wife (Battle, p. 103). Singles?

C. Understand the self-deception strategy behind illicit sexual desires (James 1:12-16).

1. First, be encouraged by the fact you will receive a special blessing (benefit) if you endure the battle with temptation, the impulse to act out immorally.
 - a. James 1:12, “Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”
2. Realize that your victory over the sexual impulse will prove (validate) the genuineness (reality) of your spiritual maturity (i.e., stood the test).
3. Now, demonstrate your love for God by standing strong against the extreme pressure (allurement, false promises) behind the sexual temptation to act on them.
 - a. Love for God will give you the strength to undergo the intense pressure of these trials. Your resistance demonstrates your love.
 - 1) John 14:15, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”
 - 2) I John 3:3, “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”
 - b. Look forward to receiving the crown of life (honor and glory) that the Lord has promised you for your faithful endurance (remain steady, steadfast) (II Tim. 4:7-8).
4. (Source) Reject the lie and excuse for giving in to the sexual temptation that it was God’s fault because He tempted you or put someone else up to tempting you (origin) so you think you can’t resist temptation. This is just a rationalization to avoid personal responsibility (vs. 13).
 - a. James 1:13, “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”
 - b. Accept two facts. 1) God cannot be tempted by evil. There is nothing in God to which evil can make an appeal. Not so in us. We have a sin principle that temptation can connect with. 2) Nor does He, Himself tempt anyone to sin.
5. (Source) Realize you are tempted when you are drawn away to sin by your own lustful impulses inside of you (unlike God) then you are enticed (trapped).

- a. James 1:14, “But each one is tempted when he is drawn (key word) away by his own desires and enticed.”
 - b. The external sexual temptation has a place to appeal to for action, namely, your own evil impulses, lusts or inner cravings, sin.
 - 1) Your task is to control, reduce, starve the evil cravings of your heart but not the healthy natural desires God created for a husband and wife. The difference is the object of your natural, strong desires.
 - 2) If you control the evil cravings that will greatly reduce the hook that temptation can have on you.
6. Understand that sensual temptation connects with the evil desires inside you, those evil desires are stimulated more and are drawn to the source of the temptation and you are now trapped (act out sexually) (vs. 14).
- a. It was the evil attraction of your heart that drags you to the point of sin, not the allurements of the temptation itself.
 - 1) I John 2:15-17
 - b. It is like a fish that is drawn out of his hiding place by his own desire, then, he is caught (trapped).
 - 1) As this pattern becomes a habit, it turns into an addiction.
 - 2) “entice” – to bait, to catch a fish with bait, or to hunt with a snare or trap.
7. Realize when Satan’s temptation mates with your lust (desire), together they conceive a child called sin (thoughts and/or actions).
- a. James 1:15, “Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”
 - b. “Desire” here is pictured as the mother, giving birth to sin, her child. And if the child is allowed to grow up to maturity, it will give birth to death. Desire is viewed as a seductress luring the believer into an adulterous union like the adulterous woman in Prov. 5-9.
 - c. The word picture changes from one’s own lust setting a trap to one’s own lust intimately connecting (mating) with temptation, resulting in a birth of a child called sin.
 - d. Notice that when sin is acted out over time, it matures to death.
 - 1) Physical death is the separation of body and spirit.
 - 2) Spiritual death is the separation of man and God.
 - 3) Relational death is the separation of relationships. In marriage it is called divorce.
8. Listen and take seriously God’s warning of what can happen when you deceive yourselves by lying and rationalizing your illicit sexual habit. You will become addicted to and obsessed by lust which will result in losses, especially in the area of relationships (vs. 16).

- a. The reasoning that you will just get better is called “magical thinking” which is typical of an addict.

D. Connect with God’s power (especially when you feel powerless).

1. Come to God, end your isolation; bring all your deep, dark secrets to the light of God’s truth and love. He already knows about them but He wants you to admit (I John 1:9) them in His presence as your first step to freedom. Confession is not informing God of something you did that He did not know about. It is agreeing with God that you did what He saw you do.
 - a. Matt. 6:4, “that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.”
 - b. Psalm 51:6, “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden *part* You will make me to know wisdom.”
 - c. I John 1:7, “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”
 - d. Phil 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
2. Acknowledge in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Lord and accept what He says about Himself and His instruction in His word, the Bible. Failure here will result in failure in your healing.
 - a. God and His Word must be placed in the center of any healing equation.
 - b. Psalm 119:9, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.”
3. Admit to yourself your impurity is your responsibility because you have diluted God’s standard for sexual purity even if someone else set you up for it.
 - a. Psalm 5:14, “For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.”
4. Admit to yourself that only God can help you break the shackles and bondage to this sexual idol.
 - a. You are out of control and feel helpless, powerless to change yourself. Admit to God you can’t overcome your sexual problem alone. You need to tap into His power and strength. This is the first step one takes in AA.
 - 1) Romans 7:15-25
 - 2) Philippians 2:12-13, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

- b. This same helplessness is the same principle for salvation (Galatians 2:8,9).
5. Understand God's grace and mercy.
- a. God dearly loves you and died for your sin.
 - 1) Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
 - b. Your task is to understand and accept the grace God has for you.
 - 1) Eph 2:8,9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast."
 - 2) Grace means favor. God still favors you even in your addiction.
 - c. Your failure to understand God's grace and mercy will result in never feeling safe in your relationship with God and in realizing there is freedom to fail as you purpose to end the addiction.
 - 1) Most addicts do not understand God's grace and only feel shame. You are not rejected because of your sin.
 - 2) Many can't receive it because they never experienced it from anyone else or are angry.
 - 3) But God alone can show you what that looks like.
6. Call out to God immediately when sexually stimulated. Don't stuff it!
- a. 1 Corinthians 10:13, "No temptation has overtaken you (from behind) except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*."
 - b. God will not bless prayerless recovery. "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17). Never "hang up" or end you call to Him.
7. Call out to God if other images come to your mind when having sex with wife.
- a. "God, I come against those impure images with the blood of Christ and command them to go because I choose to delight only in my wife. She is my gift. I choose to focus totally on her."
8. Realize your prayers for God's protection and your obedience to take advantage of His "escape" are your only chance for sexual sobriety (I Cor. 10:13).
9. Ask God to shut the door on stimulation sources in order to get sexual sobriety.
- a. Matthew 6:13, "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."
10. Do not ask God to take away your lust (strong desires) but seek to put them in balance with the rest of your life and with your wife (Prov. 5:15-20).

