

294. What's Possible with Jeff: Quitting Porn at Age 75



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sara Brewer

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You are listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast episode 294, Quitting Porn at Age 75 with Jeff.

Welcome to the *Overcome Pornography For Good* podcast. I'm your host, Sara Brewer.

Hey, you guys, welcome to today's podcast episode. I'm super excited. We have another What's Possible interview with Jeff, who comes on to share his amazing story of quitting pornography at age 75. You'll hear his story, but he, last October, had a pretty bad binge episode, and he had a really cool experience that brought him to the program, Overcome Pornography For Good.

And he talks about how after struggling since he was 14 years old all the way through 75, how it just changed everything for him. What I'm most excited for you to hear in this story and to get from this story is just a belief that if he can do it, you can too.

These are some episodes that I get a lot of really great feedback from because it is so refreshing to hear other people share their stories. It builds a lot of belief; it builds a lot of hope. And so as you're listening to him, I just hope that you can cultivate those feelings for yourself. Feelings of belief, hope, assurance, all the good feelings that are going to help you in your journey to quitting porn.

If you're looking for some help and you want to do what Jeff did, you can come join us, sarabrewer.com/workwithme to join the program. All right, you guys, enjoy this interview.

Sara: All right, you guys, welcome to the podcast this week. I want to introduce you to Jeff. Jeff is a member of Overcome Pornography For Good, and he has a really great story that I'm excited for you to hear. I'm excited to talk to him and hear about his journey quitting porn.

I'll just kind of let you start and give us a little timeline. Tell us a little bit of your history.

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Jeff: Thanks, Sara. It's great to be here. And I've enjoyed going through your program, but let me just give you a little background. I'm 75 years old. So I've kind of been doing porn for over 60 years. And with that in mind, I can kind of give you a little timetable about how this whole thing came about.

It kind of started back when I was just a young boy, around five or six. I happened to wander into the workroom where my father had employees, and they had a calendar up with nude women on it. And I was very curious about that because the 50s philosophy, that was back in the 1950s, and the philosophy that mothers tried to teach their sons was that you didn't expose young sons to a naked female body.

And so that kind of got me curious as to what the big mystery was regarding the female body. I kind of carried that mystery throughout my elementary years. And when I was 12, my mother, who was a nurse, sat down and gave me the talk about sex and where babies come from and that type of thing. But it was strictly about the basic mechanics. There was nothing about sexual desires, masturbation, feelings.

And there was no internet back then; this was the 60s. And so my source of porn was magazines and erotic literature. And I was able to sneak Playboys from my older brother, and then I bought my erotic novels in local bookstores. And the problem was that I was raised in a very strict Christian household, I went to church every week.

And because of that, I had a lot of guilt and shame about porn and masturbation, which led me into the shame cycle. And you've talked a lot about that in your program. And because of this shame, I hid my habit with lies and betrayal. And this would become a pattern that I would keep for the rest of my life doing porn.

When I got to high school and like the 15 to 18 year old age group, I was still masturbating quite a bit to porn. And I realized, this something I learned in your program, that I was using porn as a buffer to escape my inferiority complex. I had four best friends; two of those friends were brilliant students,

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and the other two were gifted athletes. And between the four of them, I had a tremendous inferiority complex. And so I used porn to buffer from that inferiority complex.

I also discovered girls in high school and I went steady with one particular girl. And then when I went to college, I ended up going to a Christian college, and I kind of rebelled against religion. And I joined a fraternity, we had wild parties. I started dating a girl who eventually became my wife. I lost my virginity to her, and we had sex quite a bit. But when she wasn't available or whatever, I continued to masturbate.

And I used porn in college as a way to overcome the stress of studying and getting good grades. And I didn't do as much porn actually in college because I was just too busy between studying and dating and parties and what have you. I didn't have a whole lot of time. Plus, I was having sex with my girlfriend at the time.

And then after I graduated from college in the early 70s, my first job was teaching in a middle school. And I was still doing my porn habit. And then after a couple years of marriage, I tried to introduce my wife to porn. And she went along with it for a while, but because of her morals and the fact that she felt that it degraded women, she stopped doing porn. But I continued to do it, and I discovered movies, porn movies.

