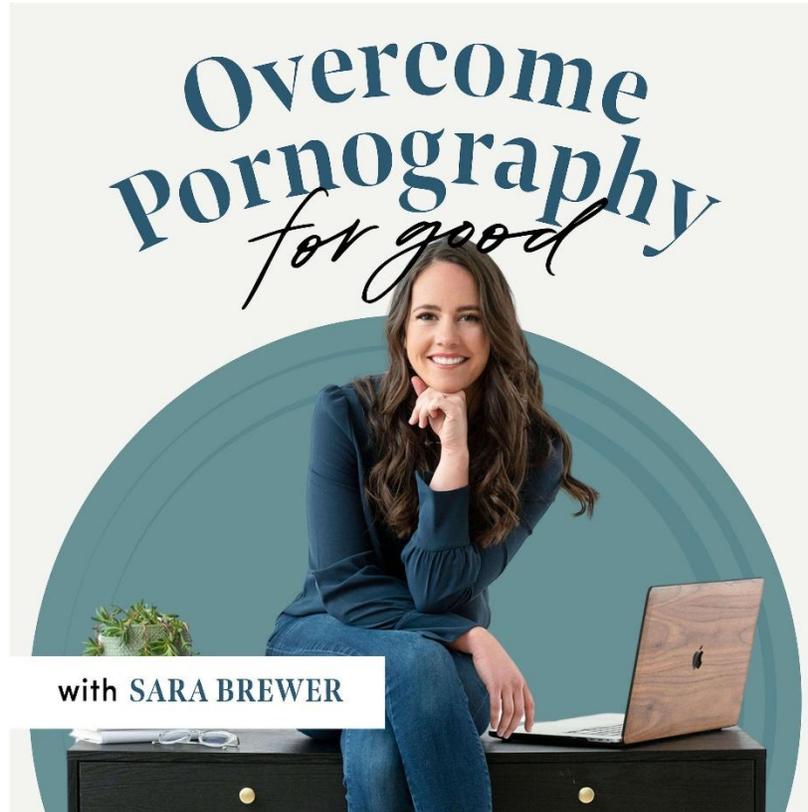


269. The Power of Surrendering to Urges



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sara Brewer

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You are listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast episode 269.

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 everyone, welcome to Overcome Pornography for Good. In today's episode, I'm revisiting a topic that I believe will offer you so many insights, some amazing takeaways, no matter where you are in your journey. I hope you find it as impactful as when it first aired. It's always an amazing thing to revisit some of these topics that we need to hear multiple times. Or if you haven't heard it before, I'm excited for you to hear this. So, welcome, and let's dive in.

Today I want to talk about surrendering. And why surrendering is such an important vital part of the process of overcoming pornography.

So listen, this is really different than how you've probably thought about quitting pornography before. You've probably thought of it as a fight, and a battle, and we have to go and we have to fight this demon, we have to go fight this thing within us.

No, that's not what we're going to do. This is not a fight. This is not a battle. This story that you have in your mind that there is a demon that you need to defeat here is just not true. And thinking of it as a fight and as a battle is going to make it a lot harder to quit.

And the truth is, when you get into what your urges are, what they really are, it's that they're not fighting you and they're not dangerous. So if you remember the episode on stop fearing urges, we talk about our desire and we really dive into that. But really what an urge is, is it's simply a feeling of discomfort. It's simply a feeling of restlessness and there is nothing to fight here.

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If you notice that you're feeling an urge, and you stop, you drop into your body. And you really get really serious with what it is, really dive into that and just really kind of strip it down to its core. What an urge is, is it's a feeling of restlessness, of discomfort, it might feel tight, it might feel heavy. But it's just a feeling. It's not something that is making you do anything. It's not something that you need to fight. It's simply just a little bit of a vibration of discomfort.

And actually, I'm going to pull up really quick. I had a client send me a message that I want to read you about as he started doing this work of processing and describing an urge for what it really is. Yeah, here it is.

He said, "Hey Sara, I'm excited about things, how things are going lately. I've hit some roadblocks in my progress but I had a breakthrough last night. I was feeling a strong urge at the witching hour and I thought I was going to give in, but I tried something. I processed the urge to the level that you recommended with writing down what I was feeling at the time trying to describe it in the most basic way possible. And it worked. Somehow, I was able to let it go. It didn't seem so urgent and unavoidable anymore."

So that's when we get down to what an urge really is. When we stop and we breathe, and we go into our body. And we're like, "Okay, we're not trying to make this go away. We're just going to get really curious, what is this?"