E. Secure outside human support.

1. One of the true tests of genuine repentance (you have changed your mind and actions) is when you are willing to tell someone else what you are really struggling with and ask for help (Secrets, p. 127).
 - a. Isolation is bad for any man, but for the sex addict, it is fatal.
 - b. Fear and awesome pride can prevent you from admitting your addiction because you have deceived yourself with the lie that you were in control. It's a blow to your pride to admit you are powerless in and of yourself to gain freedom by yourself and admit to the deep sin you are in. Acknowledging this to a trusted believing friend who will hold you accountable may be the beginning but is not the end.
 - 1) James 5:16, "Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."
 - 2) Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, if a man is overtaken (from behind) in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.
 - 3) I Thess. 5:14, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all."
2. Long range sexual sobriety will not come without outside human support. You cannot heal in isolation because lust is too cunning, powerful and baffling to handle alone. God chose to limit Himself to work through fellow believers.
 - a. Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."
 - 1) God has chosen to limit Himself to work through fellow believers.
 - b. Eccl. 4:9, 10, "Two *are* better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. ¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, for *he has* no one to help him up.
 - c. James 5:19-20, "Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰ let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."
3. Realize that because the sexual patterns have become ritualized and deeply embedded in the neurological system of the brain, the addiction will not be overcome without the help of others (Breaking Free, p. 67).
4. Admit your need for an outside person because you are so controlled by your own twisted logic now.
 - a. Jer. 17:9, "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

- b. James 1:8, “*he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*”
 - c. Proverbs 16:25
5. Choose an accountability group that will focus on being warm and accepting while being direct and honest. Men open up to warmth more than force (Secrets, p. 197).
 6. Select support people who will ask the hard questions: where, when, what, how and with whom? The support person can help you to see your sinful self-protective ways.
 7. Select a support person who will:
 - a. Demonstrate mercy, grace and compassion.
 - b. Be able to get to the truth and not be afraid to confront it.
 - c. Handle the details without disgust or fear.
 - d. Be comfortable dealing with emotions.
 - e. Avoid clichés and pat Bible verses but does use Scripture in its rightful context.
 - f. Be broken himself (II Cor. 1:4).
 - g. Keep confidence.
 - h. Know he will probably be lied to.
 - i. Be able to ask specific questions.
 - j. Rejoice over small victories.
 - k. Love the addict and not view him as a project (Breaking Free, pp.72, 73).
 8. Establish daily accountability with an appropriate friend(s) of the same sex who can keep confidence. Not a wife (she can encourage but cannot be the person who needs to tell you hard things about yourself).
 - a. You delude yourself about your motives and out of control sexual behavior so you need someone to lovingly confront you regularly about your internal reality.
 - b. You need to humble yourself and admit to another brother how ugly your inner world has really become.
 - c. They can encourage you (Hebrews 3:13).
 - d. They can rebuke you (Prov. 27:6).
 - e. They can ask you hard questions.
 - f. Accountability only works when there is a firm commitment on your part to win and stay pure. Again, you must hate your sin.
 - 1) Psalm 97:10, “You who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

F. Break the soul bonds you have made with a prostitute or a photo harlot in prayer.

1. Remember that sex was designed by God to bond (lit. glue) together a man and woman in marriage. It was the primary purpose.
 - a. Genesis 2:24 explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife and the two are united into one.

2. Realize God explains that when you have sex with a relational harlot, some kind of bonding (soul bonding or transference) takes place. They get a part of your heart and you a part of their heart.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:16, “And don’t you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, “The two are united into one.”
3. Your sexual offense is not only against God, but it is a sin that is against your own body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:18, “Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.”
 - b. “Body” can include your mind and soul. It gets damaged.
 - c. Potentially, the evil in the harlot’s heart gets transferred to yours and all the demonic influence behind it. The evil in your “soul mate’s” heart gets transferred to your heart. That is one reason God begged Israel not to have any foreign wives. In the mating process the evil in their heart would transfer and would cause the hearts (souls) of God’s people to be drawn away to the demonic gods of the Canaanites.
 - 1) This is exactly what happened to King Solomon (I Kings 11:1-6).
 - d. Understand bonding takes place on the spiritual, mental, emotional, volitional and physical levels. That explains why your spirit, mind, emotions, will and body will scream at you not to break those bonds that have been “glued” together.
4. Break the soul bonds by:
 - a. Ask God to bring to your memory anyone you voluntarily or involuntarily had sexual contact with whether it was surface contact or penetration anally, orally, or vaginally.
 - b. Write each memory that God brings to your mind. Be specific. Write their names down or list where the activity happened. In pornography list the places that God brings to mind where you masturbated and or fanaticized. Do not use electronic media for this exercise. Once it is on a computer it is permanent. Later you will be asked to destroy your list.
 - c. Ask God to help you picture your sin as He sees it. Why? Confession is to state before God not just what you think you did but that which God reveals what He actually saw you do.
 - d. Take time to allow God to show you just how deeply this hurt (grieved) Him. Look at it through His eyes. It will deepen your repentance.
 - e. Confess your sexual sin to God and state clearly “I was wrong for ...” (I John 1:9) and who was involved in it.
 - 1) Declare, “I hate the immorality” (Rom. 7:15).

- f. Forgive those who opened the door to immorality. Those who need to be forgiven are taken from your list of your sexual history.
- g. Renounce (disown, reject) your deceived thinking that you had a right, privilege or permission to engage in that sexual sin.
- h. Declare it is now the purpose of your heart to never participate in that sin again.
- i. Ask God to pour his blood over your head, chest, waist, legs, feet and scrub you clean from your sensual contamination. He will cleanse (wash) you from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9b).
- j. Break the bond by asking God in the name of Jesus to break all bonds, connections, ties or agreements that you have created. Then declare if there is any demonic influence (bonding) behind your sin, affirm out loud that Jesus is your Lord and hold up His blood against that demonic influence and command it to leave you, because your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that demonic influence has no place (ground) to be there (Rev. 12:11; I Cor. 6:19).
- k. Ask God to heal all the wounds of your heart you have just caused by tearing yourself apart from those areas you “glued” yourself to. Yes, you may have to grieve your “losses” to win back your sexual sobriety.
- l. It may be important that you do this with another spiritually mature person praying with you (James 5:16, 19, 20; Gal. 6:1,2).
- m. Replace wrong thinking with the truth of Scripture.
 - 1) Psalm 119:9, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.”

