

#173. Healthy Sexuality Part 2: More Myths About Pornography



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sara Brewer

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You are listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast episode 173, Healthy Sexuality Part 2: More Myths About Pornography.

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 today's podcast episode. Today's episode is a continuation of last week's episode. We are going through this milestone that I'm creating for my class. You guys are going to get part of this healthy sexuality milestone here in the podcast because it's really important information that I just want everyone to have.

And so last time we talked about using sexuality for good, what that means, what that looks like. It's a great intro to all the things we're going to be talking about. Then we started chatting about porn panic and what that is. And we also started talking about some myths about pornography.

I talked about and I shared the research project that has been a really huge, big ongoing thing for us the last nine months. And the things that we found are really interesting and how we're really making sure that we are up to date with the most best research, that we're using the best modalities in our practice to help you quit porn. But also that we're looking at research and dispelling biased research that creates more fear and panic and ultimately makes it more difficult to quit viewing pornography.

And so if you haven't listened to that episode, please go back and listen to it and then continue on with today's episode where we're going to dive into more myths about pornography.

So just a reminder, we are very committed to helping you feel in control of your sexual behavior, helping you quit porn if that's what you want to do. If it's just wanting to cut back on porn, whatever that is, we're very committed

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to that mission, that vision. And it works really well the way that we go about things.

One quick thing I mentioned at the beginning of the last podcast episode is that you are the authority of your life. I'm going to share all of our findings with you and then you ultimately get to decide how you want to use them. We will support you in whatever that is and whatever you feel is best for your life.

And I think this stuff is really valuable and is going to empower you and is going to help you feel more free, liberated and less shame, fear and panic and give you a lot more control over how you want to use your sexuality. So I'm really excited to keep going.

Some of this might feel controversial, that's what I do, I talk about controversial things. So just to make sure that you know and you're aware of all of the sources that I'm citing and the project information, it's at centerforovercomingpornography.com/research-page. You can see all the citations, all the links. Everything we're citing is peer reviewed and really reputable sources. And you can go and look through all of that if you want to on your own on that web page. Otherwise, let's hop into it and let's keep talking about more myths about pornography.

Let's get into more myths about porn. So this is a big one, you might have heard before is that porn increases rape and rape culture. Now just to be clear here, rape is a horrible thing. Sexual violence is a horrible thing, and I believe we should do everything we can to combat that. And we're going to talk about that here in a minute. Here's what the data shows us. This is from a study by Borgogna in 2022. This is cited on you can find it and read it for yourself on that website page, centerforovercomingpornography.com/researchpage.

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This is what they find, that neither porn viewing nor hardcore porn viewing were related to rape myth acceptance when controlling for sexist attitudes among men. This study indicated that hostile sexism is a significantly stronger predictor of all rape myths examined compared to pornography viewing or hardcore pornography viewing in men and women.

The summary, what this means is that men who are sexist are more likely to believe rape myths, like she was asking it, compared to men who are not sexist, but view porn, AKA watching porn does not make men more likely to believe in rape myths being sexist does. And there is little to no empirical evidence that a person's porn use equals sexist views and increases their belief in rape myths and increases rape culture.

Now, one case of rape is too many and we still have a lot to do to combat sexual crime. And that's important and we can't just say, well, it's getting better and so we don't need to worry about it. Not at all. There's still way too much work that needs to be done here, but porn is not creating it. And so what that means is that anti-porn does not seem to be the answer.

So instead we want to get to the real causes of sexual violence, which is going to be lack of sex education, sexist beliefs, systems that favor men over women, systems that favor men over women in court, in work environments, church environments, et cetera. Sexist power dynamics in these different areas and cultures that believe men over women.

Really what it comes down to if we want to decrease rape and sexual aggression/sexual violence is rape culture. Understanding what that is, challenging rape culture and doing our part to decrease it. Here in the slide you'll see I say, no, this is important to me because Utah has above national averages for sexual assault. That's where I live. That breaks my heart. That hurts. So this is something that's really important to me.

