

## 147. Ask a Coach: Rewriting Your Stories



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Sara Brewer**

[Overcome Pornography for Good](#) with Sara Brewer

## 147. Ask a Coach: Rewriting Your Stories

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.

Hi everyone, welcome to *Overcome Pornography For Good*. We are currently on a season break, and regular podcasting will resume January 1st. But we are still bringing you brand-new content every single week by sharing an Ask a Coach question and answer from me or from one of the other coaches in *Overcome Pornography For Good*.

Ask a Coach is a feature in the program, in our program *Overcome Pornography For Good*, where you can come and you can submit questions or coaching and get a personalized response from a coach on our team. This is something that when you join you get lifetime access to and you can submit as many questions as you would like.

You can submit 10 a day, 20 a day, you could come back down the road in three years and submit a question. You'll always get answers, you'll always get help and support via our portal through the Ask a Coach function in the program. So you can submit questions. If you're struggling you can ask for help. You can submit your learn and move-ons or other worksheets.

And so what we're doing right now is we are picking and choosing a few of these to answer anonymously, of course, here on the podcast until we pick back up with regular programming on January 1st. And I think you're going to love it, it's going to be so helpful and so good. And you get to hear from all the other coaches.

So before we hop in I do want to talk about a brand-new free resource that I have for you all that's perfect to announce during this podcast break. It is called The Podcast Roadmap. What this is, is it's a roadmap of all of the key podcast episodes. With around 150 episodes, that can feel really overwhelming if you're new to the podcast. So what we did is we created a roadmap.

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Here's 12 of the most important episodes to listen to. You can listen to them in order or not, but we have those listed out for you and linked for you and you can sign up for that and get that in your inbox for free at [sarabrewer.com/podcastroadmap](http://sarabrewer.com/podcastroadmap). No spaces, no dashes, podcast roadmap.

I really hope that you guys will go and take advantage of this. Even if you've been a longtime listener and you're using this podcast break to maybe catch up on episodes, go and download The Podcast Roadmap to re-listen to those most important episodes.

We also have our free masterclass that's always available if you want just the quick and easy version of how do I quit porn, that's [sarabrewer.com/masterclass](http://sarabrewer.com/masterclass). It's just an hour long, it'll walk you through the process. It keeps it short and simple.

And then, of course, we always have our program open. So you can come and join and work with us. You can start getting answers to your Ask a Coach questions, you can come and get coaching. Remember, it's a lifetime access, so we've got the modules and all of the work for you to do in the program, the milestones to complete.

And then you have lifetime access to coaching calls. We have multiple coaching calls every single week. We have specialized marriage calls, relationship calls, support calls. We have regular coaching calls, which are the ones that I do. We have calls on each individual milestone. Anyways, there's so much in there. I won't go into all of those details here, but you can see all the details of the program, [sarabrewer.com/workwithme](http://sarabrewer.com/workwithme).

All right, you guys, enjoy these Ask a Coach Q&As.

Kat: Hey everyone, this is Kat from Overcome Pornography For Good. Today's Ask a Coach question is, "I feel like I'm in a bit of a rut. I got carried away with studying during my post-grad and have been so focused on that that I'm either slipping up or studying 24/7. How can I get back on track with processing urges?"

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Okay, so there's two things I want to offer you today. First thing is that we're going to look at the story. We're going to look at the story that is being told here. So I'm going to read this again and we're going to look for some thoughts that create his current story.

Okay, so he says, "So how can I get back on track?" Okay, so how does the story feel? Like if you look at the story, how does it make you feel? Maybe overwhelm. Maybe frustration. Maybe a little bit of anxiousness when we think about being in this story, right? It doesn't feel good, though. It doesn't feel like a good story and it just creates more evidence for you to believe this story.

As we think about these things and we think about the model and how things fit in there, feeling this overwhelm, feeling frustrated, living this story and believing this story is only creating more of that in your life. So we want to look at this and say, well, what other story could I write? What else could be true about what's going on here about maybe the C of our model, the circumstances?

And I wrote a little something. I made it up, okay? But it's one possible option. It could sound something like this instead, my post-grad work is important and I'm grateful I have time to study and focus on this right now. These slip-ups have shown me where I've been resisting emotions that need attention. I can make time to feel, it won't take long and it has lasting effects. It might even help my study time.

That's just another way that we can write our story. And think about how that feels. What is the story we're telling ourselves? The work I'm doing is important. I'm grateful for the time that I have. I can focus on this right now because it's important to me, right? This story feels so much different than the story that was told before.

There are so many different ways we can reframe it, too. And this is just one I made up, right? So the possibilities of what this could sound like are endless. There are all sorts of things that you could write about what this means and what you want it to mean.

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So this kind of stuff actually gets me super excited as I'm working with my clients because this is when we start to find that there's more possibilities out there. We can start telling ourselves a different story and then we start feeling different, right? Like in the model, our thoughts change, our feelings start to change, we feel different about ourselves, we feel different about our life, we feel different about what's going on.

And then all those changes start showing up in our action line of our model and we start showing up differently. So exciting. So exciting. So if you're not working with a coach, you don't have somebody to point these things out to you and show you these things, you can do this on your own. You can find a practice to look at your stories and analyze your stories and see what's going on.

So what it might look like is you could write it down, right? You can write your story down, write your thoughts down, write what's going on down. You can reread it as the observer in a non-judgmental way, right? You can reread what's going on. And then you can check in and see how it feels. How does that story feel?

If it doesn't feel good, maybe we want to rewrite it. Maybe we want to change it up. Maybe we want to say something different. And so then you could take some time to rewrite that story. You could write it down, change up some stuff, make yourself the hero in the story. I love that kind of rewriting, like make yourself the hero instead of the victim, right?