G. Prepare to wrestle with your determined enemy.

1. Accept the fact your battle is not a team sport; it is a wrestling match.
 - a. Ephesians 6:12, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.”
 - b. 2 Timothy 4:7, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”
2. Hate your enemy – impurity.
 - a. The difference between winners and losers is that one hated their impurity.
 - b. Amos 5:15, “Hate evil and love good ...”
 - c. Romans 12:9, “Abhor what is evil...”
 - d. Ps. 97:10a, “You who love the Lord, hate evil.”
3. Treat every illicit thought like an enemy who wants to destroy you and your family.

- a. 1 Peter 5:8, "Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour."
4. Train for long haul obedience in the same right direction. Do the next right thing.
 - a. Psalm 37:23, "The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way."
 - b. Proverbs 16:25, "There is a way *that seems* right to a man, but its end *is* the way of death."
 - c. Do not train for a short battle and expect to win a long one. **This battle is for life** (II Tim. 2:3).
5. It is going to be messy and difficult to win over your sexual obsession.
6. Entrust a coach who can encourage, mentor, correct, admonish, pray and reprove you, but you are ultimately responsible to win in this wrestling sport.
 - a. Hebrews 3:13, "but exhort one another daily, while it is called *"Today,"* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
7. Realize you are not alone. You are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses cheering you on, but they are spectators, not participants.
 - a. Hebrews 12:1-2, "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

H. Reprogram your mind (heart) which is the control room of all your thoughts (Rom. 12:12) that turn into actions, beliefs, myths, half truths and perceptions. Change thought patterns; purge the mind with scripture (Smalley, King David).

1. Choose to shut the door on the sexual "CD library" of the mind by renouncing (disown) out loud (sexual activities) what you gladly welcomed in the past.
 - a. The *mind* is the most powerful sex organ.
 - b. Identify the "CD," reject it and add truth in its place (Rom. 6:12; Phil. 4:19).
2. Establish the criteria (test) for thoughts that are allowed to occupy mental space in your thinking. The Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gave us a very plain, simple, clear test of what should be allowed (Phil. 4:8).
 - a. Is it true?
 - b. Is it noble, dignified, worthy of respect?
 - c. Is it just, right what conforms to God's standards?
 - d. Is it pure, wholesome, not mixed with moral impurity?
 - e. Is it lovely, does it promote peace; not conflict?
 - f. Is it a good report; positive and constructive?
 - g. Is it of any virtue?
 - h. Is it worthy of praise?

3. Capture the thought that does not pass the Phil 4:8 test and make it a prisoner in chains.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 10:5, “casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,”
4. As a prisoner the thought must obey Christ the Lord (taken captive) if it enters your heart or mind.
 - a. Do not tolerate, negotiate or placate the prisoner (immoral thought).
 - b. Send the enemy (sensual) thought out of your mind.
5. Renounce (disown it and tell it to go) the thought and replace it with the truth.
6. Identify the false beliefs you have of God and replace them with an accurate view of God. Your perception of God will definitely affect your healing process.
7. Change the core beliefs that have developed as a result of the sexual obsession:
 - a. I am a bad, unworthy person.
 - 1) No, you are a saint that sinned (I Cor. 1:2).
 - b. If you really knew me you wouldn't love me.
 - 1) No, people will be grieved over your sin but most will still love you (I John 3:16).
 - c. I can't depend on others to meet my needs. I'll have to meet them myself.
 - 1) No, fellow believers will help you meet your needs (2 Thess. 5:14).
 - d. Sex is my greatest need (Breaking Free, p. 46).
 - 1) No, sex is an attempt to make up for your deepest need to be loved (I John 4:10).
 - e. I'm no good.
 - 1) No, you now have the righteousness of God (II Cor. 5:21).
 - f. I'm defective.
 - 1) No, you may be weak, but you are perfectly made by God (Ps. 139:13,14).
 - g. I'm broken.
 - 1) No, you have failed but now you have confessed it to God and you are totally forgiven and washed clean from your impure filth (I John 1:9).
 - h. I'm unlovable.
 - 1) No, you are a special object of God's love (I John 4:10,19).
 - i. I'm not worth anything.

- 1) No, as a believer you have a rich inheritance coming to you (I Peter 1:3,4).
- j. I'm basically a bad person.
 - 1) No, you are a saint that has sinned (Romans 3:23).
8. View sexual impurity as an escape which must be denounced, then, choose healthy ways of dealing with stress.
9. Strengthen your spirit through your spiritual disciplines (prayer, Bible study, forgiveness, obedience, praise, worship, self-control, practical holiness).
10. Give up to God all the reserve regions of your heart (spirit) you have used for the secret addiction.
11. Renounce (reject, disown) the lie down deep in your heart that God cannot touch your ache, your pain.
 - a. Hebrews 4:15,16, "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."
12. The reprogramming of the mind will begin to police your thoughts and clean itself up.
13. Sexual impurity is not like a tumor growing outside your body. We treat it that way when our prayers focus on deliverance, as we plead for someone to remove it. Actually, sexual impurity is a series of bad decisions on our part – a result of immature character – and deliverance will not deliver you into instant maturity. Character takes hard work (Phil. 2:12,13p; Gal. 4:19, 20).
14. Realize stress or lack of acceptance is not the cause of the sexual impurity. Sexual impurity is simply one way to deal with emotional stress and difficult circumstances.
 - a. Philippians 4:6-7, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

I. Identify and renounce entitlements (rights) of the heart.

1. Entitlements are rights you think you have because of either who you are or what you have experienced in life. Many sexual behaviors are justified based on entitlements of the heart.
 - a. I owe it to myself.
 - b. I've earned it.
 - c. I deserve a time out (sex).
 - d. My wife is unfulfilling.

