

295. Choosing Your Future Self Over Your Present Desire



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With Your Host

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You are listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast episode 295, Present vs. Future Desire.

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

Hey, you guys, welcome to the podcast episode this week. So glad that you're here. I'm excited to talk about this topic today, which is this present versus future desire. Before we hop into the content today, I just want to share a win from one of my clients who just finished working with me in the program.

He said, "Before we started working together, I had locked down my life. I had set very strict rules for myself, I couldn't trust myself to not look at pornography. I set up filters and blockers on my phone and computer, and they were making life inconvenient. And not only were those making life inconvenient, but the problem was really getting in the way of feeling good about myself and my confidence and happiness in life in general.

In a small and simple sentence, this program helped me overcome pornography. It helped me overcome and process urges. It's amazing for me to say that I don't struggle with porn like I used to. My mindset was that this is a priority for me; it's a priority for me to quit porn and masturbation. And if it's similar for you, if overcoming porn and masturbation is the most important thing in your life, this is a program that you should join. I definitely think people should do it if they're done having porn in their life."

I tell people the podcast is for listening and learning, and the program is for applying and changing. We just kind of take everything to another level and really apply the things that you're learning here.

So if you're loving the podcast, but if you're feeling like you're not seeing the changes that you want to, that's where the program comes in. That's the next step for you. There's a lot of material to apply the things, a lot of tools, a lot of resources to make these concepts more applicable. Tons of opportunity for coaching. Really, coaching is where we dive in and apply.

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Often, as a coach, I can see things that your brain is doing that you can't really see. And it's the same with my coaches. I still work with coaches, and I will probably never not have a coach because they're that important to me. They really, really help me. But my coach, when I'm talking to her, she can see things that I can't see.

And so it's really just to dive into there, to get deeper. And so you don't have to guess on what you're doing wrong or why it's not working. But you can have someone tell you this is exactly what's happening. Here's what we can do to change that.

And more importantly, we're not really focused on action as much as changing those beliefs. And so, to really get in and change those beliefs to become someone who doesn't want pornography, that's where we come in and we apply it, is in the program.

So let's dive into the topic for today, which is present versus future desire. So we have two desires that are going on and they are sometimes competing with each other. So we want to define these first. So number one, your present desire is what you want in the moment. And your future desire is what you want for your future.

Now it's really important to not judge or be mad at either of these desires. So, for example, when it comes to pornography, we have our present desire in those urges. That present desire is to look, and to give into the urge, and to get that dopamine and to go watch whatever it is we want to watch or look at, or whatever it is you want to do.

And then we have our future desire, which for most of you listening to the podcast that feature desire is to not feel at the mercy of your urges, and to not look at pornography. And to not run away from your emotions with pornography and to not have that be a part of your life.

That present desire is wanting to escape from pain. The desire to escape from pain, the desire to get that dopamine release, the desire for that pleasure and that excitement. The future desire is that desire to be in

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control of our emotional wellbeing and to feel like we're living in integrity with our values.

Now, sometimes these are competing desires. And what I want to say is that it's really important for you to recognize that there's nothing wrong with you because you sometimes listen to that present desire over the future desire. It's important to not be angry at the present desire. And it's important to not judge yourself for these desires. Of course, sometimes you listen to that present desire.

Sometimes we choose that present desire over a future desire for a number of reasons. It might be because we're not really sure what our future desire is, we haven't really decided what we want in our future. Or our future desire isn't as strong as our present desire. Or maybe it's just not at the front of our minds. Our present desire is just at the front of our minds, and we haven't practiced putting that future desire at the front of our minds.

One thing that can help us develop this future desire and make this future desire stronger, is to develop a compelling reason. A compelling reason to quit viewing pornography. If you ask yourself, why do I want to quit viewing pornography? What's the answer? Do you have a compelling reason to quit viewing pornography? What is your why to quitting pornography? Why do you want to do it?

These questions really deserve some time to sit and think about. Sometimes that why isn't strong because when you think about it, and you get into it you realize my real reason for quitting this is because someone told me that I shouldn't. Or because I'm afraid, which honestly aren't that compelling. They aren't huge reasons that would really compel you to listen to that future desire over the present desire.