So that's one thing you could do. You could also, if you don't love writing you could also record it. Record a memo on your phone and listen back to it, again, as the observer in a non-judgmental way. What do you hear? How does it feel when you hear that story? What do you notice about what's going on there for you?

And then you could just rewrite that story, tell yourself a new story. Practice saying something different in a different way that feels different to you. This is all we're doing, is we're just practicing opening up the possibility of

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something else, of a different story. Okay, I love that one. So try that. So that's the first thing I wanted to talk about, rewriting the story.

The second thing I want you to be aware of is all or nothing thinking. Okay, so this type of thinking, right, it keeps us stuck. We know that. It keeps us sitting in the pond of misery. It keeps us in non-movement. It keeps us in one place. And that's not what we want.

So I'm going to share some examples, three different ones that you can look out for in your own life. Maybe hear how other people use this all or nothing thinking in their life. And you'll start to notice it more as you start to pay attention. So I want you to try to pay attention for some of these.

So the first one I want to offer is the either/or statement. Just like in the example from the question, he says, "I'm either slipping up or studying 24/7," right? There's only two options here: slipping up or studying. Slipping up, studying, slipping up, studying, there's no other option. And that keeps us stuck. It closes us off to the possibilities, we only have those two.

So here's what to do, we want to change the or to an and. So instead of saying I'm either slipping up or studying, I'm slipping up and studying. And then I want you to add more, okay? Then I want you to give yourself at least one more thing that we're going to add. I'm slipping up and I'm studying and I'm finding time to eat. And I'm finding time to sleep. And I'm giving myself things it needs. I show up for my class if I need to, or this other thing, or for a friend.

Whatever it is, just add something else to it. So we're going to change the or to an and, and then add more stuff. At least one thing, okay? I think this is really fun because we can also flex our creativity muscles, okay? Because when we're in this closed-off thinking and we're only giving ourselves those two options, it really closes us off.

So open yourself up to getting a little creative here. What else? And what else? And what else am I doing? And what else is there for me, right? Getting creative about what that looks like.

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The second one I want to offer in all or nothing is sometimes we say always and never, so looking out for those two words. It might sound like I always struggle at night. I will never be able to do it. Those types of thinking, okay? So again, notice how closed off this is. It closes us off to any other thing. We don't have any other options. If we always do it, there's no other option. If I'm never going to do this, there's no other option except not doing it, okay?

So here's what we're going to do when we notice that we're using those words, we're going to ask ourselves to find a time that it wasn't true. For instance, I always struggle at night. Okay, we only need to start with one time. When is a time that you didn't struggle? What was happening? What was going on? Is there a time that you didn't struggle? Can you find that? And then we start opening up to maybe, okay?

And then we start looking for that time. We start finding that time. We start noticing when those times are. And when we do that, we can move from, oh, I don't always struggle. Sometimes I struggle at night. And if sometimes I struggle at night, sometimes I don't struggle at night.

And then we can start stringing this new thing together that kind of goes along with our story, right? We can start stringing a new story together about what it means about when we struggle and how we struggle and what the struggle looks like, okay? And we can start playing with that.

Go on a treasure hunt of new thoughts until you find some gold, something that feels good. I want you to keep stringing these thoughts together. So we'll start with I always struggle at night. Oh, wait, sometimes I struggle at night. Well, sometimes I don't struggle at night. Sometimes I do other things. Sometimes I'm open to other areas.

And we start to play around with the story and we start going down a path that's going to lead us to someplace beautiful, okay? That's where we start. And we only have to start with one time because if we don't do it one time, then we don't always do it. And we can find those evidences for us in places if we just look for them. Okay, so I want you to look for that.

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The last one I want to offer is when we use shoulds. It's a very all or nothing place to be. And this is really one of the most insidious ones. It really attacks our relationship on ourself. It's very damaging and it sounds something like this, right? Like, I should be doing better. I should be farther along. I shouldn't have this problem.

It's damaging because if I shouldn't have this problem but I do, then there's something wrong with me, right? I'm the problem. It's me. See, do you hear the shame? The shoulds almost always lead to shame, they bring that shame in. And so we want to drop those. We want to let those go. They're all or nothing, they keep us stuck.

So here's what to do. First I want to offer, if you feel like you can, I want to offer that you just shut it down. Commit now to stop the thinking when it comes in. Commit now to if you hear a should, you stop. You don't ever let the should finish, you shut it down, okay? If you feel like you can do that, that's my first recommendation.

The second one is if it feels too hard and it feels like you're not ready to go cold turkey on those thoughts, I want you to go back to that first one where we practiced and. Practice adding and. It might sound something like this, I should be farther along and I'm learning and growing here. And there's possibilities for me in this place. Okay? So we're just going to start softening up our shoulds by adding and or just shutting it down, because there's no place for that in my life. You can use either of those as an option.

Okay, I want to go back to the original question. I kind of got away from that just a little bit. But this, we're going to tie it back up. So the question was, how can I get back on track with processing urges? And those are the two ways. We can notice the story and we can rewrite it. And we can watch out for all or nothing thinking, because that's going to stop you from getting what you want, from even opening up to you that you have time or space for processing.

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So that's what we want to do, right? We wanted to have time for processing, and we do that by rewriting our story and by watching out for all or nothing thinking.

Okay, so if you're in the program and you need help with this, please bring it to the Ask a Coach, we're here to help you. And if you're not in the program, come join us. We'd love to have you with us. Thanks for being here. We will see you guys next time.

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](http://Sarabrewer.com/masterclass), and it is totally free.