So back to the why. What's the root of sexual aggression, sexual exploitation? It's rape culture. So rape culture is attitudes where sexual

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violence is normalized, excused, blamed on the victim, or even condoned. I'm going to give some examples.

Victim blaming phrases like what was she wearing? And if she was wearing that, then it's probably her fault. Or she didn't fight back. There weren't any punches on his face, no scratches, nothing like that. She didn't fight back. It seems like it might've been her fault.

I'm going to share this video that is really powerful from risenow.us. You see a lot of exhibits like this pop up lately and they're beautiful. So this is an exhibit at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. It's called, what were you wearing? And it's an exhibit where victims of sexual abuse and sexual assault submitted what they were wearing at the time of the assault.

Video: I have been asked this question many times. It has been called to my mind many times. This question, this answer, these details. But my answer much awaited, much anticipated seems flat somehow given the rest of the details of that night during which at some point I was raped. If only it were so simple, if only we could end rape by simply changing clothes. I remember also what he was wearing that night, even though it's true that no one has ever asked.

Sara: It says 1.3 billion women around the world have experienced sexual violence. And the purpose of this video is to show, and for podcast listeners who aren't seeing my screen, you see there's so many different things. There's scrubs, there's hoodies, there's bikinis, there's sweaters, there's dresses. It just goes and it shows you that the purpose of these exhibits is to be a really powerful visual representation of what people were wearing and how it was never about what they were wearing, ever. And that question is so harmful in excusing sexual violence.

And so that's one aspect of rape culture, is victim blaming. Other aspects of rape culture is trivializing sexual violence. So you'll hear the phrase, oh,

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boys will be boys, right? Oh, it's not that big of a deal. Jokes, comments, media portrayal that portrays sexual assault as comedic, right? That's rape culture.

Lack of accountability or covering up abuse. So one area that I see that is where clergy leaders are not required to report sexual assault, right? It perpetuates rape culture of this lack of accountability of people who do sexually assault other people. And they should be held accountable for that and clergy leaders should be required to report that.

So if you want to help decrease rape by challenging rape cultures, that's something that you can advocate for in your state if your state doesn't have clergy laws that require them to report sexual assault or report sexual abuse.

Rape culture also looks like policing sexuality. So again, kind of focusing on what women are wearing and not on the actions from the perpetrator. I love to bring this up, right? So Jesus says if your eye offends you, pluck it out. He doesn't say if your eye offends you, tell that woman to put on more clothes.

And so if you follow me or if you've heard me speak, you hear me talk about this often, that we never ever can blame our sexual urges on someone else. And even if they're automatic, even if they just come, even if they happen and you didn't really have a choice in it just because we live in a hyper-sexualized world. If you're at the gym, if you're at the beach and you're feeling these urges, it's not because of what these people wear.

We cannot blame our sexual actions on what people are wearing, ever. And you have a lot more power than that. You have a lot more power than that. And I go into depth in that on other podcast episodes that you can listen to. I'm trying to think of what it's called. I think it's the one called Automatic Sexual Thoughts where I really dive into that. And you can hear more about that there.

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Other rape culture things, sexism. So just beliefs that men are better than women. Lack of sex education, lack of resources for people who might be assaulted, not taking rape accusations seriously. You know, people are just making, if you have an attitude around, oh yeah, women just make it up to get attention. Not taking those accusations seriously is a big problem.

Sexist power advantages in work environments, church environments, political environments. Whenever there's these sexist power advantages, it gives a lot more opportunity to those people who are perpetrators to be violent. And then cultures that believe men over women.

And so those are all things that we can look out for, that we can start to deconstruct in ourselves and that we can advocate for in our own states. If we really do want to decrease rape, what we're seeing in the data is it's not getting rid of the porn. That doesn't do it. Instead, it's rape culture. So let's do that instead.