- 1) Should your wife let you down, renounce the self-pity reasoning in your mind that you deserve to go to your secret “room” for private pleasure.
2. Identify the self-pity and renounce the selfishness behind it.
3. Renounce the self-centered entitlements.
4. Grieve (the pain of letting them go) the loss of your entitlements. You will miss them.
5. Understand that spiritual maturity is always dictated by our willingness to sacrifice our own desires for the desires of others or for the interest of the Kingdom (Battle, p.183).
 - a. Romans 12:1
 - b. Eph. 5:25, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,”

J. Heal the pain.

1. Pain means something has to change! Pain is a notifier of that “something.” You can’t short circuit or skip over pain but you must face it head on and move through it to healing.
 - a. James 1:2-4
 - b. James 1:14, “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.”
 - c. II Cor. 1:3-7
2. Realize there are at least two categories of pain: 1) historical pain that the obsession with sex seeks to numb, 2) current pain that the illicit sexual habits are causing to yourself and to your relationships.
3. Consider that Inner sources of suffering of the sex addict comes from at least two sources:
 - a. Unmet emotional needs from childhood (historical).
 - 1) No amount of female attention can fix a man’s wounded masculinity in the past (Secret Wars, p. 59).
 - b. The pain and disappointment caused by trying to meet those needs through sinful sexual behavior in the present.
4. True, acknowledging your sin and repenting from it is one important dimension of your healing. But you are not just a spiritual person; you are a physical and emotional person. Failure to heal in other areas will only cause the pain to come out in another area of your life. Choose to heal spiritually but also physically and emotionally.
5. Pull out the thorn: Sexual addiction can be an attempt to manage pain that is a result of a festering “thorn” in your life. Sexual addiction is one form of pain management.

- It can become a lifestyle. Your task is to identify this “thorn” and heal the wound mentally and spiritually. Unhealed wounds can continue to produce many negative emotions (guilt, shame, despair) and take your life in the wrong direction (Better life, p. 91).
6. Revisit the painful memories of molestation if necessary to learn just how it resulted in a sexual obsession. Then choose to deal with it Biblically by coming to the place where you can forgive your undeserving abuser.
 7. Choose to be honest about your feelings, especially your pain, grief, anger, shame, guilt. This is the most important step to stop the downward spiral of your life.
 - a. Pain that is unacknowledged and untreated does not go away.
 - b. Healthy men do not ignore, deny or repress their negative feelings. Instead they face them and deal with their source. Failure to do so will allow them to come out in unhealthy ways and sex obsession is one of those ways.
 8. Honestly admit the pain of the addiction:
 - a. To yourself (emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, relationally).
 - b. To your family (wife, kids)
 - 1) Porn sends powerful shock waves through the relationship with the wife.
 - a) She feels as betrayed as if her husband had an actual affair and so does God (Matt. 5:28).
 - 2) She could be pressured to have the perfect body, perform perverted sexual acts.
 - 3) Wives have been used as a springboard for mental sexual activities.
 - 4) Children feel as violated as their mother. The addict thinks it is just between him and his wife. But when children find out, and they usually do, their entire foundation is shaken because fidelity between dad and mom is their foundation.
 - c. To others
 - d. To God. God is deeply grieved by moral impurity
 - 1) Eph. 4:30, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
 - e. Benefit of winning the war of sexual addiction is to regain and revitalize your relationship with God, wife, children and ministry. (Gain)
 9. If you leave your toxic habits unchecked, they will ultimately cause even greater pain, especially in relationships.
 - a. Impurity is a habit. If it were genetic or victimizing, you’d be helpless. But if it is a habit, it can be changed. If it lives like a habit, it can die like a habit (Battle p. 106).

- b. Sexual impurity works like a habit. Once it is a habitual pattern, it takes little or no thought to do it. It takes very little conscious thought or effort.
 - c. You must confront your socially acceptable dependencies (habits) you use to treat your unhealed pain (i.e. work-alcoholism). These are “pain killers”.
10. Evaluate if your personal pain (loss) is high enough to go through the pain to become sexually sober.
- a. Most all change is motivated by a desire for gain (purity) or a fear of loss (from impurity).
 - b. To overcome a sexual addiction (habit) it must be done “cold turkey” not a gradual reduction. “Gradual” never works. You flee immorality; you do not casually walk away (I Cor. 6:18; Gen. 39:12).
 - c. Questions to ask self:
 - 1) How long do I intend to stay snared (trapped) in my sexual addiction (I Kings 18:21)?
 - 2) How long must my family wait until I change?
 - 3) How long before I can look God in the eye with a clear, pure conscience? (Battle, p. 86, 87).
 - 4) How long will I rob my wife sexually in infidelity?
 - 5) How long will I live with my dark secret life?
 - d. Realize with no change you are on a collision course (Prov. 16:25).
11. One of two pains you may have to experience before you are motivated to change:
- a. You must experience a spectacular failure, tragedy or deep loss. (read the whole book of Judges.)
 - b. You must grow tired of your chronic sexual compulsion.
12. Evaluate if your pain is just that you were caught or if the personal pain of the addiction is motivating the change.

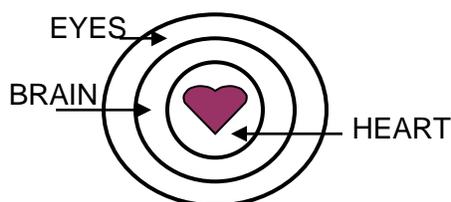
K. Stop mood altering with sex but choose to alter your mood by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18). How?

1. Understand your sexual fantasies can excite your body producing adrenaline thus altering your mood. Other chemical reactions in the pleasure center of your brain can also alter you mood and can have a narcotic like effect. But there is another option resource that can alter you mood in a healthy way.
2. Be filled with the Spirit. Ask God’s Spirit to come into every area of your life and fill any void that exists including your secret life.
3. Speak to yourself in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, make melody in your heart to the Lord (vs. 19).

- a. Col. 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
 - b. Memorize some praise songs that you can sing to Him directly even if you can’t carry a tune (Ps. 100). Remember, it is coming from your heart, not your head.
4. Start thanking God for Who He is and what He has done for you (vs. 20).
- a. 1 Thessalonians 5:18, “in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
5. Submit to each other in the fear of God (vs. 21). This includes an accountability friend.
- a. This may be your accountability person or group.
 - b. Independence (pride) is the front door to failure and defeat.
 - 1) Rom. 14:7, “For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.”

L. Establish safe visual strategies with the goal for holiness and purity.

1. Admit to yourself it is your responsibility to retrain your eyes and discipline your mind to behave.
 - a. Job knew the battle is won or lost with the eyes and the war is won or lost in the mind.
 - 1) Job 31:1, “I (in my heart) have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman?” (That would break the covenant)
 - b. Prov. 4:25, 26, “Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. ²⁶ Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established.”
 - c. Impurity generated through the eye (with a photo harlot) is sexual foreplay that leads to self-centered masturbation.
 - d. Your first line of defense is your eyes. Your second line of defense is your brain. The third line of battle is your heart. If you start with your brain (thoughts) and do not win the battle of the eyes, you’re doomed to fail. The heart is the home of your core belief system. You must see girls as young women to honor, cherish and help protect their virtue, not as objects to gratify your lust temporarily (Every Young, pp. 140-141).



