

Porn Scars.



Six Week Course



Notes to the Mentor



Please read this page every time before you meet your mentoree.

- This is a six session course to develop a helping relationship between a mentor and a person who is trying to pull away from pornography. The relationship may or may not continue after the course has finished.
- The course helps a person understand their use of pornography and gives practical suggestions to help a person free themselves from pornography.
- Each session is designed to last for approximately one hour though this may vary as different issues arise.
- It is possible to pick up the course and use it with little preparation, though it does help if it is read before the meeting.
- The course provides questions for you to ask, feel free to ask more questions to help bring a better understanding. Try not to shy away from difficult questions.

Structure of a Session

It is suggested that each session is in the following order.

Before Session

- Pray before privately for God to give you wisdom and for God to work in the life of the person who is trying to change. Pray for their specific problems.

During Session

1. There is a short period of catching up with the general events since last meeting.
2. The person is then asked how they have coped with pornography since they last met.
3. Discuss any changes that could be made that might help reduce using pornography
4. Have a short discussion of last session and what was learned.
5. The session in the booklet for that meeting is worked through..
6. Based on what was learned in the session, discuss any more changes that might be made to reduce using pornography.
7. Finish with prayer.

Finally – An important aspect of a meeting is to discuss the problems and the possible solutions in an honest and transparent way. If you do not finish all the parts of a session, don't worry, it can be finished the next day. If necessary, you could meet 8 or even more times or leave out the last session.

Session 1: Introduction

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Read together

This 6 week course will help you understand your desire to use pornography and will also give you helpful ideas on how to pull away from pornography.

There are a number of important principles behind this course.

- All parts of you are interconnected. What happens in one part of your life affects all other parts of your life. For example, The closer your relationship to God, the easier it is for you to not engage in unwanted behaviours.
- You can take control over areas which previously seemed out of control.
- All of our behaviours are controlled by our thoughts and feelings.
- Honesty with yourself and others is vital. The more you are willing to discuss the issues in this course, the more you will be helped.

Sorry but we have to add this.

If information of a criminal nature is given the person who hears it will have to contact the relevant authorities.

Discuss

Based on your experience, what are your thoughts on what you have just read.

Read together

Guidelines for the course.

- Please try to attend every session. Each one is crucial and will be referred to in later sessions.
- If you are unable to attend then let your mentor know in advance.
- The cost of the course is decided by each individual church.
- Your mentor will treat what you say as confidential but they will be accountable to the head of the church or organization running the course and will have to keep them informed of what happens in the sessions.
- Please try to read over your notes between meetings and it would also help to read relevant books.
- Don't share graphic details of sexual issues as these they might cause the other person difficulties.
- If either person is uncomfortable with what the other person is saying, simply raise your hand and say 'I am uncomfortable with this'. The person should then stop immediately.

Discuss

Is there anything in these guidelines you think you might have difficulty with?



Read together

What harm does just looking at images do?

Pornography use can be described as existing in 7 different levels. It is possible to move up and down the levels. Which level would you describe yourself to be at?

Level 1. Pornography is seen by accident and only happens a few times a year.

Level 2. Pornography is sought out and is viewed no more than about 6 times a year. There are minimal fantasies about what has been seen.

Level 3. Pornography is viewed about once a month. You try to limit exposure but the desire increases until you give in and are likely to binge for a day or two before stopping again. You are starting to fantasise about pornography. You can easily move up to higher levels.

Level 4. Pornography is viewed a few times each month and you are searching for more hard core material. You are getting a high fantasising about pornographic images. You have tried to stop but only last a few weeks before giving in again.

Level 5. Pornography is viewed 3 to 5 times a week and it is thought about each day. Pornography and sexual behaviours are among the top 7 things you think about. Important parts of your life are being put to one side to allow more time with pornography. You begin to experience intense withdrawal symptoms when you try to stop. A sense of helplessness enters and you are ready to move to level 6.