This great study from Borgogna, men who are sexist are more likely to believe rape myths like, "she was asking it," compared to men who are not sexist, but view pornography. AKA what this means is that watching porn does not make men more likely to believe in rape myths, being sexist does.

This is a really great study you can go and dive into, but that's the finding of this, is looking at rape myths, looking at people who believe rape myths, looking at their porn use compared to that and finding, discovering that watching porn does not make men more likely to believe rape myths, but being sexist does.

Okay, again, we're getting underneath the iceberg. We're not just blaming porn for these things. We're looking at what was really going on.

Okay, let's keep going. More myths about porn is that most porn is violent and misogynistic. The reality is that most porn is not violent. It shows female passion and specific fantasies that some people find icky and unacceptable, but it is not mostly violent.

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The video in this milestone called fantasy versus desire versus choice is going to help you a lot with this. So if you don't quite understand this, that's fine, just kind of listen, then go and watch that video, come back and rethink about this, but just kind of see what can stand out to you here.

So some porn, some anti-porn activists make it sound like violent porn is everywhere and it's the majority and most people watch it. And it exists, yeah, it does exist, but it is the minority. And let's be really clear here, okay? Harming, hurting women or other people is wrong. Hard line. That is wrong. And in the realm of sexuality, these power plays, BDSM between consenting actors, consenting adults is a normal part of a lot of people's sexual fantasies. Porn hasn't created this.

Please again, like go and watch that fantasy versus desire versus choice video if you haven't yet. And so real solutions here to decrease violent attitudes, again, towards women and other people is we want to teach fantasy versus desire versus choice. That video is going to help you a lot with this.

Teaching consent, this non-shaming of eroticism and of the weirdness that sexuality is instead of shaming it and hating it and demonizing it, right? What does that do? What's our beach ball example that we talk about a lot? When you push down a beach ball underwater, you're pushing a beach ball underwater, holding it down. What does it want to do? It pops up. It becomes more aggressive.

And so instead of shaming it, we just want to learn these skills that we teach here in the program; acceptance, breathing into it and then choosing what to do with it, instead of freaking out about it. We want to attack sexism. And we also need to learn how to separate our fantasy from self. Like I said, I talk about this a lot more in that fantasy versus desire video that you can see here.

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One interesting note on this idea that most porn is violent is this idea of violent porn coding. And you can see the source here is in this book, *His Porn, Her Pain*, page 188, where they dive into it a little bit more. But some anti-porn activists that claim porn is mostly violent, they use phrases like it's hostile and humiliating acts against women. It's demeaning to women.

And what we want to do is we want to look at, okay, so what are you talking about that is demeaning to women, that is hostile and humiliating acts against women? What is that? What is the definition of that? What are you talking about when you're saying most of that is?

And here's some examples of what they're referring to. Women masturbating while their partner observes. Two women and one man having sex. Two men and one woman having sex. Anal sex, sex between an older man and younger woman, older woman seduces younger man. So it's these things that might be icky to them, but are not objectively demeaning to women, okay?

Stick with me here. It's more often women that are experiencing sexual things that are edgy, maybe weird to them, erotic and strange. But this phrase and this statement that most porn is violent is not really about violence, and it's more about opinions on sexuality and what someone should like or should want to do in regards to sexuality and like the women too, right?

So just because one person would never do this or isn't turned on by this or even finds it icky and demeaning does not mean that it is objectively demeaning to all women, okay?

Again, that video with these couple of points, that video fantasy versus desire is going to be really helpful. But understanding that sexuality is weird and it lives in this weird realm of forbiddenness. And there's lots of little things that turn people on and it's part of exploring sexuality. And so different types of pornography might be exciting to different types of people.

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Some people might find one of these like oral sex, like very demeaning towards women. Whereas someone else is like, that's not demeaning to women at all. And so we have to look at kind of what they're talking about and be able to pick out what is this about your opinions on sexuality and what someone should do or what someone should like, and what is it about actual violence, right?

