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Dangers of Pornography

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Dr. Adam Moore

Take Away Porn's Power: Let's Talk about It

1. *What are the biggest risks of becoming involved in porn use?*

- a. Many of the risks of porn use don't materialize until later in life. Thus, many teens see porn use as harmless or without consequences.
- b. Most of the consequences of porn use, that are shown in research,
 - i. It lessens the enjoyment of real sex.
 - ii. It changes how people feel about their sexual relationships.
 - iii. Rather than showing the loving, close connected relationships that people want, almost 90% of pornographic videos show some type of physical aggression – often even violence. The vast majority of that is directed towards women.
 1. The more porn one watches, especially males in their 20's, the more they want to replicate what they see – which comes out as aggression and violence towards women.
 2. Porn skews the perspective to men of what it is they are supposed to be offering to women in their sexual relationships.
 - iv. Porn decreases the ability to become aroused. Thus, most men will have to think about what they have seen to become aroused.
 - v. People who use porn actively are two times as likely to cheat on their partner in their relationship.
 - vi. Many married women are likely to develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), when they discover that their partner is actively using porn.
- c. Some people decide to stop and can. However, others, cannot stop feeling compelled to come back to pornography over, and over again.

2. *Specific relationship risks & how it happens –*

- d. How do people get to the point they are struggling and lying about their relationship rather than seeking support and help from their partner?
 - i. They tell inaccurate stories to their spouse to avoid telling the truth about their porn problem for fear of damaging the relationship. They become fearful and/or distressed after marriage and don't tell their spouse they are still looking at porn.

1. They think they are heroic, by saving their spouse the pain, by avoiding telling them that they are still struggling.
2. Women, especially, prefer the honesty and are more willing to work with their spouse if they know they are trying, rather than being dishonest and secretive with them.
3. The perfect moment to tell the spouse or partner never comes. When spouse/women eventually find out, or the husband eventually shares, women often feel betrayed. Telling the truth is better than lying and hiding the situation from your spouse!

3. Best ways to stop watching porn if already involved in porn –

- e. Why do people want to continue viewing it?
 - i. It's connected to the biological and physical rewards of procreation.
 - ii. It gives feelings of connection. If people self-soothe with pornography, it soothes loneliness, sadness, frustration, anger, etc. Thus, pornography becomes a bad substitute for real relationships.
- f. Best ways to stop watching porn:
 - i. Seek emotional support: Share your feelings. Open up about your pain. Ask people to care about you and stay close and connected.
 - ii. Use accountability to take ownership of your choices and actions or behaviors AND taking ownership of the way your actions and behaviors have affected or harmed other people. Be honest about your struggles!
 - iii. Figure out why you are using porn and what your real needs are and then figure out how to meet those needs.
 1. Loneliness – create human connections.
 2. Sadness – share those feelings and get help with your sadness.
 3. Boredom – a common predictor of porn use and substance abuse. Seek help filling your time with things you care about.
 - iv. If you know the need you are seeking to fill through porn use, filling that need will help porn become less relevant or important to you.
 - v. Be patient with self.

4. What if you know someone else that is struggling with porn use? How can you help them?

- g. Now that you know how critical emotional support, accountability and meeting real needs are in abandoning the porn habit, you can use the same principles to help other people.
 - i. Talk openly about porn with people you care about.
 1. Tell about your own struggles.
 2. Ask about their struggles.
 3. Ask if they want help.

- ii. Educate people about pornography:
 1. Why people get stuck in it and how to get better.
 2. Teach about emotional support and accountability.
 3. Help them understand porn use is often a substitute for meeting real needs.
 4. Offer emotional support. Offer to help hold them accountable. Offer to brainstorm with them what needs they may have that they don't yet understand.
 5. Be patient with others. Changing a habit or pattern is hard. Change is both possible and difficult. Being patient is the nicest thing you can do for yourself and others.

Parker Hymas:

Fight the New Drug

- College Resources:

<https://fightthenewdrug.org/live-presentations/college-resources/>

Discover research, educational materials, resources, including additional podcasts from one of the premier organizations working to share the harms of pornography.