Level 6. Pornography is viewed nearly every day. A significant time each day is spent thinking about pornography and you feel out of control. It has had a significant impact on your studies or work, spiritual life, relationships and hobbies. It has also involved many lies being told and at this level it is probable that you have been caught and this has caused you problems.

Level 7. Pornography is viewed nearly every day. You have difficulty focusing on anything, except pornography and sex. You feel powerless and hopeless. The images being viewed are often violent and very graphic. You are in danger of trying to act out the behaviours you are seeing in the images and consequently being arrested by the police.

The above 7 levels are taken from 'Treating Pornography Addiction' by Kevin Skinner (2005) p 24 – 32.

Discuss

From your experience, what do you think of these 7 steps? Do you think you could move up the levels?

During the week

Read over this session and think about what was said.



Session 2: Useful Strategies

Read together

There are certain times when you are most likely to log onto pornography. These might be ;

- o when everyone is watching TV
- o when the house is empty
- o when everyone is asleep
- o whenever you get to be on your own
- o when you are lonely
- o when you are angry
- o when you are tired.

It is important to have a good understanding of exactly when and where you are likely to use pornography. You can then start to make a plan.

Discuss

When and where are you most likely to log on to watch pornography?

Read together

There are three main strategies to reduce your using pornography

1. Avoidance
2. Control
3. Escape

Read together

1. Avoidance Strategies

Avoidance strategies are used when you want to avoid being able to use the internet.

Examples of avoidance strategies are:-

- make sure that you can not use a computer or mobile phone which connects to the internet.
- permanently disconnect the computer from the internet
- permanently disconnect the satellite TV
- remove the digital television, phone or computer
- use a phone which does not have internet connection
- ask a trusted person to install passwords, which are unknown to you, for your internet connection.

Avoidance strategies are preventative strategies and have the best possible outcome of all strategies. If you are not the owner of the house, there is a limited range of what you can do.

Discuss

What avoidance strategies are you able to use?



Read together

2. Control Strategies

Control strategies are used when you are required have access to the internet but you control what you see.

Examples of control strategies are;-

- have accountability software on your computer or phone so that your mentor will be aware of what you watch. Eg XXX Church (free) or Covenant Eyes
- have filters on your computer eg. Contentwatch See www.internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com,
- some internet providers have child safety settings
- ring a mentor and say that you are going on the computer and ring him when you no longer using the computer
- if you have to use the internet you should use it in full view in the house or public library.
- before logging on you could talk to yourself about the consequences if you lose sexual self control and how you will feel afterwards.
- call upon Jesus to help and guide you
- read a previously prepared card telling you why it is harmful to use pornography when you go on the internet.
- You only use the internet when others are in the room.

It is recommended that everyone doing this course must have accountability software and filters on their computer and phone and the mentor gets a regular update of what is viewed. This is a basic minimum!

Discuss

What control strategies are you going to use?

Read together

3. Escape Strategies.

These are strategies which you use when you in a situation where you normally use porn and you can feel the chemicals starting to flow in your body. Your breathing gets shallow, you get a sense of anticipation, you start to tremble slightly, you may feel your cheeks becoming flushed, your heart rate speeds up.

It is crucial that you to learn to recognise the danger signals which your body is sending to your brain. You then have to learn to act to activate your escape strategies.

You have to be honest with yourself at this stage because your body is sending signs that you are about to finally lose sexual self control and you need to recognise and listen to the signals . Yes - escape strategies are hard to use, but they can be effective if you are determined.

Examples of escape strategies which have been used are;-

- walk or run away from the situation and keep walking or running until the feelings die down. There is something about the act of physical exercise which helps reduce the sexual desires.
- call to God,. a common call would be 'Jesus, help me, I need you to help me'. Yes, this really can help.
- pick up the phone and talk to someone you trust, if no-one answers, get up and go.

Discuss

Do you think you could use these escape strategies? Which escape strategies do you think that you could use?

During the week

Work at setting up avoidance and control strategies.

Session 3: Do you believe the Bible?

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Discuss

What accountability software and filters have been put on phones and computers? If this has not been done, how serious are you about pulling away from porn?

Read together

Take out a bible and read the passages below.