And so, yeah, violent porn exists. And it is the minority and not the majority like some of these people like to claim, okay? So let's keep going. Oh, these are big ones. You guys, these are big. These are big. We're attacking these big things.

All right, this is a really big one. A really good one, okay? A myth about porn is that watching adult porn leads to watching child porn. Now, at The Center For Overcoming Pornography we do not use the term child porn. We use the term S.E.M., which stands for sexual exploitation material. And S.E.M. is horrible and it is evil and it is wrong. And there is no evidence that legal adult porn use leads to using child porn and the two products have almost no overlap, okay?

The adult or the legal porn industry doesn't create child porn. It's illegal. There would be jails, fines and there isn't a market for it. And most people find it repulsive. There is no evidence to back up Ted talk claims of legal porn use turning into S.E.M. This is a fear and shame tactic that I know a lot of you have heard.

Like think about this, right? So someone who loves sex with men or women and has a lot of sex in their life is not going to just turn into a pedophile, because enjoying adult sex does not equal pedophilia, okay? And again, we do what we can to end sexual exploitation material. It is wrong.

You know, we have members of our team here at Center for Overcoming Pornography who have been victims of this. And it's one of the reasons that they're so passionate about doing this work and being a part of the

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organization. And they've been a part of the research. And they're really interested in getting to the root of this because it's something that has been really personal to them.

And so we're doing what we can to end that. And so if you come across it, please report it to the United States Justice Division for US residents, or to your local criminal division if you don't live in the US. And again, watching legal porn does not turn into S.E.M., that sexual exploitation material. This is a porn panic, a fear and a shame tactic that is harmful and it's really unnecessary. And it distracts us from really getting to what we need to do to end S.E.M.

One thing we also want to encourage you to do is that if you're viewing pornography, you know, make sure that you're watching, and we're going to talk more about this in future slides and future videos, like how to do this and what specifically I mean by this. But make sure that you're choosing ethical sites, that you're using paid sites, that you're using sites that have things in place to filter out anything that might be illegal, to filter out anything that might be not consenting actors.

And like I said, we're going to talk about that in a minute. There are some ways that those systems fail, but please do your part to watch on ethical sites. That's one way that we can help this.

Another myth is that neuroscience proves that watching porn can damage the brain, especially in the young and cause porn addiction. So neuroscience evidence is really mixed on the effect that porn may or may not have on the brain. And there are some things to watch out for when you're looking at things that are claiming this.

Now the area of the brain that goes off with porn is related to the same area that goes off with cuddling puppies and eating sugar and watching sunsets and doing drugs and anything that triggers desire and dopamine. And so, you know, to simply look at scans of the brain, like some people

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will do, “look at this scan and see that part of the area that's lighting up when you view porn, that means this, this, this, this, this” and they have these really big claims that aren't necessarily true.

And so when you see those pictures of like, okay, someone's brain when they're viewing porn, part of the brain is lit up and someone's brain when they're not doing porn, and that part isn't lit up, just know that that area that's lit up with what they're seeing and showing is related to the same area that goes off with anything that triggers desire and dopamine. Cuddling puppies, eating, eating sugar, drugs, watching sunsets, any of that.

From this study by George Addis and Kringelbach in 2012, they are neurobiologists and went through a whole study on this particular claim, came to the conclusion, said no data's demonstrated that porn is different from any other liked activity or object. Also on the slide, I have this quote from Bruce Carpenter, who's a researcher at BYU who stated, there's no evidence, not a single study of porn use showing brain damage or brain change.

And so there's just some things to look out for in these types of research claims. The first one is a misunderstanding of neuroscience, which we talked about a minute ago. The second one is going to be claiming certainty. The reality is neuroscience is a pretty new field of study. There's a lot of things that we don't know and anyone who's claiming, big certain statements, we need to watch out for. My own research contractor, she got after me a little bit for saying certain bold claims. She says, as soon as you do that, you shut off any future studies that might prove you wrong. And we don't want to do that.