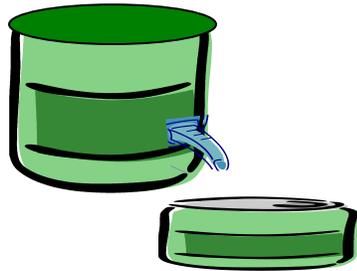
2. Understand your body (brain) will fight to re-experience those highs that come through the eye gate. It is addicted to those emotional highs that keep bringing you back for more sexual pleasure.
3. Develop the visual “bounce” technique.
 - a. Discipline your eyes to bounce off of an object of lust to something positive.
 - b. When there is no food for the mental sexual fantasies, the sexual surges that feed your mind will begin to dissipate (reduce).
4. Bounce your eyes to starve your eyes (Battle, p. 125).
 - a. “Bounce” away from sights of pretty women and sensual images.
 - 1) In six weeks of this practice you can potentially control your eyes.
 - 2) The bounce (distract) must become an automatic habit over time.
 - 3) It must be done immediately or you will fail later.
 - 4) Masturbation can be stopped if you discipline your eyes to bounce off the sexual stimuli and make your sensual thoughts submit to your control (Battle).
 - a) The ninth fruit of the Spirit is self control (Gal. 5:23).
 - b. Do not target masturbation, but target the eye gate and thinking process that results in masturbation or prostitutes.
 - c. Bounce is only possible long term if you are also spending time in your Bible. You can only “grit it through” so long.
 - 1) Psalm 119:9-11, “How can a young person stay pure? By obeying your word. ¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”
5. Understand lust is any look that creates that little chemical high. A visual bounce reduces the lust induced chemical high in the brain.
 - a. Cutting off the eye gate stimulation and gratification will greatly decrease your sex drive and begin to build purity within yourself.
6. The habit of what your eyes look at is no different from any other habit. It usually takes 21 days to create a new habit – it may take 21 days to create a bounce habit.
 - a. Sexual obsession functions like a habit but mentally and spiritually it fights back like an addiction.
7. Distinguish between a glance and a glare.
 - a. Sexual images will pass before your eyes that you may have no control over (a sensually dressed woman walking down the aisle of a mall). That is a glance. But choosing to stare at her, that is a glare. Choose to starve your eyes and

pleasure center by choosing to “bounce” off of her and onto a morally neutral object, distant stare or start a prayer in your mind (Col. 3:2).

- b. There is a difference between a glance (rear view mirror) and a glare (windshield).
8. Choose to totally starve your eyes of all pleasurable visual stimulation except for your wife. (Key: Isolate your visualization on your wife, then, concentrate on her.)
 - a. The eyes must be starved into control because the eyes of man are never satisfied (Prov. 27:20b).
9. Admit to yourself if you have a lustful eye problem, it is not your wife’s fault. You are responsible for your own eyes.
 - a. Remember, the ninth fruit of the Spirit is self-control (Gal. 5:22, 23).
10. When you are thieves with your eyes, you are embezzling sexual gratification from areas (people) that do not belong to you.

M. Plug your delight drains (water tank analogy).

1. Picture all of your sexual energy in one large water storage tank designed to provide water for livestock. The water is designed to pour into the livestock watering tank.



2. If hunters shoot at the watering tank for target practice, the bullets will make holes in the tank and drain the water out on to the ground that was designated for the stock.
3. Every time you expose yourself to a pornographic picture, video, movie, internet site, phone sex, etc. it is like a bullet makes a hole in your sexual energy tank and drains off the life giving water (delight) that God intended for you to give to your wife.
4. Good news: Your imaginative creativity can transfer back to your wife.
 - a. This change will take awhile for you and your wife to adjust to.

N. Stop feeding your lust and fantasies that you can control.

1. Magazines (like Sports Illustrated) and looking over magazine racks.
 - a. Choose not to even walk by magazine racks.
2. Movies (choose to be selective).
3. Newspapers/ advertisement flyers.

- a. When women's undergarments appear just quickly turn the page.
 - b. If they are your downfall, then you lose your right to even pick them up. That is a small loss for such a great moral gain.
4. Adult book stores, strip clubs
 5. TV
 6. Stop the prowling for sexual images or sexual partners.
 - a. Prowling is like a hunting trip for sexual stimulation.
 - 1) Stop attempts to look down women's blouses or up their dresses.
 - b. Choose, instead to switch your attention from the filthy pursuits of sexual gratification to picturing in your mind the Lord Jesus who is seated on His throne getting ready to call you up to be with Him (Col. 3:12). Concentrate! Focus!
 - c. Fix your eyes not on filth that can be seen, but on what you do not see now (Christ, heaven). Understand the photo harlots you hunt for now are only a temporary thing. What you do not see with human eyes (future, inheritance) lasts forever (II Cor. 4:18).
 7. Stop planning out specific ways to gratify (satisfy) your sexual desires.
 - a. Romans 13:14, "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts."
 - b. Greek lit. "and do not make forethought (*pronoian*) for the flesh" (*sarkos* "for lust" CF Romans 8:3-5, 8:9,12, 13).
 - c. Stop planning out specific ways to gratify your cravings. Call your accountability partner immediately if the sexual draw gets stronger.
 8. Stop all stimulating sexual objects at the eye gate.
 9. Burn or destroy all videos, DVDs, magazines, pictures, phone numbers, etc.
 10. Put filters on all computers you have access to.
 - a. Honestly, you know how to get around them. Choose not to do it.
 11. Stop attempting to charm women, which is another word for flirting (sexual teasing).
 12. Remember, fantasizing is a form of meditation. To meditate, you reflect upon, study, ponder, think deeply and continuously. This clearly describes sexual fantasies. Now change the object of your fantasy to reflecting deeply on His word how much you are deeply loved and accepted by the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:1, 2; Ps 119).
 - a. Choose to "Let the words of your mouth and the meditations (fantasy) of your heart be acceptable in the sight of the Lord, your strength, (rock) and your Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).
 - b. You can't meditate and masturbate at the same time.

O. Get on a sexual diet and stay on it.

1. Most diets fail because there has only been a temporary change in the diet. Only a life-long change keeps the weight off for a life time.
2. With the development of your sexual habits you've lost many viewing privileges.
3. You will go through withdrawal from the chemical highs from the "visual pops" from porn or any other sexually visual stimuli. If you go off sugar your body will crave it for awhile.