- Man was made pure and holy. He was made in the image of God. (**Genesis 1:6**)
- Adam and Eve sinned and our sinful nature was formed within us. (**Romans 6:18**)
- Christ died so that the Holy Spirit could enter into us. (**Ephesians 1:13**)

Discuss

- Do you believe that you are made just like God. If not, why not?
- Do you think that you have a sinful side to your nature?
- Were you aware that the Holy Spirit comes into a person the moment they believed that Jesus was the Son of God.

Discuss

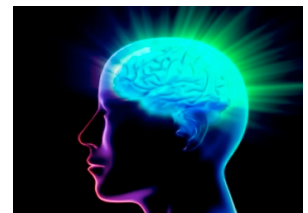


The Sinful Nature and the Holy Spirit

So - the believer has a sinful nature within and the Holy Spirit within.

Paul writes in Galatians 5:17, 'For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want'

Have you been aware of a struggle whether to chose your sinful nature or to chose the Holy Spirit? Which side wins?



The Role of your Mind

Your mind decides if you will follow the Holy Spirit or the sinful nature.

Paul writes in Romans 8:5 'Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.'

Our minds chose which we will influence us, the sinful nature or the Holy Spirit. In your experience, how important is your mind when you are involved in a struggle between your sinful nature and the Holy Spirit? (i.e. between doing wrong and doing right)

Read together

What is Your Role in Allowing the Holy Spirit to influence your Mind?

There are three main activities which you can do which will make it more likely that the Holy Spirit will influence your mind and in turn your mind will influence your behaviour.

1. Clothe yourself with Christ.
2. Learn about and remind yourself of your Christ-like identity.
3. Struggle with your sinful nature, you don't have to give in to it.

1. Clothe yourself with Christ.

Paul writes in Romans 13:14 that the people in the church should not be involved in sexual immorality but 'Rather clothe yourself with Christ and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature'.



Discuss

What do you think it means to clothe yourself with Christ? You might have to use your imagination to find the right words.

From your experience, when you are 'closer to' Christ, do you sin less?

Read together

How do we clothe ourselves with Christ?,

1. Spend times each day talking and listening to God/Christ. Most people seem to prefer one longer set time each day and lots of short times through the day. During these times you can;

- Give thanks to God,
- Repent of your sin
- Ask for help
- Ask God to help others.

As I personally spend time with Christ, I imagine His Spirit wrapping himself around me, a bit like the armour of God in Ephesians 6. You may find this helpful.

2. Spend time reading and thinking about the words in the bible. When doing this course think of reading through the book of Mark. It is helpful to approach reading your bible with prayer and a sense of excitement about what God is going to reveal to you during the session. Keep a journal of your time with God.

3. Read Christian books, listen to Christian music and talks. All of these can clothe you with Christ. Surround yourself with Christ.

Discuss

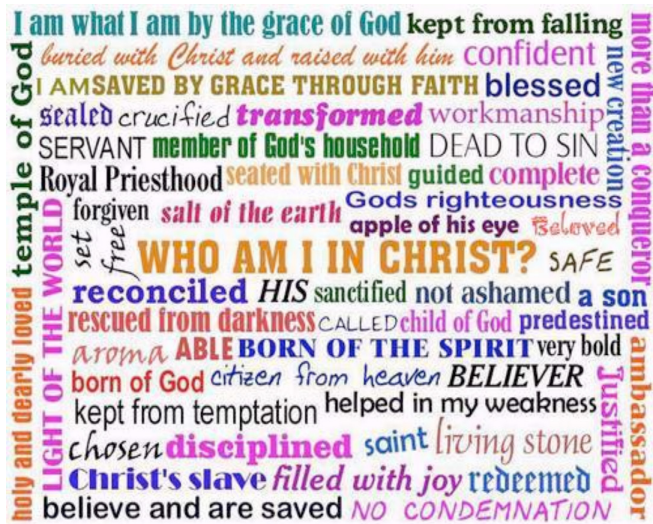
What draws YOU closer to Christ, what clothes YOU with Christ?
What could you do more in the future?



