

Addicted to Porn

We have asked "Susan," the wife of a porn addict to write a blog entry aimed at people who may be viewing pornography. The following is her response.

We encourage your comments and discussion below. We invite you to also read [an earlier guest blog by a marriage therapist](#)

To the user of pornography:

Some of you may think the use of pornography is a personal choice, that it doesn't affect anyone else. But as the wife of a pornography addict, I can tell you this is absolutely not true. Addicts are affected in terrible ways. For some, sex addiction (which usually includes pornography) leads to dangerous, destructive behaviors, which can, in turn, lead to physical illness or suicide.

For most, however, the death is one of the spiritual and emotional selves. Pornography is disgusting and offensive. It drives the spirit away immediately. Prolonged exposure makes it more and more difficult to feel the spirit and to follow the counsel from their religious leaders. It is spiritual death.

Emotions Damaged

Also, the ability of the addict to feel love or other emotions is greatly hindered. This makes it nearly impossible for them to have normal relationships with others, especially spouses and children. Addicts and their families are deprived of these, the most satisfying of relationships.

Many of you may think that because your spouse doesn't know about your addiction or your use of pornography it is not affecting her. Addicts withdraw from others, become angry at small things, and cannot communicate on even the most basic level. A spouse can feel this from you! Your children can feel the distance between you and them. It is heartbreaking because your spouse knows there is something wrong but has no proof of what it is or any way to find out.

Broken Dreams

A woman marries hoping and expecting her husband to love, honor, and protect her. She expects her husband to be a righteous man who will always place her first in his life and mind. When she finds out that the most beloved and trusted person in her life has betrayed her in such a horrible way, it devastates her. How could her own husband destroy their life together, destroy the dream of a happy family and home? How could he lust after other women and place them before her in his mind and heart? He suddenly becomes the monster who has caused more pain than she could ever have imagined. Her faith in herself is destroyed as well as her faith in men, other people, God, and church leaders.

Children are affected by a parent's addiction to or use of pornography. As they get older, they learn behaviors such as how to handle anger, how to treat women, how to interact with their family. If an addict releases anger by yelling at his wife and kids, the children will learn to

release anger in the same way. There is also the risk of children finding pornography in the home or on the computer. They can easily become addicted themselves. No child is too young to become addicted to pornography.

Tell Your Spouse

Sexual trust is the most precious type of trust that can ever be given. It is the most vulnerable a person can ever be. And when that type of trust is broken, it is very difficult to get back. Sometimes the devastation is too great and the pain is too deep. Divorce is the result. Every person involved in that situation is a victim. As you can see, the losses and the wounds are many and deep. Your involvement in pornography, no matter how small or infrequent, has terrible consequences. If you are not involved, don't ever start. If you are addicted, get help right away. If you are involved and think you don't have a problem, get help anyway. Talk to someone and then determine if you are addicted. It will be painful and frightening at first. But getting the addiction out in the open is the best for everyone involved.

If you haven't told your spouse yet, tell him or her. Ten years of lies is better than forty. Everything I've said here is from my own experience with my husband's addiction and our recovery. The lies hurt more than the addiction. Being treated like a fool hurt more than finding out. It is lies that destroy lives.

Your comments and experiences are welcome. Please click on comment below. For privacy please simply type in anonymous in the name field. Pornography is a serious topic for those affected by it and we request your cooperation in keeping the conversation on a mature level. Please keep in mind as you read the comments that they reflect the opinion of the person who made them and not KSL or its ownership. This blog is intended to be a place of respectful discussion. All comments that meet KSL's standards of decency are published regardless of the writer's arguments.

Comments

I was married in 1977 to a returned missionary whom seemed like the ideal man to marry. we divorced in 1987 because I could no longer deal with his anger, blame, and constant mood swings. He had (and still has) an ongoing problem with pornography. I never blamed the porn, but constantly begged him if he had to look at it, not to take his anger out on me. I had two small children. It caused such pain for me because i really blamed myself. This man has ALWAYS had a temple recommend. WHEN are the brethren going to deny men their recommends if they have this problem?

Posted by: [Maureen Hanks](#) | April 20, 2005 07:56 PM

As someone who went through a period of time viewing pornography and who confessed to my wife, my heart goes out to the woman who wrote this letter. Thank you so much for opening up and sharing your experience.

I think one of the biggest problems is this topic isn't out in the open. It's not pleasant. But, it's reality. KSL 1160 deserves tremendous praise and our respect for broaching this topic. Thanks to

Ms. Richards and the KSL management for this project. You have done your community great service. I am especially impressed with how you have given a voice to a these addicts' spouses. They have been overlooked for too long.

I know first-hand the hurt that looking at pornography has on a man's spouse. I had no idea about this until I confessed to my wife. I never knew what damage I was doing. Sure, I had been counseled otherwise, but no one had ever spoken to me about the damage I was doing to my wife... only to me. I figured I could hold my own. But the pain I have seen on my wife's face and the flood of tears on many nights I have been responsible for because of this habit have made me realize how horrible this habit is.

Men: take it from someone who learned the hard way, stay away from this filth.

Posted by: [Nameless](#) | April 20, 2005 08:32 PM

I think that everything they said was true. I was married and addicted to pornography and other pernicious vices. These adversely impacted the marriage. Only after watching an episode of Dr. Phil was I able to see I had a problem. I confessed to my husband "jim" and said I was so sorry for storing pornos and otherwise participating in pornography viewing. "Jim" and I cried in each others arms. "Jim" cried a lot too. He was so physically hurt. Even began smoking and he had never smoked in his entire life (42 years!). I began to see the real light and that my problems might be the poison to kill our marriage and it was MY fault.

I was in despair and losing my husband because I needed a thrill of pornography. How dumb was I? I was so addicted, but then after seeing (ironically and amazingly) another episode of Dr. Phil, I was finally able to beat the habit. I've been off porn for 49 days now. I am starting to see that the road will be hard and that "Jim" might leave me but at least I'm getting over my pornographic participation and viewing addictions.

Thank you KSL for so bravely and truthfully detailing the destructive effect and the reality of pornography and the addiction to porn that pervades in todays world. I'm one woman who has broken the habit!