P. Renounce generational curses.

1. Many sexually addicted men are second and third generations of those who themselves were sexually controlled.
2. Acknowledge before God in prayer that there may be sexual bondage coming down to you from your parents and grandparents.
 - a. Exodus 20:5,6
3. Ask God to break that sexual curse in Jesus' name, then affirm from that freedom you are going to choose purity because God is pure and holy.
 - a. Rev. 12:11
 - b. I Peter 1:15,16

Q. Rebuild healthy intimacy with your wife.

1. Rebuilding intimacy means it will be safe to share your body, soul, feelings, fears and dreams and know you are still accepted the way you are (Secret Wars, p. 148).
 - a. Almost all addictions are an attempt at an intimate relationship. Workaholics with their work and alcoholics with their booze are having a love affair. Each one numbs his pain to avoid the feelings of loneliness and the hurt from shame (John Bradshaw in Secret Wars, p. 104).
2. Intimacy is enhanced in an atmosphere of love, acceptance and sexual fidelity but greatly diminishes in an atmosphere of criticism which is usually rooted in anger.
3. Choose to honor and cherish your wife by strengthening your affections for her and your commitment to the promises you made to her (Battle, p. 106). This will happen if you restore your emotional and sexual affections solely on her. Because where you treasure is, there will your heart (focus) be also (Matt. 5:21).

R. Rebuild trust.

1. Confess and receive forgiveness from those you have hurt, if possible and if appropriate (Matt. 5:23, 24).
2. The circle of confession should be limited to those who have been affected and to those who are part of the solution.

3. It has been said, "You can't talk your way out of something you acted your way into (Stephen Covey in Secrets, p. 195). Reduce the talk and increase the walk out of darkness.
4. You are obligated to rebuild trust over time. Forgiveness is to be granted but trust is to be earned.

S. Suit up with God's armor (Eph. 6:10-18).

1. Be strong (not weak, controlled, addicted) in your personal relationship with Christ and be powerful to overcome any strong pull by lust. Yes, you have the power of God at your disposal. You have His resources.
 - a. Ephesians 6:10, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might"
 - b. 2 Peter 1:3, "By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence."
2. Assume your responsibility to put on the armor God makes available to you and stop using your own tricks. God commands you to do this; it is not casual advice.
 - a. Paul many have got his inspiration from armor while being tied to a Roman guard while awaiting trial.
3. Stand forcibly and confront head on the schemes (or strategies) Satan will devise to connect with your own lust and draw you into a trap to sin (fail) (vs 6:11) (CF James 1:13-16)
 - a. What have been the tactics Satan has used on you in the past?
 - b. What are you going to do differently when those tactics are used on you again?
4. Get in clear in your mind you are not just dealing with photo harlots, videos, phone sex, etc. but against a whole demonically managed industry designed to kill you, steal from you or destroy you. (CF Jn. 10:10). It has been described as the spiritual "mafia."
 - a. Ephesians 6:11, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
5. Choose to come out of your secret life of darkness into the light of truth (belt of truth), personal integrity, reality and faithfulness. Stay out of a life of denial and lies and start living in the realm of truth and reality now (I John 1:6).
 - a. Failure to step into the light of truth and reality is an automatic guarantee to personally fail.
 - b. The belt of truth held the soldiers garments together and served as a place to hang his armor. Every thing you do must hang on truth. Jesus came to minister in grace and truth (John 1:14).

6. Choose to do the next right thing daily. The breast plate of righteousness (vs. 14) does not refer to justification. It refers to the sanctifying righteousness of Christ in your life by your choice to make the right (righteous) decisions every second of your day. Right choices can protect you from giving into the sexual draws that Satan uses to get you to fail morally. Unrighteous (unholy) living is a guaranteed set-up for moral failure.
7. Plant your feet securely emotionally, spiritually and psychologically in the truth of the gospel (6:15).
 - a. You are saved by faith and not by your human efforts (Eph. 2:8, 9).
 - b. You are legally justified completely and as a result you are not under any decree of condemnation (Rom. 8:1).
 - c. You are eternally loved and God demonstrated that reality by dying on the cross for you (Rom. 5:8).
 - d. Nothing is going to separate you from that love (Rom. 8:35-39).
 - e. You are a permanent son of God because you have been adopted into His family. You are not a step child (Rom. 8:15).
8. Use your faith (confidence) like a shield (vs. 16). When Satan fires a flaming arrow of temptation, self doubt, feelings of unworthiness, failure, weakness, despair, hopelessness and helplessness, quickly move your faith shield in that direction and the Lord will stop and extinguish the evil one's arrow.
 - a. Trust that God to reward your faithfulness (II Tim. 4:7, 8).
 - b. Your faith (trust) that what God says is true will stop the damaging arrows aimed directly at you.
9. Put on your "helmet" of all the truths regarding your salvation because you will be hit hard on the head by temptation. Satan will aim for your head and all your thinking processes. Keep all the truths of your position in Christ in the forefront of your brain. Remember, sex starts in the brain (vs. 17).
 - a. You are still a saint in God's eyes even when you fail sexually and have a relapse. The Apostle Paul called the Corinthians "saints" in spite of all their failures (I Cor. 1:2).
 - b. Guard (control) your brain (thinking) at all costs (Prov. 4:23; 23:7).
 - c. Remember, you are in Christ and you are not your own so you do not even have an option to act out sexually (I Cor. 6:19, 20).
 - d. Protect that brain!
10. Get a firm grip on use of the Word of God (sword of the Spirit), to go on the offense against all the lies, strategies, temptations, draws of lust that are aimed to get you to act out sexually (vs. 17).
 - a. Each time Jesus was tempted to sin, He did not debate, reason or resist personally, He just drew out the sword of the Spirit (Scripture) and slaughtered each temptation (Matt. 4:1-11).

- b. Memorizing “swords” is good. Meditating on “swords” is good. But only the use of your sword (Scripture) will destroy the enemies seeking to destroy you.
 - c. Pick one good verse, memorize it and then quote it back to yourself, even out loud if you have to.
 - 1) “My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in me, whom I have from God and I’m not my own. I’ve been bought with a price, therefore, I’m going to glorify God in my body” (I Cor. 6:19).
 - 2) “Be holy, for I’m holy” (I Peter 1:16).
 - 3) “I’ve made a covenant with my eyes” (Job 31:1).
11. Stand your moral ground of purity. You can! Stand solidly against every immoral thought, urge, temptation, pressure, drawings, desires that present to you an opportunity to numb your emotional pain. How?