Read together

2. Know your identity in Christ.

When you look in the mirror in the morning you may see just you, an ordinary person struggling their way through life but you are far more than that, you are so much more than that.



You are a very, very special person on this earth. Read the scriptures below which describe what you are.

1. 'You did not chose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last'. John 15:16. God chose you so that you can bear fruit for him.
2. 'Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you .' 1 Corinthians 3:16 Your body is the sacred temple in which the Holy Spirit lives. God's Holy Spirit lives in you!
3. 'In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will' Ephesians 1:4-5 God chose you to be his adopted child. You are a son/daughter of God and brother or sister of Jesus.

4. You are a very special person and you should act as if you are a very special person. Special people act in special ways. You are a beloved, righteous, powerful child of God. You are not an ordinary person. You should not act the way ordinary people act. You should not act like a mere man/woman. (I Corinthians 3:3)



For more verses which describe who you really are, search the internet for 'My identity in Christ'

Discuss

What are your thoughts on what and who the bible says you are? Do you have difficulties with it?

What can you do about your difficulties?
One thing is the read the above verses every
day for 40 days and see if a change takes
place.

Read together

Discuss

3. Struggle with sin.

We can enjoy resting in the presence of Christ and we can be aware of our glorious identity as righteous children of God. When we do these things we find it so much easier to be led by the Holy Spirit and to walk in God's ways.

BUT, we all know that at times we distance ourselves further from Christ and at times we find it harder to believe our glorious identity as righteous, spirit filled, heaven bound believers.

When this happens we have to strive to reject the sinful nature and accept the Holy Spirit.

We have to think of the harm our action and will cause to ourselves and others. We are in a battle of the mind.

- 'So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.' Acts 24:16
Paul worked hard to keep his conscience clear.
- In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.
Hebrews 12:4

At times we have to grit our teeth and use our willpower. We have to strive and struggle.