- Recommended video:

<https://brainheartworld.org/>

Connecting the Dots! Given the ever-growing body of research, it can no longer be denied that repeated porn exposure has a tangible effect on consumers and is connected to declining relationship satisfaction as well as various forms of exploitation. **This isn't a moral argument, it's simply something to consider given the facts.**

Question & Answer

1. *Is viewing porn a great way to blow off stress and receive sexual satisfaction?*

More frequent porn viewing is associated with lower sexual satisfaction. Researchers note that under no circumstance was pornography use associated with greater sexual satisfaction.

2. *Does porn use contribute to men being more physically violent?*

The use of porn is the strongest correlate of sexual aggression and violence. A meta-analysis of 33 studies found that exposure to either nonviolent or violent porn increased behavioral aggression, including both violent fantasies and actual violent assaults.

3. *Is porn use a helpful tool in learning about sex and building a successful sexual life?*

Porn is generally inaccurate in its depictions and likely to lead to low-quality sex and infrequent orgasm, especially for female partners, as well as one-dimensional, likely unsatisfying sex for males.

4. *What is porn's impact on marriage?*

A study surveyed 2,210 married adults and found that, overall, the chance of divorce doubled for both men and women who started using porn after getting married – with the association between pornography use and divorce much higher for younger people.

5. *If a potential romantic partner is heavy into porn, should I consider furthering the relationship?*

Porn addiction may not be a “deal killer” for a further relationship, but it is something that must be addressed before the relationship goes forward. Porn addiction does not go away without the person being held accountable, and assistance given to them to support their desire to abandon pornography. It could be a very long process; make sure you have the patience and power to go the distance. You also must consider that you may not be the person who can, or should, help.

TOOLS and HELPFUL LINKS

Websites

- Stop Pornography – HomeFront Project

<https://homefront.unitedfamilies.org/units/pornography/before-you-meet/>

A compilation of articles and resources dedicated to helping individuals understand the risks associated with porn use and how to overcome addiction.

- Fight the New Drug

<https://fightthenewdrug.org/blog/>

- Fight the New Drug College Resources:

<https://fightthenewdrug.org/live-presentations/college-resources/>

Discover research, educational materials, resources, including additional podcasts from one of the premier organizations working to share the harms of pornography.

Videos

- Brain Heart World (Fight the New Drug Recommended)

<https://brainheartworld.org/>

Fight the New Drug, Recommended video. Connecting the Dots! Given the ever-growing body of research, it can no longer be denied that repeated porn exposure has a tangible effect on consumers and is connected to declining relationship satisfaction as well as various forms of exploitation. This isn't a moral argument, it's simply something to consider given the facts.

- The Great Porn Experiment (16:28)

<https://youtu.be/wSF82AwSDiU?si=yLuE-6LN4Q2aEdp4>

Gary Wilson asks whether our brains evolved to handle the hyperstimulation of today's Internet enticements. He also discusses the disturbing symptoms showing up in heavy porn users, the reversal of those symptoms, and the science behind these 21st century phenomena.

- **Your Brain and Addiction (Bill Struthers) (19:18)**

<https://youtu.be/hYK-MYNhj4Y?si=5h5CtYBXKjLP5PSW>

William Struthers (Professor of Neuroscience at Wheaton College) shares his research on addiction and the brain, helping us to understand the nature of addiction and how it relates to spiritual formation and psychology.

- **The Porn Paradox (13 :21)**

https://youtu.be/VU9v8h_OwcY?si=4-7WLq2_iPBLzf08

Understanding the connection between sex trafficking and pornography is critical for women and to shore up successful societies. You might be surprised at how connected every individual is to the porn scourge.

Quiz

Are you addicted to pornography?

If you answer "yes" to three or more of the below questions, you should consider seeking help for potential porn addiction.

1. While having sex with your partner, have you wished they were a porn star you watched?
2. Have you missed out on important events or opportunities due to porn?
3. Have you had a relationship end because of your porn habit?
4. Do you go through withdrawals if you haven't watched porn in a while?
5. Can you only have climaxes if you watch porn?
6. Do you spend the majority of your day fantasizing about porn?
7. Do you ever become sad or disgusted after watching porn?
8. How often do you watch porn each week? More than twice a week?
9. Are porn sites one of your most highly visited sites on your phone or computer?
10. Has watching porn affected your relationship?
11. Do you feel like a lot is never enough and you always want more?
12. Do you have any physical pain?

13. Have you started spending money on what you consider higher-quality content?
14. Do you find yourself distracted from different aspects of life?
15. Is there a loss of attraction for your partner?