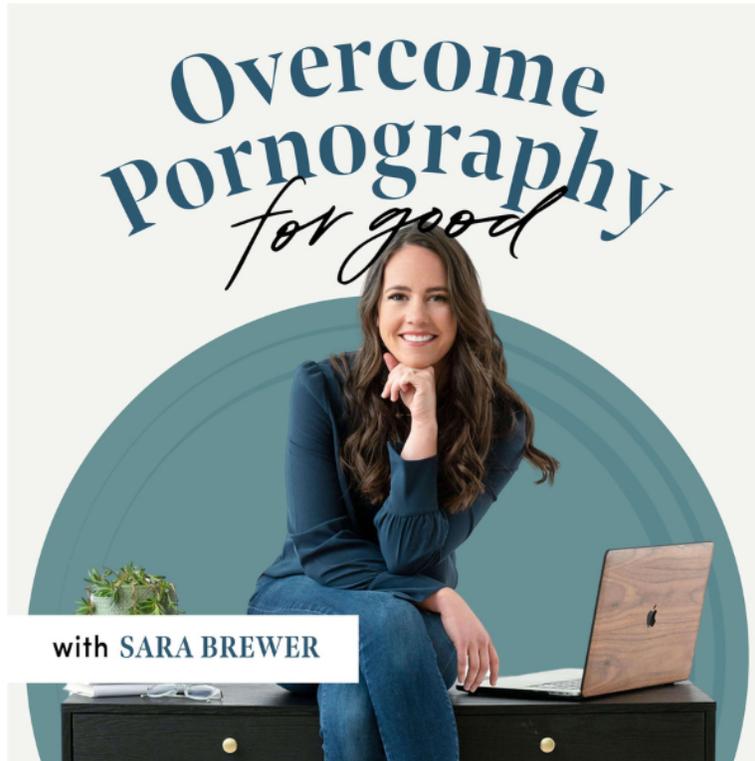


126. Productivity and Worthiness



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sara Brewer

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You are listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast episode 126, Productivity and Worthiness.

Welcome to the *Overcome Pornography For Good* podcast where we take a research-based, trauma informed and results focused approach to quitting porn. This approach has been revolutionary and changed thousands and thousands of lives. I'm your host, Sara Brewer.

Hey, you guys, welcome to today's podcast episode. I'm really excited to share this topic with you, productivity and worthiness. This is something that comes up a lot that I coach around a lot in the program. Before we dive in, let me just again say thank you so much for those of you who have left me a review here on the podcast. It's so, so, so beneficial and helpful to me and to help find people who need this work. So thank you for doing that.

There are a lot of new reviews, thank you so much. I think you guys would get bored if I spent a whole episode just saying thank you and reading them. But we do share them on my Instagram page, so go follow me on my Instagram page if you don't yet.

But I just want to give a shout out to one of you that wrote one and said, "Well thought out material. I am already one week into the program and the change is unfathomable. The urges are winding down, maybe one or two a week. I love how systematic Sara put together her material, very practical as well.

My clarity of thought, ability to stay focused and stamina is slowly returning to an amazing new normal level. I haven't felt like this since my childhood. Highly recommend it if you are serious about quitting porn for good. The work is hard but worth it." Yeah, so good. Thank you so much. I'm so excited for you and so happy for you.

I also get emails and my assistant will forward me emails that I get from you all. So thank you for sending me emails too. I had someone recently who emailed me and said, he just made a funny note about me not pronouncing my T's, which if you've listened to the podcast for a while you know I was laughing at a review I got that said great material but I can't

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stand her because she doesn't say her T's or something like that, it wasn't those exact words. And it just made me laugh because I am from Utah and that was always a stereotype growing up that we laughed about that I never noticed because everyone around me probably does it as well.

And this person who emailed me specifically pointed out the word important. He said, "Say the T in important because otherwise it just sounds like important, important, important. It sounds like you're saying in porn." So, anyways, I'm going to keep working on my T's for you guys.

So today I want to talk about productivity and worthiness. So many of us get our worth from our productivity. And this is especially true if you live in Western culture and in the United States or similar countries where we are so focused on achievement, achievement, achievement. And these messages, they get seeped into everywhere.

You might notice that you get these messages from church. You might notice you get these messages from social media, from your family, from school, from moments growing up that your worth is tied to your productivity. How good you are as a person is tied to what you get done, or to what you accomplish.

And I want to address this because this is something that can really become a problem if you want to quit porn. Here are just a few ways that I see this show up. There's buffering. So buffering is escaping negative emotion, right? Buffering from not feeling good enough because we didn't work enough.