Once again, I had to hide my habit from my wife. So I had this additional shame. And then in addition to that, I had the guilt of lying and betrayal. So after teaching for a couple years, I quit teaching and went into a business. And I started buffering with porn to overcome the stress of running a business. And it was a family business and there was a lot of conflict in the business. And so that was another way, because of the stress of that, I was still masturbating to porn.

After about 10 years of marriage, we now had three kids, and this kind of added to my guilt because I didn't feel that the life of porn that I was leading was providing a good role model for my children. And then in 1984 my four-year-old son died unexpectedly. And I just went on a real deep guilt trip

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because I felt that God was punishing me because of my porn habit, and that's why he took my son.

And so I had a lot of grief and I buffered with porn because that was my escape from all the grief that I had. And that was in 84, like I said, and then I was continuing my habit up into the 90s. And my wife discovered my porn habit in the late 90s and she freaked out about it and didn't want to have anything to do with me sexually. And this drove me to doing more porn.

And then in 1998 I ended up having an affair and we separated for a short time. And my wife came back with an ultimatum, which was to give up porn or she was going to divorce me. And so I was off porn for a couple of years, and then I discovered Internet porn. And I thought I'd hit the jackpot because it was available 24/7 and it was free.

Sara: Yeah, it's a different world, yeah.

Jeff: So I went back to it. So in 2007 I ended up selling the business that I owned, and I went back to teaching. And I was teaching in a Christian school. And in addition to that, because of that, why I became a born-again Christian, and I vowed to give up porn with prayer and willpower. And as you know, that doesn't work.

So my guilt and shame were now compounded by the fact that I was a born-again Christian and teaching in a Christian school. I retired from teaching and drove a school bus for about six years. And I was still doing porn and secretly keeping it from my wife. And then I retired for good in 2000, and I was still doing porn as a buffer from my boredom, to escape my boredom.

My wife discovered my porn use again, and she told me she was done with me. We'd stay married, but she wouldn't have sex with me. And as you can imagine, our relationship was very strained, and I figured that porn was just part of my life and I'd have to live with it the rest of my life. And if I hadn't discovered your program, I'd still probably be doing porn and hiding it from my wife. So that's kind of my story.

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Sara: Wow. Thank you so much for coming and sharing your story. We have a number of questions that we're going to go through too, that I sent over in preparation for this interview. But do you want to tell us, and you already touched on a number of these, but tell us the challenges for you in quitting porn before the work in the program? I know you mentioned escape a lot. Lots of escape.

Jeff: Yeah, and that's the thing that I didn't really realize that I was having a problem with. I just thought I was oversexed, and the philosophy back in my teenage years was boys will be boys. And so I just thought I had this high sex drive, and I didn't know that I was escaping all these emotions and using porn as a buffer to do that.

But in answer to your question, I've been doing porn for over 60 years because I started when I was about 14, and I'm now 75. So do the math. And I thought I could quit on my own with willpower and prayer, and I've been in therapy a couple of times and nothing worked. Porn was affecting my relationship with my wife, my kids, my grandkids, God, my friends, my job.

Porn was basically my life. And my biggest challenge was I'd quit for a while, then something would trigger an urge and I'd go back to it again. And I just didn't have the proper tools to help me overcome those urges.

Sara: Yeah. And so then something happened and you found the way that I talk about porn. I don't know if you found it, maybe through the internet or someone sent it to you. Do you remember how you came across it?

Jeff: I can tell you what happened. I actually went on a porn binge in the middle of October of last year. And I was doing porn every day for five days straight and I was still hiding it from my wife and everything. And I finally just sat down and just examined myself. And I got down and I prayed to God. And instead of praying to God to help me quit porn, I prayed to God to help him to lead me to find a program that would help me quit.

And he answered my prayer because the next day I saw your ad on Facebook. And so I went to your website and I read about your program.

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And after all the times I tried to quit, I was really kind of skeptical about it. And the biggest problem that I had to face in being willing to start your program was I had to tell my wife that I was still doing porn.

And that was the hardest thing that I had to do. And so I explained to her that it was kind of a God-answered prayer, that your program was supposed to help me quit for good. And she was really skeptical, she didn't think it would work because I had tried to quit so many other times. But I prayed about it, and I finally convinced her, and so I enrolled in your program the next day. And I can tell you a little bit about what I did once I got into your program and just kind of go through.

