Becoming Clean from The Sin of This Generation: 14 Keys to Overcoming Addiction to Pornography

SUMMARY

Overcoming an addiction to pornography requires consciously increasing our ability and habits to avoid and resist temptation and removing and healing subconscious tendencies that lead to giving in to temptation. Keys to recovery that I have found include:

1) Offer a broken heart and contrite spirit by going through the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous
2) Train your mind to focus on good things in general and to immediately dismiss unwanted thoughts
3) Set and keep strict internet usage guardrails
4) Create a Recovery Action Plan that will motivate you to avoid relapse and help you recover in case you do
5) Create an escape plan in case you feel “triggered”
6) Develop a support system whether it is an informal network of friends or by joining a formal recovery support group
7) Spend time where you forget yourself and pray for, fast for and serve others
8) Meditate regularly to visualize success, strengthen your soul, commune with God, and heal your subconscious
9) Regularly review and reinforce your efforts to focus on what is good and to avoid temptation
10) Balance hormones through good exercise, rest, and by avoiding hormone-injected foods such as beef and dairy
11) Be aware of and manage your stress and emotions
12) Heal father wounds
13) Heal generational curses or inherited tendencies through prayer and revelation
14) Cast out dark spirits through prayer, faith and priesthood

INTRODUCTION

The unfortunate reality is that we live in a time and place where pornography is so easily accessible on the internet. I believe that it has caused more spiritual suffering and darkening in the world and especially among Latter-day Saints than any other misbehavior in the past 20 to 25 years, so I consider it to be the number one sin of this generation. I have certainly had my struggles with it. By struggles, I mean that a part of me has never wanted to fall into it while another part of me really liked it. I have felt like Paul, “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (Romans 7:19).

After each relapse into looking at pornography I would vow that I would never do it again because I hated reaping the unclean feelings that would always come after. I would pray and work my way back to where I felt good and clean again. However, I would never do anything differently to prevent a future relapse. I believed that I would be able to stay away for the rest of my life, but then several months to a few years later, I would get triggered and fall into another relapse for about a week, then the gross feelings would kick in strongly enough that the relapse would end and I would start the process of recovery yet again. This cycle repeated more times than I would like to count. However, the last time I relapsed and started the process of recovery, I made a choice to become educated on how to fully heal and recover and to do whatever was necessary to prevent any future relapse. I have discovered several
actionable keys to overcoming addiction to pornography that would be very useful for anyone else to implement to fully recover from an addiction like the one that I had, and I would like to share those here.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

One incredible resource I found on my recovery journey was Pure Desire Ministries (https://puredesire.org/). This is an organization that is very widespread in sponsoring support groups in many locations and online and that provides materials to recover from sexual addictions. This ministry publishes weekly podcasts that have excellent information on how to overcome addiction and become healthy (https://puredesire.org/blogs/podcast) and they provide excellent mental tools to become and remain pure (https://puredesire.org/pages/tools). Some of the keys that I will go over here come directly from this ministry.

More recently I found another Christian ministry website, Communing with God Ministries (www.cwgministries.org), with a lot of material to effectively recover from and avoid pornography. Here are links to some of their excellent articles and materials on this topic: https://www.cwgministries.org/dn/How%20to%20Deal%20Effectively%20With%20Your%20Sexuality.pdf
https://www.cwgministries.org/blogs/dont-go-near-door-harlot
https://www.cwgministries.org/blogs/breaking-power-generational-sin
https://www.cwgministries.org/blogs/deliverance-demons-lust-has-transformed-my-life-yousef-shaloufe

CONSCIOUS AVOIDANCE AND HEALING SUBCONSCIOUS TENDENCIES TO SUCCUMB

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you” (Ezekiel 36:26)

Full recovery from this addiction requires efforts that can be put into two categories:
1) Consciously increase your habits and ability to avoid and resist temptation, or develop a “new mind”
2) Remove and heal subconscious tendencies to succumb to temptation, or develop a “new heart”

Willpower alone is not enough to overcome this addiction. Rather, knowing how to efficiently spend willpower and then acting accordingly will help greatly. Willpower is like a muscle that can be strengthened and that can get tired. Roy Baumeister is a psychology professor who has researched self-control and willpower extensively. He wrote:

“Lately we have begun to study people who are consistently good at self-control. They don’t have more willpower than other people, at least once you understand that willpower is part of the body’s energy supply. They merely use it better.