Posted by: [nameless](#) | April 20, 2005 08:54 PM

I agree, thank you for doing this series. This difficult problem needs to be discussed more and be out in the open.

To Maureen, they do deny recommends, but this requires the man to be honest about his involvement and the degree of involvement in pornography. I'm sure you've experienced the HUGE amount of lying that is a part of pornography addiction. I have been in a situation similar to yours and too blamed myself. It is so hard and you're very brave for posting. Thank you

Posted by: [anon](#) | April 20, 2005 10:11 PM

I've been an addict for almost five years. The hardest part of coming clean was telling my wife.

Next would be having my recommend taken by the Bishop. I have been seeing two different counselors and staying in consistent and frequent contact with my Bishop. I started this in Sept. of 2004 and continue therapy and counseling and will attend the temple in the next couple of weeks. Just as those with bad ankles have to always take precautions when they participate in Athletics, so to will I always have to take precautions when alone, when around the Internet or when staying at Hotels. I'm not trying anymore to be strong enough to not worry about these situations, I'm now trying to become strong enough to realize I'm not strong enough. I'm not sure I will ever be immune or not have to take these precautions again in would-be simple thoughtless situations. It's hard to think that I will always have to watch where I am or what I'm doing just because I had a problem a long time ago. However, if it means the way I feel now for my wife and about myself, then I can handle that! My advice to anyone remotely involved in pornography is tell your wife or parents. You think you can kick it by yourself, but you can't and without help, chances are you won't. Be honest with your wife or parents and make honesty your first priority with others and especially yourself. Good Luck to all who are dealing with this and remember to fight the good fight!!

Posted by: [Nameless](#) | April 20, 2005 11:02 PM

I would also like to thank KSL for posting this topic. I feel it is important in improving family relationships.

There was a time in my life when I found myself viewing pornography on the internet quite frequently. My problem with pornography viewing was triggered off as a reaction to how I was being treated by others. I was being emotionally abused and it had a negative effect on my self-worth.

I felt rejected by my wife and other close friends and relatives because I was overweight. They would harass me in public places and would avoid saying anything good about me. They would also force me to achieve academic and physical fitness goals by threatening to abandon me if I did not meet their requirements. Even after achieving some of the goals, the achievements would be ignored and more difficult acceptance requirements would be put in place. It made me feel as though I was in a "no win" situation and there was no way for me to have a normal life. As a result of being rejected by my wife and society, I tried fulfilling my social needs by viewing pornography on the internet. I did not go out or sleep with other women. I basically withdrew myself from public places because I felt rejected. My self worth declined more as I continued to do what my church leaders and parents treated as taboo. Instead of feeling better, I came very close to attempting suicide. At this point, I decided to talk to my wife about the problem. We are now in the healing process and she accepted part of the responsibility for what happened. She is now treating me better and I no longer feel compelled to chase after the pornography.

If we want our spouse or other close friends or relatives to stop viewing pornography on the internet, we need to find out what the driving force behind the addiction is. We need to make them feel important and loved so they don't find themselves in the same situation I was in.

Posted by: [Name Withheld](#) | April 21, 2005 03:45 AM

I, also, want to thank KSL for being courageous and bringing to light a very dark side of our society. I was married to a man who is addicted to pornography. I knew this man for years and we dated for over a year when we got married. Although there were signs, I never knew the extent of the problem until after we were married. The addicts ability to hide and deny the problem are astonishing to me.

I had very high hopes for a long and loving life with this man. It was the second marriage for both of us and I feel that we would have been and would still be very happy together were it not for his addiction to pornography.

It took him away from me, away from our life together. The pain and sadness that it caused me was unbearable. After a short 18 months of marriage, I confronted my husband and told him it had to stop. He told me we had nothing to discuss. I am now living elsewhere and in the process of divorcing.

The intrigue and power of this addiction is astounding. In the end, all of society is affected. It will and does take our loved ones away from us.

Posted by: [terri](#) | April 21, 2005 05:22 AM

My life has also been greatly affected by pornography. It has not only destroyed my marriage but has taken my sons also because of the influence of their father. I have watched the patterns of anger and abuse and a lack of being able to love or feel not only manifested in my husband but now also with my children. I stayed married to a man addicted to pornography for 25 years thinking that some how his promises of changing would last, but he always returned to it. Even after a process of repentance and more than a year of not viewing it my husband returned to the evil, it was so easily available. My sons are now young men who continue the lying to themselves and to others about their addiction, they are easily angered and disrespect women. The pain and sorrow I have experienced as I have had to remove myself and my daughter from the home so we could be safe is excruciating. I am grateful to KSL for bringing this plague out in the open so others can see that the effects are truly devastating.

Posted by: [anonymous](#) | April 21, 2005 06:30 AM

I am also grateful to KSL for bringing this disease out in the open.

I was married to someone who was addicted to pornography. I say "was" because it destroyed our marriage like it has so many others. We were married for only a year. We were also married in the Temple. But this was a problem he had before we were married as well but didn't leave it behind. He said he had it under control and it was only a few times here and there. But there was no stopping it. The spirit left him. He would never admit he had a problem.

I had to discover it myself by the history on the computer. And still, he refused to quit.

He got physically abusive to the point that I had to leave.

I believe that his frustration towards himself and what he was doing, was taken out on me. And if we would have had kids, they would have suffered.

I am Eternally grateful that I left when I did. It is degrading. It is pure EVIL. Women, it is

NOTHING you do! No matter how attractive you are, it does NOT matter. Please remember that. It took me a while to remember who I was. Any man that makes you forget who you are, is NOT worth fighting for.

Posted by: [Jen](#) | April 21, 2005 06:37 AM

Wow! After reading these stories and all the comments that have been posted, it makes me very sad to realize that there are so many who are being affected by this tragic evil. About 4 and a half years ago, I went through a situation where I found out that the one person I loved the most in the world was gravely addicted to pornography and had been dealing with the problem for over 8 years by the time I found out. My story is one of heartbreak, and the heartbreak only continues as I come to the realization that others are daily being affected in the same way that I was by this terrible disease.