Sara: Yeah, I want to hear that. I think that is such a cool God thing. I think God and however people believe, you know, universe, Spirit, God, like those moments where we're just ready, we're like, God, show me a way. Universe, show me a way, whatever it is you believe, it just happens, and it's beautiful. And I love that that's a part of your story. Very cool.

How brave of you to go and talk to your wife about it. That's hard. That's hard. So yeah, so tell us how has this changed you? What's worked?

Jeff: Well, since I'm retired, once I got in the program, I spent a majority of my days, a couple hours in the morning, a couple hours in the afternoon, working in your program. I did the urges milestone first. And then I went through the rest of the program and I took notes on everything. And I did the worksheets as I went through each milestone.

And I'll be real honest with you, I was overwhelmed at first. I thought all this knowledge and everything about it was just flowing through my head, but I just took it one milestone at a time. And then after I finished the program, then I went through it again and I struggled at first, I wasn't sure how to process my urges. But I used that strong urge guided mindfulness tool, where you talk someone through the urge.

And when I was trying to work on my urges early in the program, I'd go to that quite often, and I'd just let you help me; you'd talk me through whatever urge I was having.

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Sara: Yeah, let me explain that for people who don't know what that is. In the program, one of the things I have is a strong urge for guided mindfulness meditation, and it's when you're experiencing an urge you just will stick in your headphones or turn on your phone and just listen to me kind of tell you what to do step by step while you're going through that. It makes it super easy. So you don't have to question it or do it on your own.

Jeff: And then any questions that I had, I brought to the coaching calls. And they were fantastic, whether it was you or one of your other coaches. They did an excellent job of answering my questions in a way I could understand them.

And then I was also introduced to your CTFAR model. And that was what really turned things around for me, because that's where I learned that it was my thoughts and what I do with them that caused my actions and results.

Sara: Yeah.

Jeff: And I don't know if you want to explain that.

Sara: Yeah, thank you for bringing that up. It's the model and I learned it from Brooke Castillo, she was where I was trained and got my first certification in life coaching. And the basic idea is that you have circumstances, and then you have thoughts about those circumstances. Your thoughts create your feelings. Your feelings create your actions. And your actions create your results.

Now, like you, Jeff, when I learned about the model, it's like my whole world opened up and things just clicked. And I was like, "Oh, that's why I'm doing this, it's because I'm thinking this thought. Oh, I can change it. Not by just like willpower or just telling myself I'm not good enough and just got to change it. I change it by thinking something else."

Anyways, I have other episodes on this that dive into it a little bit deeper, but it's just simply that our thoughts are going to create our whole reality,

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our whole results. And we need to gain awareness around that and be practicing thinking on purpose, basically.

Jeff: And that changed my whole approach to what I thought about porn too, because I discovered it wasn't the fact that I was oversexed and couldn't control my desires, but that I was buffering to escape from various emotions that was causing my porn habit. And that was just an eye-opener to me.

But my first couple of weeks in the program, it was tough. I struggled swimming in the river of misery, as you talk about. And I had a couple of slip-ups, but instead of feeling shame and guilt about it and thinking, "Oh no, now I have to go back to the beginning and start all over," the way I used to think, I used the learn and move on tool to figure out what went wrong.

Then also a big part of your program is the wins because you celebrate the wins. And so I would look at it instead of a slip-up, the fact that I had gone two weeks or three weeks or something before that slip-up and was learning so much about the program. So I celebrated that win instead of concentrating on the negative, the fact that I'd slipped up.

Sara: So good.

Jeff: After I completed your program, then I started listening to your podcast. And I've now completed 100 of them.

Sara: Oh wow. Wow, that's a lot of podcasts.

Jeff: I just looked the other day, or looked yesterday when your new one came out, and so I got 16 more to go before I catch up to you.

Sara: Are you sick of my voice yet?

Jeff: No. And then every time I listen to a podcast, I learn something new. Some little tidbit or some little thing that wasn't covered in the program. So that's kind of helped me along the way. But the way the program changed

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me is that I no longer have urges. If I do have an urge, I know how to process them.

And not only do I not have urges, but I've got to a point where I have no desire for porn whatsoever. And one of the things that, early on when I was still learning, one of the things that was causing slip-ups was viewing provocative pictures on social media. But in addition to learning how to control my urges, I've also learned how to process the triggers that cause those urges.

So now, if I happen to be scrolling on Facebook or something like that and I see a provocative picture, it does nothing for me, and I just go right past it.