“A couple years ago, a giant study surprised us with the result that people high in self-control don’t resist their impulses any more often than other people (in fact the opposite). But they avoid temptations and problem situations. People with good self-control don’t expend their limited willpower wrestling with powerful impulses, temptations, and extreme demands.
Instead, they seem to use their willpower to work with habits. They break bad habits and form good ones. If you can do this, then life runs smoothly.

“Good self-control is often a virtuous circle. You form good habits and avoid problems. Things remain under control. You can focus on what you are doing rather than worrying about something else. You sleep better. (We find that good self-control has stronger links to quality than to quantity of sleep.) You have fewer conflicts with other people. And you spend less time digging your way out of problems that you might have avoided.” (https://www.highperformanceinstitute.com/blog/self-control-high-performance-and-the-limits-of-willpower).

What he said about self-control and willpower is directly applicable to overcoming addiction. We want to spend willpower to develop good habits and other safety precautions that will keep us out of trouble. Good habits and safety precautions include:

- Thought control
- Strict internet usage guardrails
- Having a Recovery Action Plan to work through in case of relapse
- Having an escape plan in case you unexpectedly see a provocative image that triggers you
- Speaking regularly and openly with supportive friends about your efforts to avoid pornography
- Spend time to regularly forget yourself to focus on praying for and serving others
- Meditating regularly
- Review your chosen practices to focus on your priorities and to avoid temptation

Subconscious forces are play that contribute to cycles of relapse. Some of those forces can be very strong. In fact, I believe that the struggle to overcome pornography is almost entirely a subconscious battle. Here is a segment from a good talk describing the subconscious battleground:

“This war is a war that has to be fought by all of Heavenly Father’s children, whether they know about it or not. But without a keen knowledge of the plan of salvation, and without the influence of the divine Light of Christ to bring us awareness, this war is being fought subconsciously, and therefore its battlefronts are not even known to us, and we have no chance to win. Wars in the inner self that are fought subconsciously, with unknown battlefronts, lead to defeats which also hurt us subconsciously. These defeats are reflected in our conscious life as expressions of misery, such as a lack of self-confidence, lack of happiness and joy, lack of faith and testimony, or as overreactions of our subconscious self, which we see then as pride, arrogance, or in other forms of misbehavior—even as acts of cruelty and indecency.

“No! There is no salvation without Christ, and Christ cannot be with us unless we pay the price of the constant fight for self-honesty.” (https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1993/10/truth-is-the-issue?lang=eng)

We want to spend time to diagnose and remedy subconscious tendencies that lead us to relapsing into bad habits. These subconscious and unseen forces include:

- The body’s innate sex hormones and sex drive exacerbated by consuming hormone-injected foods like beef and dairy
- Stress and emotional state of being
- Wounds or scars from an abusive or distant father-child relationship
- Tendencies towards sexual dysfunction inherited from ancestors
- Temptations, tricks and traps of dark and adversarial spirits

THE KEYS TO OVERCOMING

1) Offer a broken heart and a contrite spirit

The first order of business is to get right with God and Christ. This involves humbling yourself to the dust, begging for forgiveness and a thorough spiritual cleansing, and offering a broken heart and a contrite spirit. How do you do this? Following the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous is one way to accomplish this. Here are the 12 steps adapted to recovering from an addiction to pornography rather than an addiction to alcohol:

1) We admitted we were powerless over pornography—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2) Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3) Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4) Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5) Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6) Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7) Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8) Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9) Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10) Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11) Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12) Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to other addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Two of these steps require interaction with other people, but the rest can be done on your own. During my last recovery, I woke up half an hour earlier than I normally would for about a week and spent that time processing each of these steps. I wrote out my response to each of the 12 steps in a notebook. In addition, I cried out in silent prayer to God many times during that week for forgiveness of my misdeeds. God did forgive me, and I regained peace of mind. Receiving forgiveness seemed like a process that lasted a few days. I felt more relieved each day over a period of a few days. I was impressed with the thought that when a person begins the work of repentance that the Lord’s first order of business is to forgive you and then the rest of the work of changing the mind and heart begins. The forgiveness comes before you may feel it. At this point I was very grateful that I felt peace and relief, but I recognized that I still had work to do to be strengthened against future temptations and to prevent any relapse ever again.