So instead of really bold claims, let's be careful in our language and just say what the study is showing us now instead of making claims for the future as well because we don't know what the future is. We don't know what we're going to find in the future.

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Okay. Number 4, we want to look out for research claims where there isn't an explanation for people who watch a medium or large amount of porn without becoming addicted, compulsive, self-destructive, sexually dysfunctional. This is what you will see in a lot of these types of claims. They are only focusing people who will label themselves as addicted or compulsive or self-destructive or sexually dysfunctional without looking at the other group of people who are watching the same amount, a medium or a large amount, but don't see it that way. And so that's really interesting.

And then lastly, we need to look out for some catch 22s, you know, and some of these research claims, it's a bit biased where if the brain activity goes up, they're claiming addiction. And if it goes down, they call it reduced sensitivity because of pornography. And so they're not open to other ways of seeing it.

Okay. Another myth about porn, and stick with me on this one. Hear me out on this one, is that porn causes erection problems, erectile dysfunction, especially in young men. So in this one, we're looking at the Scrubs Angola study from 2018. And just a reminder, the research around pornography, it can be a bit mixed and a bit messy. And so what we've done to really filter out, and this is why I hired someone. I hired someone to do this for me because I'm not a researcher.

I didn't go to school for this. And so I hired someone who is a specialist in this. So what we've done with the messy mixed research to really filter out and find, you know, what is the most accurate here is hired out real researchers, used recent studies within the last 10 to 20 years, mostly within the 10 years, last 10 years. We've used peer reviewed empirical articles, which means that they've gone through multiple researchers before they're actually published and they're really picked apart.

So this one, the Scrubs Angola, this is what they found. They say, despite evidence to the contrary, a number of advocacy and self-help groups persistent claiming that internet pornography use is driving an epidemic of

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erectile dysfunction. The present work sought to explore whether mere porn use itself and self-reported problematic use of porn are related to ED, both cross sectionally and longitudinally.

We conclude that there is little or no evidence of an association between mere porn use and ED, consistent evidence of an association between self-reported problematic use and ED cross sectionally and no evidence of causal links between any pornography variables in ED. In a summary, here's what it's saying.

Pornography use alone is not related to erectile dysfunction even over time. However, self-reported problematic porn use is related to erectile dysfunction. In other words, only those who perceive that they have a problem with porn experience erectile dysfunction and those who view porn but do not believe it's a problem do not experience erectile dysfunction. Isn't that fascinating? Go and relisten to that if you need to.

But again, just to reiterate, here's what they're finding in this research is that, there are two groups of people they're both viewing porn the same amount. One is perceiving it as a problem. One isn't perceiving it as problem. The people who are perceiving it as a problem are more likely to experience erectile dysfunction.

The people who are not experiencing or labeling it as a problem do not experience erectile dysfunction. So fascinating to me. So there's little to no evidence, very, very little to no evidence that erectile dysfunction is caused by pornography use alone. So instead, what is it? What do we want to look at?

We want to look at what might be causing erectile dysfunction instead would be sexual distress, hormonal imbalances, age, physical health concerns, depression, anxiety, stress, relationship problems. So when I'm thinking of what's underneath the iceberg, we're talking about this throughout all of these myths. We're talking about what's under the iceberg,

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and that's what we really want to look at. You have the porn use, and what's under that is sexual distress. You're in a lot of distress because it's not lining up with your values.

You feel like a crappy person. You feel like you're sitting all the time. It's just like really distressing. If what's underneath it might be depression anxiety because the porn use isn't aligning with what you want to be doing, or if there's relationship problems, these other things that are going on underneath the surface, then it would make sense why you might be experiencing or why you might be more likely to experience erectile dysfunction, but it's not the porn use alone. Right?

Fascinating. Fascinating this study. Only those who perceive that they have a problem with porn experience erectile dysfunction. Those who view porn but do not believe it's a problem do not experience erectile dysfunction.