Sara: Yeah, wow. So what do you think you would say to someone, they're like, "What do you mean you have no desire for pornography?"

Jeff: It is just so unbelievable because having done this for 60 years and having all these urges and desires, it's so unbelievably refreshing to not have the urge to do porn. And you've talked about this before, that I still have sexual desire. If I see a scantily clad woman or something like that, I'm human, I have a sexual desire. But I don't think about running to my computer to take care of that desire.

Sara: Yeah.

Jeff: So that's what I mean that it's, you know, and it's so strange because I've had these urges all my life and now I don't have them anymore, and it's just wonderful.

Sara: Yeah, so good. And I'm just so happy for you and of all the work that you've done and put into it. I mean, to go through it not just once, but twice, to really make sure you understand everything, to come to the calls religiously and show up. It's not just, oh, let's try this and see if it works. It was, I'm quitting and I'm going all in. And that's what made a difference for you.

Jeff: Very true.

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Sara: So tell us, what have been the overall significant transformations, breakthroughs and results that you've experienced when quitting porn?

Jeff: Well, the biggest transformation I've experienced, I just kind of touched on it, it no longer controls my life. Porn no longer controls my life. When I first started your program, it was hard for me to accept the philosophy that you tell about it's okay to view porn and not feel shame. Because of my Christian background, my wife, my parents, society, my pastor, everybody had pounded the whole shame thing into my mind all my life.

And all that did for me is it led to lies and betrayal and I felt that I had to hide my porn habit. But once I accepted that I didn't have to feel that shame and stopped blaming myself for it, I got out of the shame cycle. And now I look at life through a completely different set of lenses. I'm free to live my life the way I want to. I don't have to sneak around and hide my porn use.

And I've also been able to apply some of the things I've learned in your program to other aspects of my life. And you're right, because you say this quite often in your podcast, that your program is about much more than just quitting porn, it's a life changer. It helps you in other aspects of your life as well.

Sara: Yeah. Yeah, beautiful, which is the next thing I want to ask you, which is how have your relationships and your life and your impact all changed and grown as a result of the work you've done?

Jeff: The biggest result and the one I'm most thankful for is that I reestablished my relationship with my wife. I felt so guilty with all the lies and betrayal for viewing porn behind her back all those years. So in addition to your program, and you've kind of steered me to some of these other things, my wife and I have listened to some of your relationship coaching calls with Jessica, Kat and Lindsey.

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And then we've also listened to some marriage and relationship podcasts by Amanda Louder and Jennifer Finlayson-Fife, and Zach and Darcy Spafford.

Sara: Yeah.

Jeff: So, they've really helped us with our relationship. And my wife now has a much better understanding of what my porn habit was, because she didn't know what it was all about, or the depths of it, or what I was going through. And so we now have a better relationship with open lines of communication. There's no more secrecy and betrayal. She's starting to trust me again. And plus, our sex life has improved.

And I've also reestablished my relationship with Jesus Christ. I can now concentrate on doing the type of things that he wants me to do. And this is kind of reflected in the way I'm helping others in my church, my community and the world. And another thing is I no longer objectify women. I look at them for who they are, their personality, their intelligence, their spirituality, rather than their bodies.

Sara: Yes. So good. Jeff, I'm so, so happy for you. This is just really, really- I hope you feel really proud of the work you've done. One of the reasons I want to do these interviews isn't just for other people to hear your story, which is such a gift for them. But it's also because we just want to celebrate you. And I hope that this is an opportunity for you to celebrate yourself.

I'm curious, if you don't mind sharing, and then we'll go to the next question. Tell me a little bit more about the spirituality aspect for you. Because you mentioned how me saying you can view porn and not feel shame, that took you a while to believe or to try out. I'm curious what getting rid of the shame has done for you and your spirituality.

Jeff: Well, two things happened. Getting rid of that whole shame cycle is one. And then secondly, when I became a born-again Christian, I just got in contact with God and started reading the Bible more. And not only started reading the Bible more, but it just started making so much more sense to me. I understood it more. I went into more depth.

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I've read through the Bible cover to cover a couple times now. And I do several, two or three different devotional things every day. And it's just made such a difference in my life, my spiritual life, not to have this whole porn thing hanging over my head because, as I told you before, I felt so guilty being a born-again Christian, but still doing porn. And now that I don't have that hanging over my head, I can devote my entire life to Jesus Christ instead of porn.