As for the two steps that require talking to other people, I communicated openly with some trusted friends who are also somewhat like mentors to me about the history and nature of my issue and received insightful counsel on how to deal with it. I found another friend who has been willing to talk to me about once a month to discuss my efforts and successes and obstacles to staying pure. You could think of this other friend as an accountability partner. I also admitted and apologized to family members who were affected by my poor behavior.
2) Train your mind for perfect thought control

“our thoughts will also condemn us” (Alma 12:14)

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” (Isaiah 55:7)

“let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord” (Alma 37:36)

“bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

“Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.” (D&C 6:36)

“and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name” (Malachi 3:16)

As I was listening to a Pure Desire podcast that was addressing ways to better control our thoughts, the impulse came to me that I needed to begin to immediately dismiss any pornographic thought that ever came into my mind. I made the choice at that moment that from that point forward, I would do exactly that. When such thoughts encroach into my conscious mind, I mentally force them out. My goal is to get them out as fast as possible, within about 4 seconds, preferably less. One tip that I learned is that as soon as an unwanted thought enters your mind, begin praying for other people who may also have similar struggles. I have noticed that having a default mental activity (such as praying for someone else or reciting a memorized scripture) to replace the pornographic thought is extremely helpful to keep your thoughts under control. That way, you don’t have to spend time thinking of something else to think about while you are trying to get the bad thought out. Dismissing and replacing pornographic thoughts can and should become automatic.

If you are married, I think it is healthy that when you think of your spouse to think about your sex life some of the time that you spend thinking about your spouse and keep those thoughts balanced with other positive thoughts about your spouse.

Let’s say that you do train your mind to automatically dismiss every pornographic thought as soon as it shows up. Your ability to immediately exit a website that unexpectedly displays a potentially triggering image will also increase.

Dismissing unwanted thoughts is one part of the equation to perfect thought control, having a default mental activity to immediately replace unwanted thoughts is a second part, and a third part of the equation is to always have something wholesome to be thinking about generally. We can have the “mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16). This would include thinking and pondering about scriptures and spiritual principles, focusing on family life, and being service-oriented. I feel that this is an extremely empowering key.

3) Set and keep strict internet usage guardrails

“ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation” (3 Nephi 18:18)
To avoid viewing any potentially-triggering images, you should develop healthy and preventative internet usage habits. This is part of what it means to always watch so that you do not enter temptation. Watching means to avoid the temptation. For me, this has meant minimizing the time I’m on the internet as much as possible, visiting as few sites as needed and preferably those that I have been to before and can trust to not show provocative images such as email and a few blogs, and getting online in locations where what I am browsing is visible to others. Having strict rules around when, where and how long you get online can prevent viewing a triggering image and then relapsing into unwanted patterns of behavior.

4) Create a Recovery Action Plan

One of the Pure Desire tools is the Recovery Action Plan, or RAP. This is a worksheet that you fill out to choose the steps of recovery that you will go through in case of any future relapse. You articulate the natural consequences of relapsing and choose additional self-imposed consequences in case you ever slip up again. Some of the self-imposed consequences should be painful and costly so that they reinforce a negative experience with looking at pornography. Ted Roberts, who is the founder of Pure Desire and a long-time certified sex addiction therapist, said that the relapse rate for men who sit down with their wives to create an effective Recovery Action Plan essentially goes down to zero! Here is the link to the Pure Desire RAP – https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/1869/0555/files/recovery-action-plan-addict.pdf?1458.

5) Create an escape plan in case of feeling triggered

Despite efforts to address the underlying reasons that contribute to relapse and to consciously avoid certain websites and locations, provocative images can still show up unexpectedly and trigger you into an almost uncontrollable desire to look at more. Having a plan to escape from this situation can diffuse that urge and save you from another relapse episode.

My escape plan in case I am ever triggered is to pause, get away from the computer, and call a friend and tell him that I am triggered and trying to diffuse the urge. Exposing the trigger will help diffuse the situation. Hearing the supportive voice of a friend will help even more. I have pre-arranged with a friend that if I am ever triggered, I will call him, and we will talk about remembering priorities such as family and spiritual development. I have rehearsed this escape plan in my mind several times so that it will be as automatic as possible if the time comes. When I have been triggered before, the lower brain seems to take over and it becomes almost impossible to control the urge to look at more. (By lower brain, I mean the brain stem or reptilian brain and the limbic system of the mid-brain or mammalian brain.) I have actually tested out my escape plan by calling my friend and telling him that I was triggered when I really wasn’t just so that I could lay that experience into my memory and it would be that much easier to enact the escape if ever needed.