So let's say you don't do anything all day and you can't even relax because in your mind the whole time, you're just thinking, "I should be doing this. I should be doing this. I should be doing this. I should be doing that. I need to get this done. I need to get that done."

And it just builds up so much anxiousness that you buffer from it because it's just too much. And then you feel shame for not being productive. And then you buffer from the shame and it creates this big ball of icky buffering activities, okay? So that's one reason that it's a really big problem is, I

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mean, you guys have heard me say this. Have I drilled this into you enough? You can't quit porn unless you feel worthy.

And so we can't base our worthiness off of our actions or whether or not we've quit porn yet. Otherwise, you're just going to get stuck in this loop in these shame cycles. You're not going to be able to hate yourself into changing. You're not going to be able to talk sternly to yourself enough in order to change yourself.

And I promise you, if you're waiting to quit porn to feel good enough, you're going to quit porn and then you're going to find another reason to not feel good enough. And then you're going to wait, okay, until I get this promotion or until I get this job I'm not going to feel good enough. And then you get the job and it's just going to go on and on and on in a cycle, cycle, cycle.

So the feeling of worthiness, the feeling of enoughness, that I am 100% worthy as a human, my worth doesn't change, that's going to come from your beliefs and your thoughts. This is where religion can be really helpful if the religion you grew up in taught you these beliefs and it's just like, ingrained in you. You're like, yes, because I am a divine being, I am just worthy.

Sometimes those messages in religion get a little sticky and we have to relook at our beliefs in order to start to develop and cultivate this feeling of enoughness. I'm enough, even if I don't get stuff done. Even if I'm not productive. Because it's not either shame or justification. It's like thinking of this continuum, right? On one side, we have shame. On the other side we have justification.

A lot of people think if I'm not shaming myself, I'm going to jump straight to justification. No, there's middle ground. There's a middle ground that we want to cultivate here. Think about the actions that you take when you feel good enough. When you feel good enough, you take good action. It's when you feel like crap that you sit around and watch TV all day.

And so the best way to stay committed and to keep momentum up and to make the changes that you really want to make in your life, you have to

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develop this skill of feeling enough, of feeling worthy enough. And it's a skill and it doesn't come naturally, especially because of a lot of conditioned beliefs that we have that keep us from feeling that way. So you have to really, really work on that.

Steve talks about this in depth in my interview with him. He was a member of Overcome Pornography For Good. In the middle of his life, 50s, 60s maybe, he quit porn. He talks about this process of really having to actually cultivate these skills and cultivate this worthiness and how it was hard and it was work and it is a skill you need to learn. But it's so, so, so worth it.

Okay, so beating yourself up and not feeling good enough is never going to help you do more things. And I used to do this all the time. I used to think, "If I can just kind of push myself along, beat myself up a little bit and tell myself I'm not doing enough, then I'll get more done."

I have this whole list of things I want to do, of things I want to create. And I would not allow myself to feel good unless I completed everything, or most everything if not everything. It's like how I felt about myself was directly tied to what I accomplished that day. And I know so many of you can relate to this.

Now, this is very conditional self-love. If you only feel good about yourself when you get stuff done, your love for yourself is conditional. And you're going to stay on this race track of productivity and trying to do more to feel better, and exhaustion and exhausting yourself out for the rest of your life.

How I see this show up is I have a number of returned missionaries in my program. And when you're on a mission, you're so productive. Like so crazy productive. And they come home and they beat themselves up for being lazy because they woke up at nine instead of 6am. Or they beat themselves up because they're just kind of chilling and hanging out with people and they feel so guilty. And they feel so icky about not doing stuff.

What I want you to know is that if this is you, if you feel icky, you don't feel bad because you didn't do stuff. You feel bad because of what you're thinking about not doing stuff, all right? Really important distinction there.

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Because there are people who, and I'm one of those people now where I can just have a chill day and not do anything. And I could not do this years ago.

But I can have a chill day and not do anything and I feel fine. I don't feel icky, even if I didn't follow through with my plans that day. It's because I'm thinking different things. I'm thinking stuff like, my body needed this rest. I trust myself that I'm going to get it done when the time comes.

My worth isn't tied to my productivity. I'm not a better or worse person because I am just taking a really chill day today. And there are other people who don't do anything and you just feel like crap all day long. It's because of what you're thinking.

So the really great thing here is that in order to change how you feel and to change if you feel worthy or if you feel good enough, you don't need to change what you're doing. In fact, that's not going to work. It'll work for like just a short minute and then you'll go back to feeling like garbage. You need to change what you're thinking and what you're believing about yourself. That will create long term, long lasting changes.