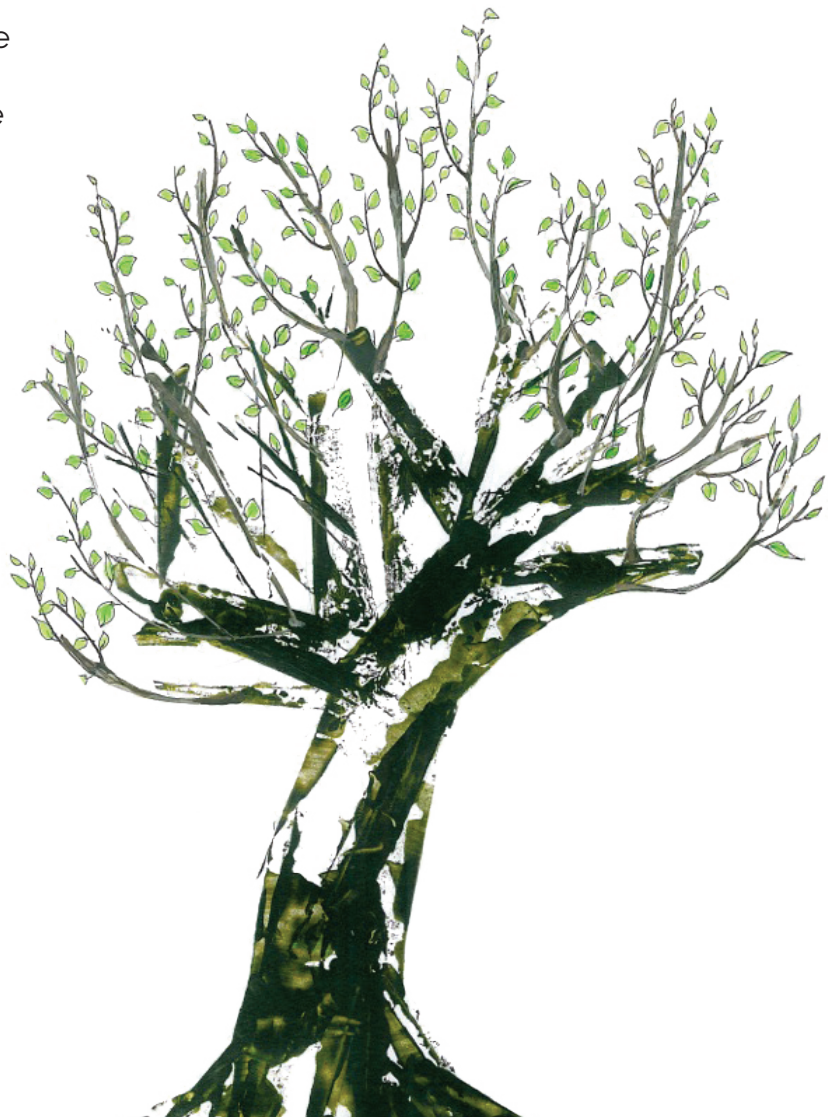
How would you rather fight sin,

- By resting in Jesus
- By being empowered by your identity
- By struggling and striving

In the past did you try to fight sexual sin solely through your own strength? What was the outcome?

During the week

Spend time clothing yourself in Christ and remembering your true identity.



Session 4: Break the chain & start again.

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Discuss

What was your experience in trying to clothe yourself in Christ?

What was your experience in thinking about who you really are?

Read together

Inside your brain.

When a user of porn looks at porn a rush of chemicals flows into his or her brain and create a sort of high. When porn is combined with masturbation the rush of chemicals is exhilarating and quickly the brain develops a desire for more.

Just as you can get addicted to chemicals you put into your body, you can get addicted to chemicals your body produces naturally. When the excitement of the natural rush of chemicals fades away, you can feel a bit down. It is the same way a drug addict experiences withdrawal. One way to overcome this feeling of being down is to return to porn for that feeling again and the cycle continues.

Discuss

Based on your experience, does the above make sense?

Read together

Break the Chain.

Most people who use pornography have the impression that one minute they are going about their daily life and suddenly, with little warning, they are logging onto porn. You may think that, but there are usually lots of warning signs before you log on.

There is usually a chain of events leading up to the porn session and today we will look at that chain.

Discuss

Do you think you find yourself looking at your phone or computer with little warning that it is going to happen?

Read together

Our lives are mixture of events, behaviours and feelings. Read this chain of activities and think about how the chain could be stopped. Imagine you are the main character in this story.

Event	When you were away from home someone swore at you.
Feeling	You felt hurt and angry.
Thought	You thought you would be Ok when you got home and spoke to someone.
Event	When you got home no one was in.



Feeling You felt rejected a little bit annoyed.

Behaviour You read a note saying no-one would be home till 7 o'clock and you were to make your own dinner.

Feeling You felt more miserable.

Behaviour You saw the computer and thought you could log on and see what there was to see.

Feeling You had a little burst of chemicals in your brain and felt a little excited.

Thought You thought - I didn't want to not look at porn again.

Feeling The thinking of not looking at porn causes another a gentle rush of chemicals

Thought You thought - I will just log on to look at e-mails

Behaviour Logs onto e-mails

Feeling Looking at screen causes gentle burst of chemicals

Thought You thought -I will just type in a word in google to see what web sites there are.

Feeling Another gentle flow of chemicals,

Behaviour Look at descriptions of sites and then another page of descriptions and then another page.

Thinking You thought - who cares about me really, no one is here to meet me.

Feeling You feel a bit angry

Thinking You thought -no one really cares about me anyway

Behaviour You open open up site to see what it is about, chemicals rush into system. Several hours later you log off .

Event Family come in

Behaviour Picks a fight with family because annoyed with them and with yourself.

Discuss

There are a number of places where this chain could be broken and the person does not look at porn. How do you think he could have broken the chain of events? Discuss with your mentor how the person could have stopped at different points in the chain.

Can you describe the events, behaviours and feelings that led to the last time you looked at porn?

What could you have done to break the chain that led to looking?

During the week

Think of what happens before you look at pornography and try to think of ways to stop yourself. What you learn from this is extremely important.