We notice that it's just simply some feelings. It might be different for everyone. Maybe it's heaviness, maybe it's tightness, maybe it's prickly, maybe it's feels like a pulling. But it's not dangerous and it's not making you do anything. So there's nothing to fight here.

And fighting, here's why this is so important that we don't want to fight these urges is because fighting is a sign of willpower. And when we have these urges to go view pornography, the last thing that we want to do is use our willpower. And I know, I know, I know that this is so different than everything that you've been taught or everything that you've tried before.

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But stay with me, let me explain to you why. Willpower doesn't work. And you know that this is true because you've tried willpower for a long time and you're still struggling with pornography.

Willpower, what it is, is it's just trying to force it away, trying to drive it away trying to use your grit and brute strength just to push it away. And that's not how quitting pornography works. It's actually the opposite.

And here's the thing about willpower too, willpower is finite. So you only have a little bit of it. You don't have enough willpower to quit pornography, honestly. You just don't have enough willpower and it doesn't work.

So what willpower looks like is it looks like you see an image you have a thought to go look at pornography. And then you're thinking, "No, No, no, no, no. Go away, go away, go away. Resist, resist, resist." It's like you're pushing it, trying to push it away. Trying to force it out of your mind, trying to force it away. And what this actually does is it actually makes the urge stronger. It doesn't make it go away; it just makes it more powerful.

I love this visual of a beach ball underwater. This is the example that I use a lot when I talk about resisting emotions, resisting urges. It's like you have a beach ball, you're playing in the water with a beach ball and you hold a beach ball underwater.

What happens when you're holding a beach ball under water? There's a lot of pressure and it just wants to pop right back up, right? That's exactly what happens when we resist our urges to view pornography. It's like we're holding it under the water and then it makes it even more desirable, it makes it even harder.

That's why we don't want to use willpower, because it makes it harder. It doesn't work. It's like forcing the beach ball under the water. So we don't want to fight. We don't want to fight our urges to view pornography. And the moment that you start fighting is the moment that you're going to lose. So instead, we want to do more surrendering.

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What that means, that doesn't mean we're going to surrender to our urges and just go and look at it and let ourselves do whatever our lower brain is telling us to do. And do whatever we want to do without thinking about our future and what we want in the future. That's not what surrendering means here. It means a couple of different things.

So number one, is we want to just allow that urge and just let it be there without giving into it. We've talked about this before. I want you to imagine that you're in a room and an urge comes along and it starts knocking on the door. And it starts opening the door.

Using willpower to get rid of that urge would be like running to the door and pushing the door closed and holding it as hard as you can. And the urge is pushing back and you're just in this tug of war. You can only hold that door closed for so long before you get exhausted.

Instead, what I want you to do is let that urge come in the room. I want you to just go sit on the couch, let it walk right in. Let it come sit across from you on the couch and surrender to it. Just let it be there. It's going to start yelling at you. It's going to start saying, "Hey, we should go look at that. Hey, we should go have some of that."

And you're just going to let it be there. You're not going to try to push it out. You're not going to try to force it away. You're just going to let it talk to you and tell you what it wants you to do. And you're not going to do it. You're going to be like, "Yeah, I know. I know you want me to go look at that. I know you want me to go explore that some more. I'm glad you're here, what else do you have to tell me?"

And it's going to feel a little bit uncomfortable but it's not harming you. It's not punching you. It's not grabbing you by the wrist and forcing you out the door. It's just sitting there talking to you, telling you what to do. Maybe yelling at you sometimes.

And when you do that, when you just let it be there, and you don't give into it, and you don't do what it says to do, it'll eventually stop. When you

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surrender in this way, and I'll talk about this more in just a second, but when you surrender in this way not only do you allow the urge to be there and then it stops yelling at you, and it's easier. But it also teaches you more about yourself. And it teaches you more about how to get the life that you really want to live.

Because when it's yelling at you and screaming at you to go look at the pornography, there's always something behind that, right? There's always something behind that. There's always another emotion that you're feeling, that you're trying to mask, that you're trying to cover up. I'm going to talk about that here in a second.

But I just want to mention really quickly too, when we allow that urge in, when we surrender to that urge, we can do that because it's completely harmless. And because surrendering and letting it be there is not the same as giving into it. So that's the first way that we want to surrender.

And the second way is we want to surrender to the emotion that's beneath the pornography urges. And this is what I was talking about just a second ago.