Anyways, just so, so interesting. I want you to pause because I know that's a big one. That's a hard one. And just notice feelings that come up, practice some grace for yourself, practice some humility, and also just love and honor your current self, your past self. Here's what we find. Here's what the data says. Here's what the studies say. And then your experience is real, and your experience deserves attention and love and validation.

So all of that can be true. Okay. We're making space for all of this to be true. Let's keep going. There's more myths about porn. It's that porn changes your brain, so you can't enjoy sex with a real person. Again, you know, like these other studies around brain and how it changes your brain, there's no reliable data here. Typically, you know, this is what's going on is if you don't want sex, it's because you don't desire the person that you're with or you have issues about sex or closeness.

Now this is a hard realization for couples, but it's something that can ultimately be worked through and bring you together. And I understand that it is easier to blame the porn than to sometimes bring the honesty of, like, I

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don't desire this person sexually or I have issues with being close or issues with vulnerability here. And so, again, if you're having a problem wanting sex with a real person or with your person, the real solutions here aren't quitting porn. The real solutions are going to be relationship counseling or individual counseling. That's going to get you a lot further. Okay. Let's keep going. I know this is a lot to digest.

We're almost done. And then we do have a lot of support and special calls on all of this particularly that we can chat through, answer questions about. You know, whatever is coming up for you around this, we can work through this in the coaching calls anytime. So another myth about porn is that porn ruins intimate relationships. Right? Like, this is such a big one. And let's talk about the nuances of this. Okay? Let's talk about the nuances of this. It's not so black and white, so stick with me here.

Okay? There's no reliable data on this. And often if you'll see, again, this porn panic, this moral panic, if we're looking at studies, they're biased studies where they're not looking at tiers. For example, it declares porn use as a threat to marriage without comparing marriages in which porn is and isn't used. They're only looking at marriages where the porn is claimed to be a problem and not at marriages where the porn isn't claimed to be a problem and people are actually totally fine. Okay. So, again, correlation does not equal causation. If there's bad marriage or relationship issues and there's porn involved, it does not equal that the porn is the cause of this bad relationship dynamic. Okay? So again, we're going to get I have a picture of an iceberg here that we're going to talk about in a minute.

I want you to pause because I know that's a big one and that's a hard one. And just notice feelings that come up, practice some grace for yourself,

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practice some humility, and also just love and honor your current self, your past self.

Here's what we find. Here's what the data says. Here's what the studies say. And then your experience is real and your experience deserves attention and love and validation. So all of that can be true, okay? We're making space for all of this to be true.

Let's keep going. There's more, more myths about porn. It's that porn changes your brain so you can't enjoy sex with a real person. Again, like these other studies around the brain and how it changes your brain, there's no reliable data here. Typically this is what's going on, is if you don't want sex, it's because you don't desire the person that you're with or you have issues about sex or closeness.

Now, this is a hard realization for couples, but it's something that can ultimately be worked through and bring you together. And I understand that it is easier to blame the porn than to sometimes bring the honesty of like, I don't desire this person sexually or I have issues with being close or issues with vulnerability here.

And so again, if you're having a problem wanting sex with a real person or with your person, the real solutions here aren't quitting porn. The real solutions are going to be relationship counseling or individual counseling. That's going to get you a lot further.

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For example, it declares porn use as a threat to marriage without comparing marriages in which porn is and isn't used. They're only looking at marriages where the porn is claimed to be a problem, and not at marriages where the porn isn't claimed to be a problem and people are actually totally fine.

So again, correlation does not equal causation. If there's a bad marriage or relationship issues and there's porn involved, it does not equal that the porn is the cause of this bad relationship dynamic, okay? So again, we're going to get, I have a picture of an iceberg here that we're going to talk about in a minute, but the porn is the iceberg of the relationship and not the underlying problem.

The reality is that there are people who view porn in their marriages and it works well. And there are people who view porn individually or, you know, separately or together and they still have intimate, close, honest relationships. The porn is much more neutral. It's not that powerful. And what's underlying is going to be causing issues. And here's what I mean, okay?