My ex-husband and I were both students at BYU and we met and fell in love in 2000. He was a volleyball player at the school and I was a very involved student as well. We were married in the Salt Lake LDS Temple and it seemed as if we were on top of the world -- for about a week. I quickly began realizing that things weren't nearly what I imagined they would be and that I didn't feel my husband was very interested in me anymore. It was very difficult for me and my self-esteem was being brought down daily. I got to the point where it was difficult to even want to get ready in the morning because it was never good enough for my husband. I realize now this was only because I was being compared to the latest "porn queen" and nothing I did, aside from any dramatic cosmetic surgery or photographic airbrushing, could make me what he wanted because what he wanted wasn't real. Well, after about 6 months of wondering why my husband didn't love me, I found out about his pornography addiction. He informed me that he began using pornography around age 16 and had continued using it through his LDS mission and into our marriage. He told me he felt that once he got married, he would not need it anymore because he could be involved in a physical relationship with his wife, but he soon realized that was not true because his addiction had become so strong. We tried for about 6 months to work through his addiction, but the marriage fell apart when my husband got to the apathetic point of not caring anymore. He did not want to change and there was nothing I could do about it. Our annulment went through on what would have been 2 days after our one year anniversary.

My heart goes out to all the women and men who are dealing with this problem in their lives, whether at the hand of a spouse who is addicted or being the one who is addicted. I can't explain the feelings of betrayal that come when you realize that the one person who you love the most in the world and who you are supposed to be able to trust the most has in fact been trampling that trust under the monstrous woes of pornography. As a wife who has experienced this, I plead with all men out there to do whatever is necessary, difficult as it may be, to get help for the problem and resolve to make their marriage work. And to the countless number of women whose husbands are struggling with this problem, please be understanding of your husband and do all in your power to get him help. I am certainly not an advocate for marriages ending, even though mine did. I know of plenty of situations where the addiction has been dealt with and the marriage has been salvaged, despite a long and difficult road. Please also understand that this addiction has nothing to do with you. I struggled for a long time thinking that if I was a prettier wife or if I

could make him happier he wouldn't have needed to turn to such a vile thing; but, in reality, he was turned to pornography long before I met him and I have come to the realization that his expectations were unreal because of the nature of his addiction and there was really nothing humanly possible I could have done differently to make him happy.

The road of recovery has been a long one for me and I am just now feeling like I am getting to the point of being able to be normal again. While going through the experience, I thought that there was no chance of me being able to put my life back together because I felt it had been destroyed at such a basic core level. I now realize though that there is a power beyond myself that has helped me get through it and be able to now stand strongly as someone who has been there and would like to help others through it as well.

Thank you, KSL, for your willingness to shed some light on such a dark subject and let those out there who are affected by this problem know that there is help and their lives can be turned again to a state of joy that they so long for.

Posted by: [Tiffany](#) | April 21, 2005 07:24 AM

I too am a wife who has suffered from the pain of a spouse addicted to pornography. I feel very fortunate in that he has mostly been honest with me after each time he has fallen. He told me about his addiction on our honeymoon. We thought being married it would solve itself. Unfortunately, as many of you know that was a misconception. Twelve years of addiction was too great to push aside.

My husband has now gone close to two years without viewing pornography. Here are a few things that have really helped us. My husband has tried to get me involved to help. He told me whenever he viewed porn that night when we went to bed, with one exception. It was not easy. I typically cried nonstop for two weeks from the pain and betrayal.

Next, I called The Gathering Place. They recommended a few books. I bought them, and we read them together. One was a workbook for him.

Last, and I think most helpful. My husband asked me to "check up" on him every night. So right before we go to bed I asked him if he had any temptations or problems that day. If he had temptations, we discuss if they were very strong, and how often. If his temptations were really strong and he feels a driving urge to view it, we will begin to take precautions. I won't leave him alone in the house when I run errands. I also no longer take overnight trips leaving him alone. I think for us one of the hardest effects of pornography has been the erosion of my husband's faith. He has all but lost his belief in God. This is after faithfully serving a mission for 2 years. Personally I feel the greatest way to fight this prevalent lurking disease in our society is to shed light on it. More coverage in helping us combat it. the better. Nicely done KSL.

Posted by: [Susan](#) | April 21, 2005 08:01 AM

For everyone who reads this, I must tell you that every person who has endured the heartache and suffering of what this disease does to a person, their spouse, and their family, does still not fully comprehend the devastation it incurs. I have been an addict for over five years, and it has slowly corroded my marriage, my self esteem, and my family. It is a cancerous poison, and for all of you

spouses out there whose partner is the addict, pornography is just the tip of the iceberg. If you actually believe that the addiction is all that he/she is prone too, you are mistaken. Let me tell you what pornography has done to me.

First of all, it has wasted time. It consumes hours of precious life that could have been used to do so many other good things. It breaks the line of trust between husband and wife, and literally agitates the abuser to anger, and a lack of self respect for you and the abuser. It leads to new doors, and forbidden paths. The abuser begins to enter chat rooms and converse with others and engaging in unsafe chat, and or cybersex, and self gratification. This can lead to the abuser deciding that the pornography is not enough, but to seek after the real thing, and ultimately lead to an adulterous affair.

There are so many vices tied to pornography, so many doors and avenues that the mere thought that it is the image of the picture alone is erroneous. The abuser is slowly being pulled further and further away from friends and family until he/she is utterly lost. This is where I am now, and I write this to warn all of you, don't be fooled that your spouse can change, make sure they do. Don't leave it up to him/her, and if they won't, I promise you they really won't. You have to absolutely make sure it is eliminated from their life. If that doesn't work, I'm sorry I couldn't be of more help.

Posted by: [anonymous](#) | April 21, 2005 08:44 AM

I cannot even begin to express how sorry and sad it makes me that so many relationships and marriages have been damaged by pornography. My husband has had the addiction for over six years and I have gone through so many emotions and hurt feelings myself. At first I was so mad, "how could he do this to me?!" Slowly, and painfully I've begun to realize (and constantly have to remind myself) that it really isn't about me, it's about him and what he has been through and continues to go through. This is NOT to say that my heart has not been broken over and over by the betrayal. It hurts every time he has a relapse (I listen quietly and cry every time) but- honestly, I'm so grateful it's not a secret he's keeping anymore. I am thankful he has admitted it is a problem that needs attention. I am thankful we are dealing with it now instead of 20 years ago when NO ONE EVER talked about it. I am so glad there are resources available now to help and people are willing to say that it's a problem. He has been helped by our bishop and a 12 step recovery program. I know this addiction can only be in a remission and that it's a battle we'll most likely deal with for a long, long time. It's something I'm constantly aware of now in the media. I fear for our son who in just a few years will encounter it in some form or another. Although I am very glad there are resources to help those addicted, I wish there were more sources of help for the spouse who goes through their own very real affects of the addiction. It's a very lonely place to be on this end too.