So, if you remember pornography is a buffer. Which means that it's an activity that we use to escape our emotions. Maybe stress, maybe you're stressed about a test, or stressed about work, or stressed about something that's going on in your life. And pornography is a temporary quick escape from that.

Or loneliness. Maybe you're feeling lonely, you don't like feeling lonely and pornography is a temporary escape from the loneliness. Or anger, resentment. Maybe you have a relationship and you're feeling a lot of resentment towards this person. And that pornography is a little bit of an escape from feeling angry and resentment.

So when we surrender to our urges to view pornography, and that doesn't mean looking at it. When we surrender to that we also surrender to the

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emotion that's beneath those urges. We're surrendering to the emotion that you're supposed to experience as a human.

So you're surrendering to the stress. We're just letting the stress be there. We're going to listen to the stress. What does the stress have to tell us? We're surrendering to the loneliness. What does that loneliness have to tell us? We're going to let ourselves feel this loneliness. And this anger, and this resentment, or whatever emotion it is that you're buffering from.

And really what that is doing, it is surrendering to the emotion. Not that something's gone wrong and we're surrendering to some negative emotion and something bad is happening in our life. But we're surrendering to the emotion that we're supposed to experience as a human.

We're supposed to feel negative emotion. We're supposed to have moments of stress, and loneliness, and anger and resentment. We're supposed to feel negative emotion, at least half the time.

We're supposed to struggle in our lives, in our work, in our marriages. We're supposed to struggle with ourselves. These negative emotions are not a problem. All they do is they allow us the experience of being human.

So instead of trying to escape that, let's completely surrender to those emotions and open ourselves up to the human experience. And when we do that, not only are we living more and experiencing life, but we're able to find the things that we want to change and that we want to do differently to handle the emotions that we're trying to buffer from.

So for example, when we allow the stress to be there, instead of just needing to escape from it. We learn how to deal with stress better, we learn what we need to do to work on the stressful things in our life. If it's work or school when we allow the stress to be there that allows us an opportunity to handle the stress.

If we're just running away from it, we're not going to fix anything. Anger or resentment in your marriage is really important. That teaches us really

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important things and shows us some things that we need to do differently. And if we're just going to run away from that, we're not going to try to make our marriage better.

So we're supposed to feel negative emotion. And surrendering to that negative emotion allows us the human experience that we want to experience.

All right, I think I need to do another podcast episode diving into this a little bit more, because there's a lot here I can talk about. But just with this overall concept of surrender, when it comes to negative emotion in our life we don't want to fight it. Or urges, we don't want to fight it. We want to surrender to it. Because that's what being a human is.

So, again, the negative emotion isn't the problem. It's the need to escape the negative emotion that's the problem. So instead of fighting it, we want to surrender to it. And you will be amazed. You'll be amazed at what it teaches you when you do that.

And remember that emotions and urges are completely harmless when we surrender to them. It's when we fight them that they get bigger. What that looks like is thoughts like, "No, I shouldn't feel this. I can't do this. This can't be there. This needs to go away."

When we fight it with our thoughts like, "This needs to go. I can't do this. This can't be there." That's what makes it way bigger way harder. When we surrender to it makes it a lot easier to handle.

And it takes courage, it totally takes courage to surrender, right? Because it feels a little bit more glorious to fight our urges. That feels a little bit more, I don't know, masculine? Important? We want to fight our demons, but it doesn't work. And you don't have to fight in order to overcome.

This urge is here, it's so uncomfortable. It's miserable, I hate it. And I'm just going to let it be there. And I'm just going to feel it.

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Or this anxiety, or this resentment, or this loneliness. I hate it, it's so uncomfortable, but I'm not going to fight it anymore. It's just going to be here. I'm going to let it be there. I'm going to feel it. I'm going to experience this because I'm a human and that's what I want to do. And that's what I came here to do.

I didn't come here to escape my emotions. I came here to feel crappy half the time, so that I can know what it's like to struggle. So that I can know what it's like to have a body and to be a human experiencing all the things that humans experience in this world. They will be done. Surrender. Just going to let it be there.

So let's stop fighting our urges. Let's stop fighting our emotions. The way to quit pornography is to completely surrender and to stop fighting. If you have more questions, if you want to learn how to do this a little bit better, like the actual steps to doing this, go ahead and listen to the podcast titled, Stop Fearing Your Urges. All right, everyone, thanks for being here. We'll talk to you next week.

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." 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.

You can go and sign up at SaraBrewer.com/masterclass, and it is totally free.