6) Social support group

Exposing and shining a light on your weakness with other people is extremely important in addiction recovery. This is more than a one-time confession to someone else after relapse. This means joining a
formal addiction recovery group or having a mentor or small number of trusted friends with whom you frequently discuss your progress in recovery. Having a supportive network of friends will help you heal and remain addiction free.

7) Pray, fast, serve others and the law of restoration

“After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before.” (Job 42:10, New International Version)

“6) Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?
7) Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?
8) Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.” (Isaiah 58:6-8)

In my own experience and by reading and listening to the experiences of others, praying for and even fasting for heaven’s help to avoid pornography may move the needle to prevent relapse a little bit, but often those efforts don’t help at all. However, I believe that the right kind of prayer and fasting can be very beneficial. I recently learned that altruistic prayer, or, in other words, praying for others, is a very powerful form of prayer. Lynne McTaggart who researches, writes and speaks about the power of intention, has this short video on YouTube where she describes real-life experiences of the powerful benefits on those who pray for others – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDU0Lq1OAU&feature=emb_logo.

The key here is that if you spend time to regularly forget yourself and pray for others and dedicate fasts to other people, Heaven will reward you with a greater blessing than what you would receive by focusing your prayers and fasts on yourself. You can specifically pray and fast for others who are also struggling with pornography or who may likely be tempted to look at pornography, such as any of your male relatives or friends and possibly female relatives and friends.

Job 42:10 (quoted above) says that “the Lord restored [Job’s] fortunes”. This describes what can be called the law of restoration, which is not much different than the Buddhist concept of Karma. In The Book of Mormon, Alma the younger taught his son Corianton about this law of restoration:

“12) And now behold, is the meaning of the word restoration to take a thing of a natural state and place it in an unnatural state, or to place it in a state opposite to its nature?
13) O, my son, this is not the case; but the meaning of the word restoration is to bring back again evil for evil, or carnal for carnal, or devilish for devilish—good for that which is good; righteous for that which is righteous; just for that which is just; merciful for that which is merciful.
14) Therefore, my son, see that you are merciful unto your brethren; deal justly, judge righteously, and do good continually; and if ye do all these things then shall ye receive your reward; yea, ye shall have mercy restored unto you again; ye shall have justice restored unto you again; ye shall have a righteous judgment restored unto you again; and ye shall have good rewarded unto you again.
15) For that which ye do send out shall return unto you again, and be restored; therefore, the word restoration more fully condemneth the sinner, and justifieth him not at all.” (Alma 41:12-15)
Jesus taught the Nephites that by always watching and praying, that they would be able to avoid temptation. Then he describes the type of prayer associated with avoiding temptation, which is to pray for your wives and children to be blessed, which is forgetting yourself and praying for others:

18) Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation; for Satan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.
19) Therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name;
20) And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you.
21) Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed. (3 Nephi 18:18-21)

In The Book of Mormon, Amulek taught that praying for others is not always enough, but we also need to make personal contact in our service to others:

“27 Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you.
28 And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith.
29 Therefore, if ye do not remember to be charitable, ye are as dross, which the refiners do cast out, (it being of no worth) and is trodden under foot of men." (Alma 34:27-29).

Although this key was not a part of my initial recovery, I do feel that this could be an extremely powerful key for anyone who is beginning a recovery. Forgetting yourself and praying for others is a very high level of thought control and self-discipline. If you can master this key, you are well on your way to full recovery and freedom and being a true servant of God.

8) Meditation

The mental, emotional, spiritual and even physical benefits of meditation are well known. Meditating daily can help you develop better self-control, maintain more positive emotions even during stressful situations and conditions, and cleanse the subconscious. I would recommend doing some research on different forms of meditation and visualization to find a method that resonates with you. I meditate 6 to 7 days per week for 10 to 60 minutes each day. I have found that time to be extremely valuable to do the inner work of developing and strengthening my spirit, mind and heart and to connect to and commune with God.