Session 5: Faulty Thoughts

Read together

Earlier in session 3 we said that the mind controlled our behaviour. We are now going to look at thoughts that can control people's behaviour. We call them faulty thoughts because they are not true.

See if you recognize any that you say to yourself.

1. Justification.

When we create reasons to defend the behaviours which are causing us harm ie

- I've had a horrible day today and I deserve a bit of pleasure.
- I enjoy it, I can do what I want
- This will be the last time and after this I will stop.
- Everyone is allowed to look at pictures of attractive people if they want to.

Have you thought any of these?

2. Minimising.

Looking at pornography is a big thing, you try to make it seem not important. The key words for this are 'only' and 'just'.

- I just looked at the less extreme websites.
- I only looked at free sites so I am not encouraging the business side of it.
- I was only on for 5 minutes.
- I only do it when the house is empty so no one gets hurt by seeing it.
- I've only look at porn once a week. That's OK.
- Its only what everyone else is doing.
- This isn't really that bad.
- Looking at pornography is not as bad as having sex with someone.
- A lot of people do worse things. Nobody will know and nobody really cares.
- I never down load the images
- the people in the pictures get paid, there is no problem

Have you thought any of these?

3. Magnifying.

Making a big deal out of unimportant things, often to distract from what you were doing wrong. This comes into play when you are found out or challenged.

- Someone has gained access to your pornography and you get angry with them for snooping around.

Have you ever done this?

4. Victim stance.

You blame others or even circumstances for what is happening to you when you should take responsibility for the impact of your own actions.

- Why do these things always happen to me?
- Why can others give up and I can't?
- It's not fair, no-one understands me.
- It's my weakness, what can I do?
- I am oversexed, I can't stop myself. Its easier for others.

Have you ever thought one of these?

Discuss

What faulty thoughts have you have used?

Why are they faulty, what is the truth?

Remember session 3. What does the bible say you are you because of Christ?



Read together

Using Sex to Remove Unpleasant Feelings.

There are times when you feel:

- Lonely
- Rejected
- Sad
- Angry
- Disrespected
- Frustrated
- Anxious
- Depressed
- Scared
- Loved
- Hurt

Using sex can make you feel better.

What can you do to stop yourself from using sex to make you feel better?

- You can pray to God and ask him to take the feeling away.
- You can add more pleasant things to your life to make the unpleasant seem less important.
- If you have fallen out with another person, apologise to them.
- Confess your sins to God and accept his forgiveness.
- Ask God to help you forgive the person who has offended you.

Discuss

Can you think of any situations where you would use the above ideas to make you feel better?

Read together

What do you do if you are sexually aroused when you don't want to be?

Below is a common thought which is believed by people who have problems controlling their sexual feelings and actions.

'If I am sexually aroused I have to act on the feeling.'

This is a faulty thought.

You will not die if you wait until your arousal dies down. The feelings will pass. There are many ordinary people who decide not to act on their sexual feelings when aroused.

Many married people find others attractive but decide not to have an affair.

You can learn to be sexually aroused and not act on it. The more you do it, the easier it gets.

Discuss

Do you believe it is possible to be aroused and to not act on it?
Can you tell of a time when you were aroused and managed to get away without acting on it?

Session 6: Choose the real thing

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Read together

Many people who use pornography find it difficult to relate to people who they are sexually attracted to..