I think those who have commented on their experiences either a spouse or the one addicted are very brave. It's a dirty secret no one ever wants to admit having. Reading the comments and experiences of others has helped me realize we aren't alone afterall. Thank you.

Posted by: [withheld](#) | April 21, 2005 08:46 AM

The bottom line here is addiction. Not to condone pornography in any way, but it is no more destructive than any other kind of addiction. Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sex, television, and pornography are the popular addictions, but let's not forget food addictions - especially sugar. How different is it for someone to hide in their world of pornography compared to someone hiding in their world of ice-cream and bon-bons?

The root of the problem is the addiction. If someone you know and love has a problem with pornography, don't treat them like they're dirty or shameful. The addiction is the disease, not the pornography. They don't need ridicule or embarrassment, they need your love and help.

Good luck to everyone whose lives have been affected by addiction. It's not an easy road, but it can be overcome.

Posted by: [Concerned Citizen](#) | April 21, 2005 08:56 AM

Guest Blogger: Therapist Dan Gray on Pornography Addictions

Posted by Russ Hill on April 18, 2005 at 10:57 PM

Editor's Note: As part of KSL News radio's series of reports, Addicted to Porn, we've asked therapist Dan Gray of the Life STAR Network to write a column addressing the explosion of pornography. We invite your comments below.

Pornography Explosion

Pornography viewing and other compulsive sexual behaviors have become rampant over the last decade. With the Internet becoming available to the masses, pornography, cybersex, and explicit chat sessions have become increasingly popular ways to seek sexual experiences while preserving anonymity. Porn peddlers are making profits in excess of 56 billion a year. They are cunning in their methods to lure new followers, and more and more people are falling prey to their enticements. The obsession with pornography and other compulsive sexual behaviors consumes time, money, self-worth, and close relationships, and can quickly escalate into a serious addiction.

Is it an addiction?

Sexual addiction can be defined as a compulsive physiological or psychological need for a sexual experience that has become habit forming. Sex becomes central to the addict's life in spite of the consequences that may result. It becomes more important than family, friends, and work. Sexual addicts frequently deny that they have a problem, even to themselves, and frequently use compulsive sexual behavior as a means of dealing with pain. This denial often leads them into living a double (or secret) life, creating more shame, pain, and isolation.

The development of a sexual addiction

For some, sex addiction starts early in life through adolescent experimentation, the discovery of self-stimulation, or early exposure to pornography and other sexual stimulants. Sex becomes a powerful, exciting obsession very early on and the addiction accelerates. For others it may start later in life—during graduate school, divorce, or when stresses become so great that an escape is needed. It becomes a way to self-medicate and cope with the pressures of life and the guilt and shame that follow the addictive behavior.

Help for Spouses

Partners of those using pornography excessively often feel “something is wrong” even before the behavior is identified. Once the problem is exposed, partners often experience a wide range of emotions, including feelings of betrayal, hurt, loss, grief, anger, and guilt. They struggle with trust issues and a deep loss of personal security. Some blame themselves, feeling that if only they were more available, attractive, or interesting, their spouse would not have felt the need to look elsewhere. But it is critical for spouses of addicts to understand that they are not to blame for

their partner's addiction. The addiction stems from underlying issues that are beyond the control of the spouse. For the spouse of an addict, it is important to take steps to recover and heal from the pain caused by their partner's addiction, even if the addicted partner will not commit to recovery. Through the process of recovery, partners of addicts can gain a sense of serenity and self-worth that is empowering.

Come Out of Hiding

Many who struggle with these difficult issues have found hope, healing, and new meaning in their lives by breaking the cycle of shame and committing to recovery. But because of the nature of sex addiction, most sexual addicts are initially reluctant to seek help, instead trying to fight the addiction on their own. Some succeed for a while, but inevitably the addictive patterns return.

The key to starting the process of true recovery is to come out of hiding. Talking to someone about the addiction—such as a trusted friend, clergy, family member, or therapist—is an essential first step for both addicts and their partners. Disclosure helps reduce some of the shame as those struggling discover they're not alone.

Individual and group therapy is readily available in your community. If you or someone you love is struggling with pornography or other compulsive sexual behaviors, seek the assistance of a licensed therapist trained and experienced in sex addiction therapy. Twelve-step support groups are also very helpful for individuals and couples.

Dan Gray is with [LifeSTAR Network](#).

Your comments and experiences are welcome. Please click on comment below. For privacy please simply type in anonymous in the name field. Pornography is a serious topic for those affected by it and we request your cooperation in keeping the conversation on a mature level. Thank you.

| [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(3\)](#)

Pornography Series

Posted by Mary Richards on April 18, 2005 at 03:46 PM

In case you haven't heard the promos for the three-part series starting Tuesday, here's a promo -- listen starting Tuesday. The series is on Pornography. The first part deals with how big it has become, in the second, airing Wednesday, I talk to (self-described) addicts, and in the third part, airing Thursday, I look at how pornography affects the spouse of the consumer. Coming soon is a page off of our KSL Radio page with tons more about this topic. I just wanted to give you all a heads up.

Comments

Okay so this is HARD and it REALLY hurts to tell others about this, but maybe my words can help others. I have been addicted since my early teens. It took me until now (41) to realize I have been ADDICTED all this time.

I have often told myself that I can beat the Problem all on my own with the help of my church leader. Note the word Problem, that is all that I really thought it was, not an addiction.

As I have come to find out I am every bit as addicted to pornography as the drug addict down in the slums of the city.

I have often thought of myself as a good member of the LDS church and maybe my awesome caring loving family (through childhood and now marriage for 16 yrs) has been the reason for wanting a change and wanting to get rid of this Problem. I also feel that this has been the reason why I did not move onto harder pornographic or physical stimulation. It truly is an addiction!