If you want high-powered meditation, I would recommend becoming acquainted with the work of Dr. Joe Dispenza. He does not teach specifically about recovering from pornography, but you should find the things he talks about are directly applicable to that. The title of his most recent book is “Becoming Supernatural”. You can find instructions to meditations he has created at http://www.becomingsupernatural.com/meditation-information/. Many videos of his presentations and interviews are available on YouTube and other websites.
Here is yoga meditation that is designed to break any type of addiction - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBp9JdnpKGk.

Visualization is often a part of meditation. When recovering from an addiction, you can visualize yourself and imagine the feeling of being clean and free for the rest of your life. As you imagine and feel yourself clean and free for the rest of your life, your neurological system accepts that as reality and your subconscious will work to bring that new “reality” into being. This method of visualization is a form of prayer that Christ described – “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” (Mark 11:24, New International Version). Notice the verb tenses in that verse. If you were to verbalize that type of prayer, you would say something to the effect of, “Lord, I choose a life that is pure and that is clean and free from all addiction. I accept and am grateful for your help to keep me clean and free. I am free and I will be free from now until the end of this mortal life. I feel and envelop myself with that freedom and cleanliness.”

9) Regularly review and reinforce good habits

Once you have done the up-front work of recovery and have started to develop habits to avoid pornography, then you enter a phase of maintaining health, inner strength, and balance. Part of that maintenance is regularly reviewing and reinforcing those habits and reminding yourself about the battle for self-control that you have been fighting. For example, I mentally rehearse my key habits about once a week, which are controlling my thoughts, keeping strict internet usage rules, reviewing my escape plan in case it is ever needed, praying for others, avoiding beef and dairy as much as possible, contemplating the consequences of ever relapsing again, and being aware of my physical energy levels and emotional states. In addition, I listen to one Pure Desire podcast per week to remind myself about living clean.

10) Hormone control

“And not choose eternal death, according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom.” (2 Nephi 2:29)

In the scripture just quoted, we learn that our flesh or body has evil tendencies built into it. The body produces hormones that lead to a natural desire for sexual stimulation and reproduction and such desires can be expressed in good or bad ways. Evil spirits play on our hormone levels to get us to do things like look at porn.

A large percentage of dairy cows in the US are injected with extra hormones such as testosterone to make them grow faster. Those hormones are then found in beef and dairy products. Consuming beef and dairy products may very likely increase your level of testosterone, leading to an increased sex drive and susceptibility to being triggered to look at pornography. When I found out that this was a potential contributor to my relapses, I prayed to know how much of a contributor it was. The answer was that it was the number one factor contributing to my relapses. The solution for me has been to nearly eradicate all beef and dairy. The only exceptions are when I know that the beef and dairy products come from cows that are not injected with hormones, and even then, I try to keep it to a bare minimum.
You can also keep your hormones balanced through proper nutrition, exercise and sleep. Balancing hormones could require major lifestyle changes for some and minor changes for others. It may require eliminating all hamburgers and milkshakes and getting on a long-term exercise program. As I look back on my relapses, my longest span between relapses (which was 4 years) occurred during a time when I was at my healthiest and at my lowest weight.

Based on my studies of the benefits of fasting and detoxifying the body and my own intuition, I believe that excess hormones, inflammation and other imbalances in the body that lead or may lead to falling into pornography can be balanced through multi-day fasting (where you do drink water but you don’t eat food) or other methods of detoxification such as juicing. If you feel that this would be beneficial for your recovery, I would recommend that you research the different methods of fasting and detoxifying the body and wisely choose and follow through on a method that seems most beneficial for you. Doing a multi-day detox or fast can be a great way to give your recovery from addiction a massive boost.

11) Stress management, emotional awareness and the FASTER scale

One reason that people look at pornography is to escape from or deal with stress and negative emotional states. For me, I have found that when I do not get enough sleep pornographic thoughts enter my mind more often. Being aware of and managing your stress level, emotional state and ensuing vulnerability to temptation is extremely important in avoiding relapse.

Michael Dye is an addiction therapist who identified a sequence of emotional states that addicts go through before they relapse, which is called the FASTER scale. The sequence of emotional states is Forgetting priorities, Anxiety, Speeding up, Ticked off, Exhaustion, and finally Relapse. You can learn more about the FASTER scale and Dye’s Genesis Process at https://www.genesisprocess.org/. Pure Desire has adopted the FASTER scale for use in their recovery group program. Many men that have gone through Pure Desire recovery groups have said that the FASTER scale was the best tool in the program for them. Here is the Pure Desire version of the FASTER scale – https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/1869/0555/files/faster-scale-check-in-2017.pdf?1458?.