Sara: Yeah, that's what I found. I found when I could get rid of shame, it helped me feel a lot closer to God. Whereas before I kind of thought, well, I need shame so that I can be good enough for God. I found it doesn't work that way.

Okay, so next question, what do you think is possible for you now as a result of quitting porn?

Jeff: Well, I now look forward to each new day that God gives me. In 2000, one of the reasons I did this was because I had retired and I didn't have anything else to do. But also, while I was doing it, it kept me away from porn, I actually wrote a book and had it published.

Sara: Wow, that's a big deal.

Jeff: That is. And it was just a little romance novel, but I felt very proud of it.

Sara: That's amazing.

Jeff: And so since not doing porn, I've actually written a couple more, and once I fine-tune them, I might have those published as well.

Sara: Okay, so let me just remind everyone who's listening. You are 72? 75. So at 75 you quit porn, and then you published a book.

Jeff: I was actually 73 when I published my first book.

Sara: Okay.

Jeff: But now since I've quit porn, I've had all this extra time on my hands, so I've written a couple more.

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Sara: Yes, okay. Okay, still, though, 73 published a book and quit porn. I mean, my goodness, it's not too late for you ever to do this.

Jeff: That's the message I want to take to people. No matter how long you've been doing porn, it's still possible.

Sara: Yeah.

Jeff: One of the other things that I'm considering, because I wish I had access to this when I was a young man, is I'm considering taking my message and talking to young Christian teens about the effects of porn and what I can do as far as ruining their lives. And I wish I had access, like I said, I wish I had access to a program like that when I was young because it would have gotten me out of this.

Back when I was a teenager and early 20s, the whole human sexuality thing was something you didn't talk about. So we've made such great strides. And that's why I enjoy listening to some of these podcasts about human sexuality, because it's just opened up so much in the last 20 years.

I mean, I forget who it was, one of the sexual advocates that I've listened to their podcasts, I think it was Zach Spafford that said back when he was having his problems with porn, he tried to find something that he could use to get out of his porn habit, and there wasn't anything there. And I think that was back in 2007 or something like that. So we've made some great strides.

Sara: Even in the last seven years, five, seven years, there's been a lot of change just in this short time too, yeah. Really good, thank you.

And lastly, Jeff, are there any other insights or any last messages that you think would be helpful to share for listeners who also want to quit porn?

Jeff: In closing, I'd just like to say that Sara's program has changed my life from a porn-dependent person to a happy, loving, caring individual who's now porn-free. I would definitely recommend it. I have reestablished a

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relationship with my wife and God. And Sara makes the program simple and easy to understand.

And compared to other programs, the cost is very reasonable because I checked out some other programs before I got into your program. And as I mentioned before, I'm retired, so I'm on a fixed income, but I was able to spread my payments out over six months. And along those lines, if you don't want to get in the program or don't feel that you can afford it right now, listen to her podcasts. Because I've picked up so much valuable information from them.

And a lot of the things that she mentions in her podcast, she also does in the program. So you're kind of getting a freebie by just listening to her podcast.

I'm proud to say that I've been porn-free now for five and a half months. I have no desire to go back to it. And if you're willing to follow her program, do the work, you too can be porn-free and never go back to it.

Sara: Oh, wow. Jeff, congratulations and thanks for the program plugs there at the end. But really, congratulations, and I'm just super excited for you and proud of you. Thank you for coming to share your message today. I know it just helps so many people.

I get the most messages after these episodes release, these what's possible episodes. And just people are so grateful to hear these stories, and I know yours is going to be like life changing for people, life-changing.

Jeff: Thank you for having me. And I've really enjoyed your program, and I've enjoyed the coaching calls I've been on with you and stuff. And I really thank you for putting together the program that you did because it's been a life changer for me. And I know a lot of your other clients in the program, it's changed their life. And I just thank you for doing the work that you do.

Sara: Thank you. Thank you. So fun to share this space with you today.

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All right, you guys. Have a great week. If you want to reach out and say thanks to Jeff, you can email us support@sarabrewer.com. We've been getting some emails, of people saying thanks for these calls, and then we'll pass them on. We'll pass them on to them. So have a great week. We'll talk to you next week.

Thanks for listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast. If you're ready to take your next steps, visit centerforovercoming.com. We'll talk to you next week.