To help overcome this addiction I have seen several bishops in my life and the response and course of action has varied with the amount of experience the bishop has had in dealing with this addiction. Many bishops have felt that pornography was a problem and not an addiction, thus part of the reason for not overcoming my Problem and realizing that I was in fact addicted.

I do not feel that in the past people thought of pornography as an addiction. We need a paradigm change. My present bishop is a pharmacist and teaches about and deals with addictions of pharmacists to help them overcome their addiction. The steps to overcome a drug addiction are the same for pornography. The same patterns are followed when a person tries to rid themselves of pornography as does a drug addict.

I recently came to the conclusion that I was addicted as I had gone more than 1-1/2 years without an INTENTIONAL exposure to pornography. The previous time stretch was about a year of non-intentional exposure. I really felt that I could beat this on my own. Well I have not!!

A short time ago I found myself lost in porn on the internet. I felt like a dog returning to its vomit; like it was a habitual movement on my part. As I started this latest exposure I thought nothing of the damage at home that this would cause (and it has!), nor the myriad of other consequences until AFTER I stopped. Then it all hit me like a ton of lead!

Presently I am in the process of setting up an appointment with a social service professional to see if I can overcome this once and for all.

Pornography has robbed me of the potential of a perfectly wonderful life. It has haunted me EVERY day of my life in some shape or fashion.

Pornography has influenced my sexual relation with my wife and presently has almost eliminated it!

IT'S NOT WORTH IT!
DUMP IT!
OR DON'T EVER START IT!

Posted by: [anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 09:22 AM

I divorced my husband after 18 years of marriage to a man with a pornography addiction. I am so encouraged to see this addictive destructive behavior being called for what it truly is. Few men understand the devastation that occurs in the relationship with their wives. It will destroy any and all loving feelings that a wife has for her husband. It crushes feelings of desire for intimacy and replaces it with disgust and revulsion. It takes away security and replaces it with mistrust.

To see these words - "But it is critical for spouses of addicts to understand that they are not to blame for their partner's addiction" helps to bring me some peace. Even as I was going through my divorce there were some in his family who still truly felt that it was MY fault for not making him change. For many years I forgave him over and over while he promised to not bring it into our home again. Pornography addiction needs to be taken very seriously by leaders, families and most of all those who are allowing it to take their lives away. Those who are deluding themselves into thinking it is a victimless, benign behavior which they can stop at any time are truly misguided.

Thank you for bringing this out in the open.

Posted by: [anonymous2](#) | April 20, 2005 09:59 AM

Let me quote your blog which pretty much summarises what is wrong with your story.

"Pornography viewing and other compulsive sexual behaviors have become rampant over the last decade"

You've just described pornography viewing as a compulsive sexual behavior.

I don't think viewing porn is immoral, wrong, unethical, or bad.

I enjoy pornography. I sometimes indulge in self pleasure while viewing pornography. I sometimes indulge in the pleasure of my spouse while viewing pornography. I have no problems with this, and don't think it's wrong. I laugh at the notion that it could be wrong. I have gone through phases of more frequent viewing of pornography, but it's never been high on my list of priorities. It's definitely never interfered with my family or personal life. I would say I'm definitely not addicted to it. I can't even remember the last time I viewed any pornography.

I don't think most people who share my views have addiction problems with pornography. I think people who have religious beliefs about the moral implications of pornography are the ones most likely to have inner conflict with their natural desires, and therefore are more likely to have addiction problems.

Sure there are people who use it for escape, just like anything. But it seems that people who think

its bad are far more titillated by it than I am. I don't know whether to envy them, or be grateful. ;)

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 10:41 AM

I am a spouse of a recovering porn user. I can tell you it does effect relationships. Those who don't feel the effects are past feeling and have lost the sensitivity of the human heart. I have hope for the future, but realize the vulnerability I am in by having a recovering addict as a husband. I will continue to forgive. It is difficult to have trust in this type of relationship. My family is the most meaningful thing to me. I will fight for it. It is sad that our society has let this happen. We can freely view such smut. The virtuous women is priced above rubies. That is what is real.

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 11:40 AM

TO Anonymous April 20, 2005 10:41 AM

Not everyone who drinks is effected by alcohol the same way either, does that mean that alcohol isn't addicting?

The problem between alcohol/and other addictions, compared to pornographic addictions is, well, we might have to wait a few more decades, pornographic material to the masses is still in it's infancy... do we really know all the outcomes from this most offending addiction will be? Alcohol has been available to the masses for years... could you imagine if you could go to your kitchen sink and there was a posset that had alcohol piped to every home in America? And your absolutely right... you can't compare the two... porn addiction is MUCH worse.

People internet porn is directed to destroy one organization, the most important organization ever assembled... the FAMILY.

Posted by: [Religious Fanatic](#) | April 20, 2005 11:49 AM

To the wives: as a husband, believe me it is not intentional! It's an addiction that MOST people with the problem that truly realize that it is a problem, try to quit all their lives. I always felt that I could solve the problem myself and prevent the hurt, pain and mistrust.

Every situation is different but if you can please stand by and help and support your husband.

Some may say it's not a moral problem and that it is okay. Unfortunately they will find out when it is too late that they were wrong. It is destroying the society. Deep down inside, when a person is all alone to reflect, everyone knows it's wrong.

The wives comments are helping me see more light. Thanks!

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 12:00 PM

What if you're a disabled person and females do not see you as being a sexual person.. porn is

my only sexual outlet I have.

my councilor says keep it out your mind but that doesn't work these feelings are natural. they don't go away no one addresses that problem.

Posted by: [TONY SUDWEEKS](#) | April 20, 2005 12:02 PM

To: Religious Fanatic

I'm not saying pornography isn't addicting. In fact, I'll go ahead and say it pornography can be addicting. Anything can be addicting mentally. Pornography is definitely NOT physically addicting, but that's not the point. Addiction is addiction and needs to be dealt with, because, by definition, it is interfering with your life. People are and can be addicted to porn. My point was twofold, first that the article didn't much justice to the issue of Porn vs. Porn addiction. Porn isn't inherently porn addiction, and this is anything but clear in the article. Second, that people who have deep moral feelings that all pornography is bad seem to be more likely to get addicted to it, as opposed to those with more casual views of it.