The key here is to not only be aware of your emotions, but also have a routine or method to return to a strong and positive state, which could include a short meditation, breathing exercise, working out, or getting more sleep.

12) Healing father wounds

In his counseling practice, Ted Roberts has found that 80% of men who were addicted to pornography had significant “father wounds”. In other words, some aspect or even every aspect of their relationships with their fathers was dysfunctional. Typical father wounds are due to a father being very harsh on one hand or on the other hand being very distant, perhaps due to a divorce. Men with father wounds turn to pornography to medicate the pain of the abusive, dysfunctional or distant relationship with their fathers. Many of the men who went through therapy with Ted Roberts were very relieved to understand that they weren’t perverts, they were just wounded. Some men experience other forms of trauma and emotional wounds that they medicate by viewing porn. Emotional wounds underlying porn addiction need to be resolved and healed. This did not happen to be an underlying issue for me, but if you think it could be an underlying issue for you then you can do a little research to find information on how to heal

13) Undo generational curses or inherited tendencies

“The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.” (Numbers 14:18)

We inherit the positive and negative tendencies of our parents and other ancestors. At this point in history, the whole human race has a massive buildup of generational curses or misbehaviors. Chances are that everyone of us inherited some amount of sexual misbehavior. In our generation, that sexual dysfunction is often manifested as an addiction to pornography. I prayed to know how much of a contributor this factor was to my own addiction. The answer was that it was number two contributor. I don’t think my case is abnormal. Healing these generational curses requires revelation to identify which ancestors contributed to it and then how to heal them and you from the issue. The healing of the generational issue typically takes the form of a command to dismiss it or a prayer to God to have it healed. You can find many resources on how to heal generational curses if you spend the time to search them out.

The atonement of Christ can be understood as a generational healing for the entire human family. The prophet Jacob in the Book of Mormon said, “And [Christ] cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam.” (2 Nephi 9:21). I have asked in prayer how much of the atonement of Christ was devoted to sexual issues. The answer that I received was that it was the number one issue.

14) Cast out dark spirits

In my experience, observation and study, spirits of a dark nature are very closely involved in tempting some of us to look at and stay hooked on looking at porn. I personally don’t think there are any exceptions. Whenever anyone, especially someone who has made serious efforts and commitments to follow Christ, falls into a porn addiction, dark spirits immediately show up. In my own experience, there have been times when I relapsed and then did all I could to repent and regain a good state of being, but the dark spirits were still around me or in me waiting for the next time they could work with subconscious issues to tempt me into yet another relapse.

Casting out dark spirits can be accomplished in a few different ways:
- Pray to God and beg that the Lord Jesus Christ come and remove them from you; you may be required to fast and pray so you will also need to ask for and be sensitive to the directions of the spirit to know what you need to do so that the Lord will cast the dark spirits away from you
- According to the directions of the spirit, you can command the dark spirits to be cast off you
- Ask God to lead you to someone who has true priesthood who can cast them away from you
I have had dark spirits cast off through priesthood blessings. I am sure that if I ever relapse again, dark spirits would be right back, and I would have to go through the unpleasant process of dealing with them, repenting and requesting another casting off blessing.

The Book of Mormon tells a story about an unnamed king of the Lamanites who was the father of king Lamoni. Aaron, a Nephite missionary and one of the sons of king Mosiah, taught the king of the Lamanites about the plan of salvation. The king then asked how he could get rid of the evil spirit that was possessing him or rooted in his breast. Aaron told him to repent of all his sins and ask God to give him what he desired. The king did so, and the spirit of God came and worked on him so that he did receive what he desired. This story shows that evil spirits can be cast out by asking God and Christ to root them out. See Alma 22:1-27.