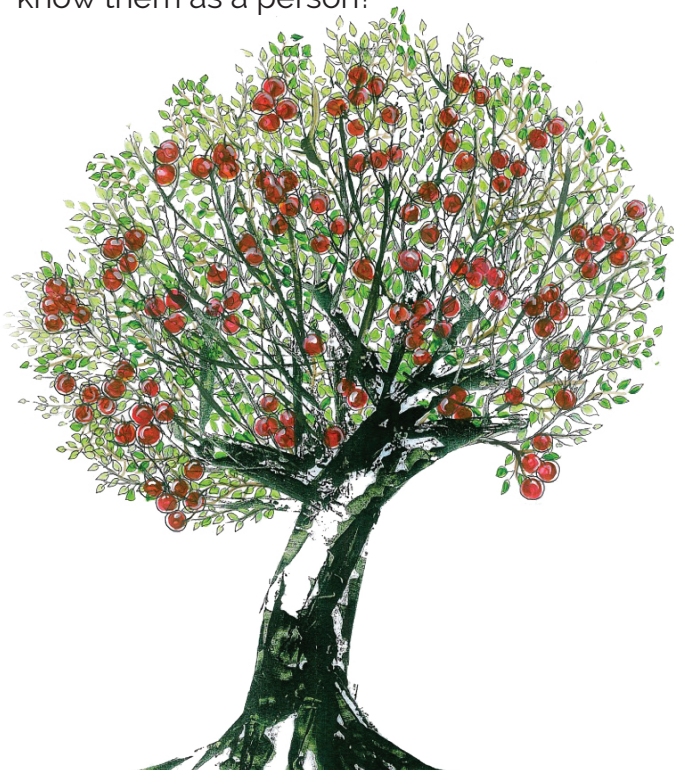
There is a lot of scientific evidence to show that those who regularly use pornography have difficulty forming successful relationships with others.

Why is this?

- You want to copy what you have seen on the screen and it makes people uneasy. What you see on the screen is not normal life.
- When with people, in your mind you tend to replay what you saw on the screen, you tend to withdraw and this makes other people uneasy.

Discuss

From your experience does this make sense to you? Do you think that what you have seen on the screen has helped you talk to someone you are attracted to and get to know them as a person?



Read together

How do you develop a rich caring relationship?

1. Listen to what the other person says.

People like people who listen to them. How do you listen?

- Make eye contact
- Lean forward
- Nod to show you are understanding
- Ask questions, to help you understand what they are saying.
- When they have gone, think about what they said and when you next speak ask a question about it.

Discuss

Think of a person you met today. Think of one thing they told you. Think of what you can say about this when they next meet.

Read together

2. Express yourself.

The other person will want to know about you. If they don't, then maybe you are better not trying to have a relationship with them. Try to find someone who has some interest in knowing you better. Here are some simple rules.

- Be prepared to tell the other person about yourself.
- Don't talk to long about yourself.
- Watch the person you are talking to, if you see them stop listening, ask what they think of what you said.
- Be honest, lying and keeping secrets is one of the quickest ways to ruin a relationship
- If you yell and shout, people will just want to get away from you.



Discuss

Which one of these rules do you have difficulty with?
What do you think you can do?

Read together

3. Be Flexible.

When you are in a relationship with someone, you may have to do things which may not be exactly what you want to do at that moment. So long as what the other person wants to do is not wrong, think about sharing the activity. It helps develop the relationship.

Discuss

Can you think of a time when a friend agreed to go somewhere with you when they did not really want to. How did you feel?
Do you think this is how others feel when you go along with them?

Read together

4. Increase your self confidence

If you think that you are not worth much, you will act as if you are not worth much and believe it or not this upsets other people.

The chances are that 95% of what you do each day is effective and good but you tend to focus on the small percentage of things that do not work out for you.

Discuss

Think of negative things about yourself and discuss how true they are.
Write down positive things about yourself.
Repeat them to yourself often.

Positive 1
Positive 2
Positive 3

Read together

5. Increase Pleasurable Activities

How does this improve my relationships with someone I am attracted to?

If you organise, plan and carry out activities you enjoy,

- it gives you something interesting to talk about,
- it increases your self confidence
- it generally makes you happier.

People are generally attracted to people who are interesting, confident and happy.

Discuss

Plan what activities you could get involved in? Ideally, it should take you away from your computer or phone.

and finally.....

'Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, what ever is right, whatever is pure, what ever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and anything of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.'

From Paul's letter to the people in the church in Philippi chapter 4 verses 8 – 9. This is still good advice for us 2000 years later.

You have finished discussing the contents of this course. Hopefully you have learned skills to help you live without porn. Keep using these skills and adding new ones, they will be valuable for the rest of your life.