So if, you know, the top of the iceberg, porn in relationships. Now let's see what's underneath. If there's issues, right, it could be because there's lying. It could be because there's a lack of emotional connection, because there's maybe emotional abuse tactics, right? That's a big one and we're going to have a whole big video on this really soon and on other relationship stuff. But if there's emotional abuse tactics or any other abusive behaviors or abusive attitudes, that's something we really need to look at, right? That's where it really becomes a problem.

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If there's a lack of self-confidence. If there's loneliness underneath, if there's an agreement that porn won't be used and then you do use porn, right? That's underlying this, that could be causing issues.

Now, again, on the other side, we see like if there's open communication and an agreement that porn is okay, there's going to be a different result here. If there's relational distress, if there's fear or stress around intimacy, right? That can be what's causing the problem, not just black and white it's the porn, okay?

And not all of these, so if you see these ones on the right, this open communication and agreement that porn is okay, those are examples of what other things might be underneath the iceberg that aren't causing issues. Sorry if that's a little bit confusing.

But do you see what I'm trying to say here is that it is not black and white porn ruins relationships. That's just not true because there are a lot of marriages where porn is used and it doesn't ruin the relationship. They're actually totally fine. And so why, like why is porn hurting this relationship? It's because we have to look underneath the surface and see what's going on.

And this is true too, right, with women who are in distress about their partner's porn use. Like if you're in distress about it, validation, validation, there's probably a really good reason for it and your body's freaking out. And let's look underneath that. Let's look at that. Let's see what's going on.

Is there a lack of emotional connection, lack of effort from your partner? Does it feel like a betrayal? Is there maybe some subtle emotional abuse tactics that you haven't been aware of because you haven't known that's what they are. Are there narcissistic tendencies, right? There's so much that might be going on.

There's also patriarchal conditioning. That's a whole other video that I'm going to save for a spouse's video specifically. But I just, I want to offer this

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data and also offer validation. And again, reiterate that you are the authority in your life and your body is speaking to you. And there are people who choose, they say, yep, porn isn't going to be a part of our relationship and we've decided that feels really great. And lovely, we support you and want to help you with that.

There are other people who are going to decide, you know what? We're actually okay with this and he can do his thing and I can do my thing. And we're going to come together and share our sexuality together. And that's a really beautiful thing too. And we're going to support that.

And so the porn is neutral. What's going on underneath the iceberg, that's what we want to look at. We're going to get so much further and create a lot more healing doing it that way too, rather than just blaming the porn, okay?

Does porn compete with a couple's sex life? For some, yes. For some, no. So that's another phrase that is just black and white, it's just not true that porn always competes with couples sex lives. For some people, yes. For some people, no. It depends on the relationship dynamics and the complexities of what's underneath the iceberg. Okay?

All right, another myth. All porn that I watch is consensual. That is a myth. We ultimately don't know. Consent is ultimately up to the individuals in porn and it can't be measured by most studies. So the short answer is that you can honestly never know for sure if what you're viewing is consensual or not.

What we do know is that the majority of actors producing porn are consenting adults. We also know that there are some unfortunate cases of non-consensual material that is made and even shared on platforms that claim to have strict rules about consent. Stuff gets through the cracks.

So, many pornography producers put systems in place to ensure that only ethical porn is shared, but even those systems can make mistakes

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sometimes. And so what we want to encourage you to do is to practice ethical porn use, which includes paying for content. You know, you're going to find ethical sites doing that, instead of just like random stuff on the web. And then doing your own diligence to research consensual porn.

If you come across non-consensual material, we strongly encourage you to report it here to the, we have this link here or to your local criminal division if you're not in the US, okay?

Just a few more short ones. Another myth is that watching porn always improves relationships or porn is the best way to create sexual satisfaction with my spouse. And you can see this study from 2019, again, below.