DEVELOPING A COMPLETE RECOVERY AND MAINTENANCE PLAN

If I could go back in time and advise my younger self on how to avoid any more relapses, I would put myself on a recovery program like this:

Weeks 1 and 2, get right with God, develop key tools
- Spend 30 minutes per day working through the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous
- Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
- Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
- Develop a Recovery Action Plan (RAP)
- Develop an escape plan
- Develop internet usage guardrails
- Once developed, review guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
- Find at least one friend or mentor who will act as a support and talk to you regularly about your progress, or join a recovery group
- Severely reduce or eliminate beef and dairy from your diet and ensure that you are keeping your hormones balanced through good sleep, diet, and exercise
- Begin working on excellent thought control

Week 3, add FASTER scale self-analysis
- Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
- Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
- Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
- Speak to support friend at least once a week about progress with all the recovery activities
- Become very familiar with FASTER scale and begin to use it, get in the habit of doing a FASTER scale self-analysis weekly

Week 4, work on father wounds
- Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
- Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
- Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
- Speak to support friend at least once a week about progress with all the recovery activities
- FASTER scale self-analysis once in the week
- Contemplate and pray about any father wounds that you may have, research methods to heal the father wound and do the work to heal it
Week 5, finalize work on father wounds
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
▪ Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
▪ Speak to support friend at least once a week about progress with all the recovery activities
▪ FASTER scale self-analysis once in the week
▪ Complete the healing of the father wound as much as possible

Week 6, work on generational curses
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
▪ Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
▪ Speak to support friend at least once a week about progress with all the recovery activities
▪ FASTER scale self-analysis once in the week
▪ Contemplate and pray about generational curses that have contributed to any relapses, research methods to heal generational curses and begin the work of healing them

Week 7, work on casting out all dark spirits
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
▪ Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
▪ Speak to support friend at least once a week about progress with all the recovery activities
▪ FASTER scale self-analysis once in the week
▪ Ask God in prayer if there are any unclean or evil spirits in your heart, rooted in your breast, in you, attached to you, oppressing you, etc.; ask how to have them removed and follow through

Week 8, detox
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
▪ Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP daily
▪ Speak to support friend at least once a week about progress with all the recovery activities
▪ FASTER scale self-analysis once in the week
▪ Do a detox fast or juicing program

Week 9 and beyond, maintain freedom
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day praying for other people
▪ Spend 5 minutes per day meditating, visualizing, and feeling being clean and free
▪ Review commitments to thought control, hormone control, guardrails, escape plan and RAP weekly
▪ Speak to support friend(s) every month about progress with all the recovery activities
▪ FASTER scale self-analysis once in the week

SOME RANDOM FINAL THOUGHTS

The struggle to recover from any addiction, including an addiction to pornography, is largely in the subconscious. Making effective change in the subconscious requires being able to access and communicate with it. The “languages” of the subconscious are imagery, emotions, and body
movements. Doing a meditation where you sit still and visualize and even evoke emotions is effective. The Psalms talk about communicating with the subconscious (which the scriptures call the heart) – “I commune with mine own heart” (Psalm 77:6). Adding physical movement to the visualization can be even more effective. A book entitled “Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power” by Thomas Mails talks about a Lakota Sioux medicine man and holy man named Fools Crow. There is a section in the book that describes Fools Crow’s method to pray, meditate and commune with God the Father (called Wakan Tanka by the Sioux) that includes gestures to remove darkness and obstacles from his being and to then receive God’s power. You can read about it on pages 32-35 in the book and you can even find those pages on the preview of the book on Google Books, https://books.google.com/books?id=7AA3NB1mxdQC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false. Other traditions also incorporate physical movements, gestures and postures into their spiritual practice. Scientific research has shown that your physical posture also influences your mental and emotional state. You can learn more by watching this TED talk, https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are. Incorporating gestures and postures into your meditation and prayer of cleanliness and freedom could be very useful.

Recovering from an addiction is about going from an unhealthy state to a state of general wholeness. For example, if you become familiar with the FASTER scale and use it as a tool to evaluate your emotional state and vulnerability to temptation, you will also become more emotionally healthy in general. Learning to be aware of and control your thoughts in one area will lead to generally controlling your thoughts in many areas.

Recovering from an addiction and healing the subconscious requires sensitivity to your own heart and to the voice of God. If you have not developed your ability to identify answers to prayer, I would suggest reading the book “Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice” by Mark Virkler (who runs Communing With God Ministries) to learn an excellent method to learn to hear God’s voice. You can also find enough information about the four keys on the website www.cwgministries.org that you would not need to read the book. In addition, Mark Virkler has done presentations on the four keys that can be found on YouTube and Vimeo that are easy to find.

Remember that “we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:15-16).

If you have any questions about what I have written here or think that I may be able to help you in any way, you can contact me by email at sojourner28@protonmail.com.