Let me add that porn and alcohol are very good parallels. Both can ruin lives, and both can be devastating to people caught in their grip. But both can be used responsibly and have positive benefits to the users. This doesn't mean that either could be labeled as always bad or wrong, or made illegal.

All things in moderation, nothing in over indulgence. This is true from water to alcohol to porn. The problem with porn addiction isn't the porn.

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 01:05 PM

To Anonymous

Pornography cannot be used responsibly and exploits both women and men. I'm sorry you feel the way you do, but simply put, you are wrong. I'm sorry if this offends you.

Alcohol and pornography are not good parallels. Good parallels would be pornography and meth or pornography and Ecstasy, pornography and heroin, etc.

Addressing your two points, no porn is not porn addiction. Porn leads to porn addiction. As for your second point "people who have deep moral feelings that all pornography is bad seem to be more likely to get addicted to it, as opposed to those with more casual views of it", do you have evidence to back that up? I'm married to a person who struggles with a pornography addiction and consequently have studied it a great deal. Interestingly, a whole lot of the addicts who have written about their experiences started out just like you, as individuals with "casual views" of pornography.

Regarding your last statement, "All things in moderation, nothing in over indulgence. This is true from water to alcohol to porn. The problem with porn addiction isn't the porn." Let me refer back

to the good parallels, meth, Ecstasy, and heroin. Are these things good in moderation too?

Lastly, if you are so certain that your viewpoint is the right one, why post as anonymous?

Posted by: [AlsoAnonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 04:04 PM

I have to disagree. Women do need to accept some of the responsibility for their husband's desire for porn. In my opinion and experience, many women in the LDS community believe that once they have landed their husband and secured a temple marriage, divorce is not an option. Therefore, they can treat their husbands poorly, become frigid in bed, and let their bodies go to pot and their husband will never leave. Don't kid yourselves. A temple marriage is no guarantee that your husband will stay and put up with your crap. Ladies, if you aren't giving your husbands what they need, they WILL look elsewhere for it, and many times porn is where they'll find it.

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 04:13 PM

As a newly wed bride who's dream were just shattered by pornography I felt I need to share my story. After 2 months of marriage, I found out my husband not only was consumed by pornography, but to the point that he was chatting sexually and participating in phone sex. Months later, I am slowly healing. We are trying hard to rebuild the trust and my husband is doing all he can to stay away from ALL forms of pornography. Pornography is absolutely devastating. My husband sobbed as he told me how badly he wants to stop and has tried so many times. His heart is broken. My heart is broken. Pornography strips families of their dreams. I live each day of my life in fear that it will happen again and that all our efforts were in vain. I love my husband and don't plan on leaving...I need to stand by his side and support him. I urge all struggling wives to do the same. Make rules and hold him to them. Hold each other to the same standards and expectations. My husband and I have actually grown stronger and closer through this. It has been the most difficult period of my life, but I want everyone to know there IS hope. Whatever you do-don't give up!

To those who are convinced that pornography is harmless, I need to remind you of how many hearts have been broken due to pornography. Also, would like to point out that after watching a documentary on a porn actress, I am convinced that the industry is pure evil. These girls didn't grow up dreaming of starring in a porn-most of them end up in the situation by coercion and the necessity to pay their bills. Pornography is an industry of poison and corruption no matter how you look at it.

We need to no longer accept it as a society and take action! Too many families are being ripped apart. There is hope for those of us who have been directly affected and let's keep trying and not give up on making a change!

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 04:19 PM

Unfortunately porn has been a bad choice in my life. I know I can quit completely from making this bad choice by placing God first in my life and wish that we could eradicate this poison from

our society.

Men need help from the women in their lives to help eradicate the poison. Not by dressing sexy 24/7 to be a turn on to their man or trying to meet the sexual drive of a man (there can be an appropriate time and place for that) but by fighting against the many triggers of sexual desire that confront a man. Tell the managers at the stores you shop at that you will quit shopping at their stores if they don't stop displaying the pseudo porn magazines, such as COSMO, or even PEOPLE that promote the non-emotional sexual experience.

If you women, want to stop this destructive behavior on relationships and the subsequent pain it will cause you then help stop the the false representation of the sexual experience. Tell the media, internet servers and other evil devices that create sex triggers for men, to stop dressing women in a fashion that will create the sexual fantasy desire for a man that is contrary to what women want. Women want emotional intimacy that can lead to a beautiful and great sexual experience for both male and female. Why then do you women allow other women, the media, etc. ruin that for you?

A man has a sex drive that goes beyond the sex drive of a women. It is due to high levels of testosterone. I have observed in the animal world the male animals during the mating season fight another male to the risk of death for a chance to mate with the female. I work in the medical field and have seen the research that suggest if you give a woman testosterone they will begin to have increased sexual desire. The male has the testosterone for a reason to propagate the species. You women have your hormones for a purpose as well, child bearing. If you were in my body at age 22, with the levels of testosterone I had circulating through my system and no prospects for marriage, I would like to see the decision you would have made when confronted with pornography. On the other hand if I was in your body during the PMS phase I would have a better understanding of the decisions made by a woman under the heavy influences of the female hormones.

No excuses, I just want you to understand how the media, and all the many sexual triggers that confront a man can distort what sex is about. What I request is a commitment from you women to fight this poison as I commit to fight to make the right choices.

In my opinion, pornography could be the greatest threat to families. It needs to be eradicated from a joint effort of the human gender.

Posted by: [Steve](#) | April 20, 2005 08:21 PM

To Religious Fanatic.

Hmm meth & heroin are physically addicting, and not purely mentally addicting like pornography or ecstasy, so I don't think they are parallels. I cannot say how much is too much as it would depend on the person, and I can only decide how much is too much for myself, and no one else. It is my responsibility if I get addicted to one of these drugs, or to porn. Just like it is your responsibility if you get addicted to something. Trying to blame the thing for your choice to use it is a real problem, and people who do these things are often unhappy for other reasons.

Tell me if your study of your partner who is addicted to pornography would validate my theory or invalidate it. That is, are *you* and he/she religious believers that porn is morally wrong?

I would only encourage people to think for themselves. About drugs, about porn, about life, and love and why we're here. Nobody else can tell you the truth about how you feel, or who you are.