So anyways, back to how I see this show up, this productivity and worthiness. I talked about RMs beating themselves up for being lazy, using lazy as a bad word which I think is interesting, right? I'm lazy, and that's an insult. What if lazy, I mean, it's subjective. It's not like a fact, you can't go and prove, oh, they're lazy. You can prove, oh, they laid on the couch for three hours. But you can't prove, oh, they're lazy.

But what if we stopped using lazy as a bad word? It doesn't mean anything about if I'm enough, or if I'm worthy enough, or if I'm a good enough person. I see this with people who want to quit everything right away. So they join the program and they're like, "I'm not just going to quit porn, but I'm going to quit drinking, and I'm going to quit watching TV. And I'm going to quit sugar." Right?

It's like if I can just quit all these things so I can be way more productive, I'll feel so much better about myself. And it's like this rush, rush, rush, hurry,

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hurry, hurry to quit so I can finally be productive so that I can feel good enough.

And this is another way that someone that shame shows up. They're like, I'm not quitting because I think that I'm a bad person if I view porn, because they've heard me talk about that a lot. And they're like, we're not using that shame. I'm not quitting so I can finally be a good enough person, but I'm quitting so that I can finally be productive. And if I'm productive, then I'm finally a good person, right? You see how that gets tricky?

I see this show up when people don't listen to their body when it needs to rest. And they just ignore their body cues. I was coaching someone and they were talking about every day at 2pm I just lay on the couch for two hours. And we were talking about like, why is that a problem? And he was saying stuff like I could be working. I said, "Do you need to be working?" He said, "No, I typically get my stuff done by 2pm. And if I don't, then I'll just do it later that night."

Okay, well, then why else is it a problem? And I asked like, are you viewing porn here? Is there some pornography use happening here that you don't want? He's like, no, there's not really porn use happening but I just feel so bad because I can't get myself to do anything between the hours of two and four.

And he wanted me to tell him like, here's the tactics to learn how to do this. Here's the tactics, how to get up, and get moving. And we can do that, but first we need to get rid of the shame around laying down from two to four. And we came to the conclusion, we're like it's actually not a problem. The problem here is that you think that you are less of a person because you rest from two to four.

And as we coached through this and worked through it, it sounded like for him, his body really did need that rest and wanted to rest from two to four. And that's not a problem. That's not a problem. The problem was the shame that was coming up because of that.

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A lot of our conditioning is that we shouldn't rest for longer than an hour at a time or our rest time should only be this amount of time, or we shouldn't need rest. I have a lot of clients come in and they're like, "I don't do anything at night, and that's why I view porn." And what we find out is that they're not viewing porn because they're just turning off their brains at night. They're viewing porn because they're buffering from feeling so restless about not doing anything, right?

But once we get rid of the restlessness and the shame around just chilling and not doing anything, that's when the buffering stops. And that's when the unwanted porn use stops. Isn't that crazy? A lot of people think, well, if I'm going to quit porn, I have to fill my time. I have to go and do something productive instead of just chilling.

And I say no, you don't have to do anything productive. You can still chill and watch the TV show that you like, take hours to rest, play a video game. Just do it intentionally and allow yourself to have the rest that it needs so that you don't feel so restless and anxious that leads you to buffer and leads you to binge more and to watch more TV.

That's what happens too, you allow yourself to start watching TV and you feel so bad about it that it creates a lot of stress and anxiety in your body. And then you shut down and just watch TV so that you numb out from those feelings over and over and over again. If we can unshame this part of us that needs to be productive all the time, we actually become more productive. Which isn't necessarily the goal, so I want to be careful there.

But we stop beating ourselves up and then we stop buffering. And we get off this hamster wheel of I need to go, go, go, go, go in order to feel good about myself.

I also see this show up when people are trying to, how I like to explain this is they're trying to process their way out of their body needing to rest. So between the hours of eight and 10 I am trying to process out of urges so I can go and be productive instead of just laying down and then falling into pornography.

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And what I love to do, one thing I love to do in my coaching that I need to do an episode on is unshaming the urges and the desires for porn. And so as we talk through this and as we unshame that, if we have these urges and we unshame them, what are they trying to do for us? What are they trying to tell us? What is the purpose that pornography is using in your life?

And sometimes what people will find is that their urges for porn, as we unshame them and look at them more neutrally and lovingly as like they're trying to do something for us, they're trying to create rest. And so, as we do that, as we unshame that and as we learn that, that maybe your urges are – And it's going to be different for everyone, this is just like one example, right?

Your urges are teaching you and telling you that you need some rest and this is just how your brain and body has gotten used to resting. We can take that and be like, "Thank you for telling me this." And rest in a different way, instead of trying to process our way out of needing rest. Do you hear what I'm saying? Let me say it again in another way, just to reiterate this point.