Suit Up Summary

- a. Get your strength and power by maintaining a genuine daily relationship with Jesus (I John 1:5-10).
 - b. (Vs. 10) Take off your human armor (efforts) to control your glands and take responsibility to put on God’s armor and win (vs. 11).
 - c. Identify and defeat all the game plans your enemy is planning to use against you (vs. 12).
 - 1) II Cor. 2:11, “so that Satan will not outsmart us. For we are familiar with his evil schemes.”
 - 2) If you don’t know his tricks, you’re dead.
 - d. Get it clear in your head, you are not just dealing with sexual images, you’re dealing with demonic forces (vs.12).
 - e. Choose to live in truth and reality, not fantasy (belt of truth) (vs. 14).
 - f. Do the next right thing, righteously (shield) (vs.14).
 - g. Keep your feet planted in the truth of who you are in Christ through salvation (feet) (vs. 15).
 - h. Use your faith (shield), not your doubts (vs. 16).
 - i. Guard your brain (helmet) and thinking processes. The brain is the most important sex organ you have (vs. 17).
 - j. Keep specific Scriptures handy in your mind at all times (sword). They can be deadly (vs. 17).
12. Your shield will take a lot of blows. Your sword will get nicked. Your helmet will get dented. Your feet will get stomped. But be assured; you will stand!

IV. Stop the Revolving Door!

A. Live in a daily, holy fear of failing.

1. Apostle Paul physically disciplined his body to control his evil desires in his heart so that he would not fail morally and then become a castaway – be disqualified to minister.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 9:27, “But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.
2. Realize moral relapses could occur again.
 - a. God told us that if we think we stand cured, we have the high possibility we will fall into a relapse.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 10:12, “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”
 - 2) Your task is to be hyper-alert to possibilities of attack and failure.
 - b. But do not let one failure trick you into thinking that you might as well fail big time and masturbate two or three times a day for a week.
 - 1) Two steps forward and one backwards is progress.
3. Because habits take time to be rebuilt, there may be some short term setbacks.
4. Men who experience the fewest relapses are the men who have made fundamental changes in the stress, pace and busyness of their lives (Secret Wars, p. 143).

B. Study thoroughly the steps to rebuild through failure. (website www.Lfmttools.org)

C. You can make vows not to give in to your lust, but include a game plan to keep them or you will inevitably break them.

1. Addicts live on broken vows and promises.
2. It may be better not to make them.
 - a. Ecclesiastes 5:4-5, “When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; for *He has* no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed. ⁵ Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.”
3. Instead, declare that it is now the purpose of your heart to be pure and sexually sober.
4. Go on record that from this day forward whatever you do in word or deed, you are going to do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus while giving thanks to God the Father through Him (Col. 3:17,23). You cannot lust, masturbate, screw a prostitute or sexually fantasize to the glory of God.

D. In your recovery from sex addiction, getting healthy is just the beginning.

1. Staying healthy is equally important.

2. This means that you must continue to grow in your life: personally, maritally, parentally, relationally and spiritually (Breaking, p. 193).

V. Close the Door Summary

- A. Choose to hate sin.
- B. Choose to be pure.
- C. Understand the deception behind illicit desire.
- D. Access God's power.
- E. Secure outside help.
- F. Break the soul bonds.
- G. Prepare to wrestle your determined enemy.
- H. Reprogram your mind (thinking).
- I. Identify and renounce entitlements.
- J. Heal your pain.
- K. Stop mood altering with sex.
- L. Establish safe visual strategies.
- M. Plug your delight drains.
- N. Stop feeding your lust and fantasies.
- O. Get on a sexual diet and stay on it.
- P. Renounce generational curses.
- Q. Suit up with God's armor.
- R. Rebuild trust.
- S. Rebuild healthy intimacy.

VI. Brian's Story

Coming home from Chicago on the airplane I sat and reflected on my life. I just finished an exciting semester at Moody Bible Institute and was ready to take a break and have a fun-filled Christmas. Of course, it wouldn't be all fun and games because I knew that next Friday I had an appointment with a counselor friend to work through my pornographic addiction. In my eyes, once I got that straightened out I could go on with my life. Besides I had my best friend, the girl I loved more than anyone, sitting in the plane next to me and we were going home together. In my eyes, we had just had the best semester together. We were growing closer and closer and really this Christmas would be the last big checkpoint before I would pop the big question this following summer. She was the one exception, the one thing I did not want God to change, touch, take away, etc. Things were going so well and I was going to deal with my addiction issue that Friday, no harm done, and we could go on with our lives.

Friday came and I had my session with Jeff (counselor friend) and it went great. I saw that when people struggle or have an addiction, it is rooted much deeper than what it looks like on the outside. The problem in our Christian lives is that we look no further than the surface and so we never get to the real problem or the lies that entangle us. The lies were exposed, my addiction was very much rooted in a fear of abandonment, rejection, of not feeling wanted and because pornography was something that would not do those things (at least it seemed I could walk away from it, no harm, no foul) and it was pleasurable, it was easy to go there. Then the real test came.

Friday after the session I went to see my girlfriend Michelle to tell her how great it went because she had been my biggest support through all of this, so I thought she would want to know. I also had to tell her that Jeff (my counselor) recommended that she should tell her

dad that she knew of my addiction. He was also a counselor and Jeff's boss and knew already because I previously shared with him what I was dealing with, but he didn't know Michelle knew. So that Friday Michelle and her father were going out on a date, and she was going to let him know. I was going to go home and think through what had happened earlier that day with my time with Jeff.

Saturday came, just days before Christmas, and Michelle and I were going to do some Christmas shopping. As soon as we went to leave something was wrong. She apologized for not being herself and asked for my prayers. I, out of concern pushed the situation, and as I was dropping her off asked her if she was breaking up with me. She said she didn't know but we would meet later. So later that day it happened, the one person in the world I would not let go of, let go of me! I was shocked, I was in denial, it hurt so bad. I wanted to fix it because this was messing up everything. Worst of all, I knew everything I had talked to Jeff about, the lies in my life were staring me right in the face, and more than ever, I felt rejected, alone, abandoned. Let's face it. I failed!