Posted by: [Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 08:43 PM

Great day,

I am 22 yrs old, and have grown a good life and have been taught by my father and my relatives, and by other close people in my life to look to your elders. Well I am not that old, but those who call evil good and good evil well it's flat out pathetic 22 yrs old and I call those older than my worthless. You should be stimulated by your wife, not by porn and your wife they don't make sense. It is not that hard to see, but I am not blinded by the men of the WORLD!!! Also you had a Dr. tell you that it is bad, if religious leaders or worldly leaders can't tell you it is wrong you need to pull your head out.

Posted by: [Noneu](#) | April 20, 2005 08:58 PM

Actually the comparison between meth and porn is a very good one. The chemicals released in the brain while viewing pornographic images can have the same addictive effect on a person as many drugs. It is this "high" that many men seek for and need more hard core images to get the same effect after getting used to the soft porn that doesn't have the same effect anymore. There have also been recent studies done on how pornography actually changes the physical attributes of the brain.

Posted by: [anonymous2](#) | April 20, 2005 09:29 PM

To Anonymous

I see you're still posting as Anonymous.

Illegal drugs are both physically and psychologically addicting. If you don't believe it, research the subject a little. Also, pornography is not purely psychologically addicting. Let me remind you of your "self pleasure" comment in an earlier post, and if that's not enough - again, research the subject. Also, are you saying Ecstasy is "purely mentally addicting"??? Nobody is blaming "things", but we don't sell meth, heroin, crack or ecstasy at the convenience store.

People should think for themselves and face reality. Get rid of pornography and stop trying to justify your actions. Do you really believe no one is hurt? The porn actors and actresses are all realizing a lifelong dream???? Are you sure your spouse is a completely willing participant and not just going along with it for you? He/She enjoys the fact that your arousal is the result of a photo or movie of someone else?

Yes, obviously *I* (I'm not sure what the asterisks are for, but *you* used them) know that pornography is wrong, I have seen what it does. I hope you don't have to.

Posted by: [To Anonymous](#) | April 20, 2005 09:53 PM

I was married to someone who was addicted to porography. I say "was" because it destroyed our marriage like it has so many others. We were married for only a year. We were also married in the Temple. But this was a problem he had before we were married as well but didn't leave it behind. He said he had it under control and it was only a few times here and there. But there was no stopping it. The spirit left him. He would never admit he had a problem. I had to discover it myself by the history on the computer. And still, he refused to quit.

He got physically abusive to the point that I had to leave.

I believe that his frustration towards himself and what he was doing, was taken out on me. And if we would have had kids, they would have suffered. I am Eternally grateful that I left when I did. It is degrading. It is pure EVIL. Women, it is NOTHING you do! No matter how attractive you are, it does NOT matter. Please remember that. It took me a while to remember who I was. Any man that makes you forget who you are, is NOT worth fighting for.

Posted by: [Jen](#) | April 21, 2005 06:26 AM

To: Anonymous | April 20, 2005 10:41 AM

Read this and then still try and tell me that you can "laugh at the notion that it could be wrong". Just ask any of my children who have had their lives turned upside down because of the choices of their father.

On November 18, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) chaired a hearing of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space on "The Science Behind Pornography Addiction."

Four experts in the fields of mental health and communication testified:

Judith Reisman, Ph.D., President of The Institute for Media Education, Scientific Advisor to the California Protective Parents Association and the Subcommittee on Junk Science for The American Legislative Exchange Council's April 2004 report [testimony];

Jeffrey Satinover, M.S., M.D., Psychiatrist and Professor at Princeton University [testimony];

Mary Anne Layden, Ph.D., Co-Director, Sexual Trauma and Psychopathology Program, Center for Cognitive Therapy, University of Pennsylvania [testimony]; and

Dr. James B. Weaver III, Professor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Department of Communication, Shanks Hall (0311), Blacksburg, Virginia [testimony].

Dr. Reisman specializes in the communication effects of images on the brain, mind and memory; fraud in the human sexuality field; and the addictive properties of sexually explicit images, commonly called pornography. She emphasized how pornography not only influences behavior but also actually alters brain chemistry, making children most vulnerable to its toxic imagery:

Thanks to the latest advances in neuroscience, we now know that emotionally arousing images imprint and alter the brain, triggering an instant, involuntary, but lasting, biochemical memory trail.

This applies to so-called “soft-core” and “hard-core” pornography, which may, arguably, subvert the First Amendment by overriding the cognitive speech process.

Once our neurochemical pathways are established they are difficult or impossible to delete. Erotic images also commonly trigger the viewer’s “fight or flight” sex hormones producing intense arousal states that appear to fuse the conscious state of libidinous arousal with unconscious emotions of fear, shame, anger and hostility.

These media erotic fantasies become deeply imbedded, commonly coarsening, confusing, motivating and addicting many of those exposed.

How does this “brain sabotage” occur? Brain scientists tell us that “in 3/10 of a second a visual image passes from the eye through the brain, and whether or not one wants to, the brain is structurally changed and memories are created—we literally ‘grow new brain’ with each visual experience.”

Children and others who cannot read can instantly decode and experience images In fact, erotic (any highly arousing) images commonly subvert left hemisphere cognition. [Emphasis in original.]

Dr. Satinover emphasized that modern science debunks the dangerous illusion that pornography is merely “expression in the trivial sense that a fall from the Empire State Building is a mere stumble—since it’s hitting the ground that’s fatal. Or, that cigarettes don’t cause cancer, it’s the burning smoke that’s the problem.”

Here is what I mean: Like cigarettes, that particular form of expression we call pornography, unlike all other forms of expression, is a delivery system that has a distinct and powerful effect upon the human brain and nervous system. Exactly like cigarettes, and unlike any other form of expression, this effect is to cause a powerful addiction. Like any other addiction, the addiction is both to the delivery system itself—the pornography—and to the chemicals that the delivery system delivers. [Emphasis in original.]

It may seem surprising that, at this juncture, I should speak of “chemicals,” when one might be thinking instead of “sex.” But, in fact, modern science allows us to understand that the underlying nature of an addiction to pornography is chemically nearly identical to a heroin addiction: Only the delivery system is different, and the sequence of steps. That is why heroin addicts in particular give up sex and routinely compare their “rushes” to “orgasms.”