Sometimes people will try to process their way out of needing rest, instead of allowing themselves the rest that they need. Now, that doesn't mean that you need to go and rest with porn. There are so many other ways to rest and relax and rejuvenate. And if you want to quit porn, you can do that, but you have to listen to your body and what your body needs. And guess what? Our bodies can't go 1,000% all the time. They just can't.

And so listening to that, unshaming that urge, what is it telling me? It's telling me that I need some rest. I'm going to go take some rest. I'm going to allow myself to just relax for two, three hours, however long I need to. Two or three days, right, whatever. It doesn't matter because my worthiness isn't tied to my productivity.

I can rest as long as I need it, as long as I want it, because my worth isn't tied to my productivity anymore. And then allowing yourself to do that in a

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way that aligns with your value system, instead of trying to process their way out of needing that rest.

You know what I used to do? I used a train example, so I used to go and go and go. It was like I was on a train and the train was going up a hill. And I would add more stuff and do more stuff and process my way out of needing rest and go and go and go and go. And it was like going faster and faster and faster and faster, until it's going so fast it starts to get wobbly.

And then eventually it just crashes. It rolls over. It rolls off the track and I crash and burn for a little bit. And then I would just be incapable of doing anything for like a week. And then I would beat myself up because I wasn't doing anything because my body was exhausted and my anxiousness was exhausted from trying to be productive all the time.

And then I'd finally get on the train again and I would just do that again. Go and go and go and go, faster, faster, faster, faster, faster, wobbly, wobbly, crash and burn, exhaustion. And in that cycle, I was so much less productive than I am now, which is really listening, really having rest, saying no to a lot of things. And not getting my worth out of how productive I am.

So I hope you see how this shows up. I hope you see how this is a problem and how this creates more porn use, how it creates shame, how it creates just these really icky cycles of burnout. And your next question might be, okay, but how do I actually change this belief? And this is where the work comes in. This is where you really have to sit down, you have to discover, right?

These are the three steps. Number one, discover. Discover what those specific beliefs to you are. I'm only worthy if I'm productive because... What does it mean to be productive? What does it mean to be lazy? Like your specific beliefs. Number two, you ask yourself if you're willing to be wrong about them. And you find new beliefs. You find new ways of thinking about it. You find new evidence for it.

So your brain right now is finding lots of evidence that you're only worthy if you're productive. And so when I say that, right, you're going to be like,

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yeah, because my cousin just sat on the couch his whole life and he was a crappy father. Or because this person I know was lazy and they had a horrible life because they're lazy. You have tons of evidence for it. So you have to be willing to be wrong about that and then find new evidence for these beliefs.

And then number three is you practice, practice, practice, practice. What you're doing is you're creating new neural pathways in your brain, so creating new beliefs. The beautiful thing about our brains is that they are malleable and you can change what you believe. You really can. You can go from I hate myself and I hate my body to I'm so grateful for myself and I love my body. But in between that space there's some work to be done.

And there's lots of practice over and over and over and over again rewiring that brain to have new neural pathways to believe something different. And what's that quote that I have in the program that I love? Something like the only thing keeping you from being successful is the belief that you can't do it.

You can do anything in your life if, number one, you're willing to feel uncomfortable. And I've taught you all those skills here in the podcast, and we really master them in the program. And number two, if you change your beliefs. You can do anything you want if you're willing to be uncomfortable and if you're willing to change your beliefs and do the belief work, okay?

So again, those steps are to discover what those beliefs are. Be willing to be wrong about them and find new beliefs to think. And then you practice, practice, practice, practice. I have a whole milestone, it's like a whole big pillar in *Overcome Pornography For Good* and we work with you specifically on it. I have hours of training on it. I have worksheets and workbooks that go along with this. And then we work on it in coaching every single week.

So if you want to come and join us and work on this belief, you're always welcome to do that, sarabrewer.com/workwithme. And let's start rewriting this belief that we are only worthy when we are productive because, okay,

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that's just not true. It keeps us stuck and it keeps us from being happy. Okay, you guys have a great week. We'll talk to you next week, bye bye.

I want to invite you to come and listen to my free class, How To Overcome Pornography For Good Without Using Willpower. We talk about how to stop giving in to urges without pure willpower or relying on phone filters so that you can actually stop wanting pornography.

We talk about how to stop giving up after a few weeks or months. And spoiler alert, the answer isn't have more willpower. And then lastly, we talk about how to make a life without porn easily sustainable and permanent.

If you're trying to quit porn, this class is a game changer. So you can go and sign up at Sarabrewer.com/masterclass, and it is totally free.