Monday came around and I was still fighting the hurt, the loss big time! I knew I had to start living up to all that happened, so I called my best friend in Arizona to tell him what happened. I didn't want to, but for the first time I let out everything that was in my mind, heart, feelings, etc. It was good, but when I got off the phone it hit me like a ton of bricks, like something drove me down and threw me on the floor. God was present, and I emptied myself to Him for the first time, and in that time He defeated the lies! He showed me in my greatest hour of need, in my desperate longing for acceptance that He was there! Jesus loves me, accepts me, will not leave me! Oh how my heart was lifted, strengthened, comforted, and for the first time there was peace! Jesus knew what it was like to lose a best friend, but that didn't end in death (John 10) and He literally raises to life those who are dead. The best part was that He was not finished and so He began to piece my wounded heart together again!

I opened His word and He led me to Hebrews 1, the Hall of Faith. I read stories of people, despite their hard and pain filled circumstances, trusted and believed God would work for good. I went on further to chapter 12, **"Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."** It was clear, Jesus had been there, and I could take great comfort because He endured so much more. More than that, I saw the command, to Let Go! The lies were gone. Michelle was gone. Now, God was giving me the freedom to clean up and run my race. I went on reading in chapter 12, and it spoke of discipline, and that God disciplines those He loves. He disciplines us for our good, **so that we may share His holiness** (vs. 10). It came to mind that God might be doing this so I can walk in holiness. Quickly I had remembered a book that Michelle was reading and had recommended to me, so I went and I got it. It's called "The Pursuit of Holiness" by Jerry Bridges, and on the cover was the verse I Cor. 9:24, **"Run in such a way as to get the prize."** In the book, Bridges speaks of the definition of holiness as not just being moral purity but obedience to the will of God. So when Scripture says, God disciplines for holiness, I knew that this was my race; that God was working through this breakup, as hard as it was! What was next?

As the days went on and as God was continuing to show me things of His character through Scripture, convictions began to take hold of me like never before. I mean, when I went to Blockbuster to pick out a movie, I found myself being so much more careful about what I picked out. It didn't stop there, places and things that would have been such a stumbling block before; God was changing my heart to flee from those things. No late night TV, in fact, my desire to watch TV has been so little. I just don't want victory anymore, I want obedience! Because when Scripture says avoid all sexual immorality, I have to be obedient to the command and leave the blessing up to Him. It's easy to think that this happened because God took Michelle away. No, within all this my perspective switched. Before, I wanted to be free because it was sin and it would be damaging to my marriage. Now I'm realizing so much more, that when I sin, I sin against God and Him alone and the separation that can occur if you persist. God is good when He disciplines! Jerry Bridges put it best when he said, "In all our thoughts, all of our actions, in every part of our character, the ruling principle that motivates and guides us should be the desire to follow Christ in doing the will of the Father."

Letting go of my girlfriend has probably been one of the biggest acts of faith I've ever done. In doing so, I was letting go of my plans and placing them in the very hand of God. One of the stories in Hebrews 11 is about Abraham who obeyed by faith what he believed to be the will of God, even though such obedience must have been so difficult. Jesus says, "Here I am. I have come to do Your will" (Heb. 10:7). Holiness is obedience to the will of God in whatever God directs (even a breakup), but even more, no one can pursue holiness who is not prepared to obey God in every area of life! Faith is not holding on too tight; it's letting go when you want to hold so tight. There will be times when you don't understand what and why God is doing what He's doing, but He never said we would understand, He just wants obedience! I have to admit this has been a very confusing, frustrating time for me this Christmas. Last Sunday I couldn't agree more with what a friend sang about that "Life is hard, but God is good!" Any normal person would say this has been a horrible Christmas, but God gave me something that He came to do all along, set people free! Because of this, I think I grasped more than ever the meaning of Christmas. Being disciplined and obedient isn't always easy, in fact it hurts, but I can agree with the writer of Hebrew that, "**those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.**" As I pursue holiness, I can trust in You, God, to bring me that special person. You have always been so faithful!

God, I love You, my life is Yours!

Brian
Matthew 4:19

Help for Women Whose Husbands Struggle with Sex Addiction

1. I will let his recovery be his, not mine.

If he wants to change, he'll do what's necessary to change. If he's not willing, I cannot soften his heart. Either way, his recovery must be his own and I will not attempt to *create it, control it or oversee it*.

2. I will build more of a life apart from him.

Loving him will not exclude me from friendships, passions and God's calling on my life. To love him as a partner is to be his wife, but to allow his behavior to dictate my well-being is to become his slave. I will find ways to add joy and peace to my life.

3. I will stop apologizing for the boundaries I set.

When I refuse to accept or tolerate behavior that is blatantly sinful, disrespectful or hurtful, I do no wrong. The greater wrong lies in my allowing these actions to destroy me and my family, so I will make no apologies for saying, "Enough!"

4. I will not let his sin distract me from my own.

Although my husband has sinned against me, I know I am far from perfect. God requires me to humbly examine myself and answer for my own life. In doing this, I must take necessary steps to correct my own attitudes and behaviors.

5. I will be angry and sin not.

No matter how gravely he's sinned against me, I am given no excuses or permission to sin against him in return. If I am unkind, harsh, sarcastic or hurtful, I am wrong, and will admit it.

6. I will neither minimize nor maximize his sin.

There's nothing OK about sexual sin in any form, nor does sexual sin completely define the person who commits it. His sin has devastated me, but I will remember that his sin is not all that defines him.

7. I will take my pain seriously enough to get help for it.

I will give serious thought to what my soul requires for healing, and *will follow through with action*. Just as I would see a doctor for ongoing physical pain, I will do whatever is necessary to ease my broken heart and put myself on the path to healing.

8. I will rediscover the joy of long walks, hot baths, chats with friends and chick flicks.

My life did not stop the day I discovered my husband's sin. There's still a world of awesome, God given pleasures and joys to experience and I will consider it vital, not optional, to partake of them. I will try something new and I will gain perspective.

9. I will despise the very thought of being a victim.

I will grieve without resorting to self-pity; I will weep without surrendering to helplessness; I will protest the wrong that's been done me without ever calling myself his (or anyone's) "victim." I will be courageous.

10. I will invest regularly and intensely in my intimacy with my Lord.

I will take seriously the First Commandment to love the Lord my God with all my heart, always remembering that I was created first and foremost for His pleasure. Apart from Him I can do nothing and in His presence is fullness of joy! I resolve to seek, know and express that joy like never before. I will grow in faith and the knowledge of God through His Word, true fellowship and worship.

Adapted from Renee Dallas (WifeBoat.com)

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