So the sexual scripts that are learned from pornography can increase a person's short term sexual quality, but are not shown to increase long-term sexual quality in couples. And so that's really what this study is showing. With pornography you can learn sexual scripts that make things exciting in the short term, but long-term they don't show increased quality in couples.

So long-term sexual quality is going to come from emotional connectedness, communication, playfulness, willingness to explore and learn with another and a sense of safety in your relationship dynamics. It's going to come from this really deep sense of emotional connectedness and safety.

So again, sexual satisfaction is about what's under the surface and cannot be measured by porn use alone. And this is where, again, we're getting less black and white and we're not going to just fight about the porn anymore. We're going to look at what's underneath and see what we can do there, okay?

I think this is the last one and then we've done it. We've made it through this whole big thing. Myth about porn is that over consumption of pornography is a male only issue. That's not true. And I want to make sure I bring this up for my female program members.

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In the state of Utah, 79% of people reported viewing porn in their lifetime. 85% of men, 75% of women. The most common frequency of porn viewing was weekly or monthly among men, and monthly or every six months among women, which is comparable to national averages.

So it's not just, like over consumption is not a male only issue. And if you're a woman here, we've got you. We want to help you. And reach out to us if there's a way that we can help you be a little more comfortable or get you some more coaching.

We've considered doing women's only calls before and we have done them, but we just didn't really quite have a turnout. And so if you want that, reach out to us and we'll help you because we want to make sure we can be a safe space for you as well.

So with all of that said, we're getting rid of the porn panic, of the shame and the fear. We're dispelling myths about porn that just aren't true. And I've had program members who have listened to this early and they're like, oh my gosh, get this out there sooner. This is what people need to hear. This is liberating. This is what I needed. This is so powerful. Thank you for sharing this. Now I can, I don't have to be worried I'm going to turn into Ted Bundy or something horrible. Like it's neutral. It's neutral, it doesn't have that much power.

And so with that, there are non-shameful and non-panic reasons to work through a porn habit, okay? Let's make sure that our reason for working through a porn habit isn't because of any of these myths that we've heard, but some of these more powerful reasons.

It could be because you're using porn as an escape, as a buffer instead of addressing the hard things in life. That's a beautiful reason to quit porn or to at least decrease porn, right?

Maybe it's because you want to use your sexual energy to create a beautiful relationship instead of using it to consume pornography and

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instead of taking the time and energy and effort, putting it towards your relationship with your spouse, you're just using it on consuming porn, right? That's a really beautiful reason to quit doing porn.

Maybe you want to learn just to feel more in control of your life and porn feels like an out of control thing for you. Validation, validation. Yeah, it easily can become an out of control thing, and that's where we can help you.

Maybe you want to work on your emotional health. Maybe you want to face challenges of life without buffers, without escape, without numbing. Maybe you want to create a life that you're obsessed with and that you love, and porn seems to be getting in the way of that. It's too distressing. It's too consuming and you're just done with it. That's a great reason too.

And one of my favorite reasons is that quitting porn is the vehicle that can really help you learn a lot of these tools to change anything in your life. So the mindfulness tools, the emotional regulation tools, the thought tools, the identity tools. Oh, it's so freaking powerful.

So those are some really beautiful, non-shameful, non-panic reasons to work through a porn habit. I hope that this leaves you feeling empowered and liberated and more excited to come in and do the work to make your life better because now what's underlying it is not these myths about how terrible of a person you are that just aren't true.

Okay, thanks everyone for being here today. I know that was a big one. If you want to come in and get some coaching around this, please come and join us, [centerforovercomingpornography/workwithus](https://centerforovercomingpornography.com/workwithus). Next week we're going to dive into more topics, so more juicy stuff we're going to be talking about. You know, I had mentioned fantasy versus desire, porn literacy, masturbation, all these big things. So please enjoy those and we'll talk to you next week.

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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](https://sarabrewer.com/masterclass), and it is totally free.