The pornography addict soon forgets about everything and everyone else in favor of an ever more elusive sexual jolt. He will eventually be able to find it only among other “junkies” like himself, and he will place at risk his career, his friends, his family. He will indulge his habit anywhere and everywhere, at any time. No one, no matter how highly placed, is immune. And like all other addicts, the pornography addict will lie to cover it up, heedless of risk or cost to himself or to others.

Dr. Layden included the anti-social effects of pornography consumption in her testimony:

Those who use pornography have also been shown to be more likely to engage in illegal behavior as well. Research indicates and my clinical experience supports that those who use pornography are more likely to go to prostitutes, engage in domestic violence, stranger rape, date rape and incest. These behaviors should not be surprising since pornographic videos containing all of these themes are readily available and the permission-giving beliefs of these pornographic videos reinforced by the orgasm say that all these behaviors are normal, acceptable, common and don't hurt anyone.

Dr. Weaver acknowledged that while “research directly assessing the impact of pornography addiction on families and communities is limited, ... there is a large body of social science research evidence that can inform our discussion.” It reveals: “The manifest content of pornography has been extensively examined, for example, revealing that (1) pornography's dominant theme is one of unrestrained human sexual promiscuity and (2) it's devoid of coercion and violent action. ... Further, the findings of numerous studies suggest that pornography consumption promotes sexual deviancy, sexual perpetration and adverse sexual attitudes.

Posted by: [anonymous2](#) | April 21, 2005 09:25 AM

SALT LAKE CITY-(KSL News) -- Many don't realize it, but what they're looking at online could be ruining their marriage. For some women, there's not much worse than discovering their husband is into pornography. This morning, one woman who made such a discovery shares her experience.

The Bountiful apartment is small. *bill* "Come on in."

Their 18-month-old son runs around the living room. Behind the smiles, Bill and Susan are struggling But there's something missing

Mary "Do you not have a computer here?"

Susan "We haven't had one since we lived here."

Bill "When I moved back in, the computer didn't. It wasn't invited."

Susan left Bill when she found out he was addicted to pornography.

Susan "Your self-esteem is devastated. You feel worthless, and just so ashamed, and it's my fault, I'm not good enough."

Now they are going through therapy together.

Bill "The anger and the hate for your husband, and the shame and embarrassment, is all normal"

"In a very real way this is a form of adultery, a great form of infidelity." Marriage and family therapist, Jill Manning says for the spouse, a pornography addiction can be worse than an affair.

Manning "And a real life affair keep in mind as maladaptive as it is, it's still connected to reality. That person still has warts and wrinkles, and is in real life. Even if there's fantasy tied up in that affair, it's a real person."

Manning says a pornography addiction affects the spouse as well as the addict. "Women will often experience depressive symptoms; anxiety, fatigue, isolation. We know that they experience an intense range of different emotions, rage, abandonment, loss of self-confidence."

Licensed Clinical Social Worker Todd Olson says often the addict or consumer doesn't think he's hurting his wife. "It's not that the addict doesn't love her or care about her, it's that he has an addiction and doesn't think he can stop."

Bill says that's what happened to him and Susan. "It was killing her. It was really hurting her very very deeply. And I didn't see what was going on."

Susan "I bet most of the wives don't know their husbands have this problem." Susan says the spouse knows something is wrong. "Even if you don't tell it hurts people"

She says anyone who is involved in pornography needs to tell. "Of course telling your wife is going to hurt her, but you are hurting her anyway, and she just doesn't know what's going on."

Bill says those who don't think they have a problem, or who see an image and think about clicking on it for more, should run. "Some people out there get addicted right from the start. You might be one of them. And so one look it's not worth the price."

Addicted to Porn Part 2

SALT LAKE CITY-(KSL News) -- On television, at video rental stores, and on our computers, pornography is available as never before. This week on KSL we're examining the explosion of porn.

In part two of "Addicted to Porn," KSL Newsradio's Mary Richards talks to some of the addicts.

In an Orem office, John and his therapist introduce themselves.

John "I don't know, are there any questions you have?"

Mary "How long has it been?"

John "About 2 ½ years"

Mary "And how long has pornography been a part of your life?"

John "well, most of my life probably since I was 8, 9, 10 yrs.

John says he was addicted to pornography for more than two decades. "It's just like drugs. A lot of people got into it for curiosity sake but it does falsely fill a hole that they are having."

Tim Adams "There's a few variables that define an addiction. One of them is a tolerance level that's developed toward it; it's very similar to substance abuse where you need more and more to get the same effect"

Therapist Tim Adams has been working with John after John says pornography ruined his life and his family. "It blurs your vision of what priorities are. It knocks out god and hope and family and work and it just takes vision away of what's really important in life"

Mary "Did it lead to your separation?"

John "Oh yeah, very much so."

In his Bountiful home, "Bill" says his wife left him after finding out about his pornography addiction. "I was left there alone. She took our son, and he was only a couple weeks old."

Bill says he first saw pornography at five years old, and was addicted at 12. "It had nothing to do with pornography or sex at all. For me it was mostly about escape."

But Bill says you can't escape pornography once you start. "You keep it hidden, and as it's hidden it grows, and it gets stronger. You look at worse and worse things."

John says pornography trapped him.

"It's a constant, constant thought. Second by second, minute by minute disturbance to try and conquer these thoughts and that's why it's so overwhelming."

Therapist Tim Adams says pornography draws people in until they feel they can't stop.

"It's a gradual progression that people will go through if they continue in the addiction. Not necessarily everybody, but if someone's doing this on a daily basis or several times a week they'll reach a tolerance point where it won't give them that high or that rush that it used to."

Bill says he thought he could stop by himself. "I'll tell you I committed to stop a hundred times or more you know. Every time you think I'm never going to do this again."

He sought professional help after his wife left. "I slipped into a deep, deep, deep depression. I think it was at that point it was either do or die. I need to beat this or I'm going to die. It's going to destroy me completely."

John says there's hope for others who are struggling. "It feels after being in a dark hole and coming into the light, it's probably an even brighter hope after you get through it than what those people who are involved can ever comprehend."

Pornography doesn't just affect the addict. Tomorrow, bill's wife tells her story.