So get really deep into answering that question, why do you want to quit porn? What is the reason? Because if the reason is just a surface-level reason, like someone told me, it's not good for me. My Bishop told me to

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stop. My parents told me to stop. My wife told me to stop. That's not a compelling reason enough for you to quit.

And if that's your reason, in the back of your mind you might be like, "Yeah, it's probably a good thing for me to quit, they're probably right. But also, I'm okay. And my life is okay. And we're doing okay even though I have this habit. So it's okay if I look at it one more time." See, that compelling reason is so important because if we don't have one, we're not going to want to do the hard work to process the urges when they come up.

And it's at this point, with this compelling reason that a lot of people like to bring in the fear tactics. We've all heard these fear tactics. If you don't quit, then everything will fall apart, your future relationships will fall apart. You'll become addicted, you'll have sexual dysfunction, and all this stuff will happen.

And I'm not saying that these things can't happen, of course they can. Sexual dysfunction is a totally real thing with over pornography and masturbation use, it totally is. There are a lot of negative side effects of pornography, but unfortunately this fear isn't a great compelling reason.

The fear isn't a great compelling reason to keep you going. Because think about this, what do we do when we feel fear? When we feel fear, we hide, we resist, we push the urges away. And that only lasts for a little bit and then we feel a lot of pressure and we give in a lot easier. When we feel fear, we have the all-or-nothing mindset, which keeps us from quitting porn. I've done a lot of episodes on that. We get into the shame cycles, which causes us to continue looking at pornography.

One exercise that I do have in my program is I have an exercise for every single time that you slip up. We do this exercise, we answer these questions, we go back and look at what happened so we can learn from them. Instead of just like, "Oh crap, I slipped up. We'll try better next time." It gives us some really clear data, some really clear direction to go. And

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then they can bring them to coaching calls or bring them to the coaching board.

But one thing that is really fascinating for my clients is when they really get in depth in looking at what happened, they're fascinated to see how fear and shame doesn't do anything to help them. But the fear actually creates more pornography use. And the pressure creates more pornography use.

I just talked to Tina, who's a coach in the program, and she was telling me about one of her clients who she was talking to him about pressure and showing him what pressure was doing with his porn habit. And just being like, "Hey, isn't this interesting? When we feel pressure, we actually resist, we avoid, we buffer, we feel discouraged. So we look at more pornography." And he decided he was going to let go of the pressure.

And then he came back a week later and he's like, "Tina, you won't believe it. I processed every urge, I didn't look at porn once. I had an amazing week and I believe that's because I let go of the pressure." And it feels super contradictory, right? Like we need pressure on us for us to quit this. But what I see over and over and over and over again is the fear, the pressure, the shame, it is not a good motivator. And it's not a great compelling reason.

So as you're asking yourself, why do I want to quit porn? Is the root of those why's based in shame and fear? And if they are, that's a little flag for "Okay, how can we switch these? How can we change this up so that the reason is more compelling than just based out of fear and shame?"

So this is where the question comes up, okay, well then what is a compelling reason? What are some compelling reasons that I can have to quit porn if it's not all of this fear stuff, like my life is going to be ruined? Because, honestly, that's really all it's been for most of you for a long time.

And this is where we can bring in this tool of using your future desire and asking yourself, "What is it that my future self wants?" Not what is it that I'm trying to avoid? What is it that I'm trying to deprive myself of? What do I

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need to miss out on? What am I going to miss out on? What does your future self really want?

What does that future life, when you think about the ideal future life, what do they really want? What does it look like in regards to sex and pornography, my sexual life? And what does it look like overall? And it can be kind of scary to ask yourself this question if you don't believe that you can really have what you want.

It can be scary to go there like, "What is it, like, best-case scenario, the best thing that could happen in my life, my very best future, what is that?" It can be kind of scary to go there if you don't really believe that you can have it. And so it can take some courage to go there.

But if you allow yourself to just go there and to ask yourself, "What does my ideal life, what does my future life look like? What would be all of my dreams come true?" It can start to give you your compelling reason to quit pornography.

So ask yourself specifically what does it look like in regards to sex and pornography? And then ask yourself, what does it look like overall? What does my dream life look like? Maybe as you're sitting on this and thinking about your ideal future life, you realize what you want is a relationship with someone where there is no secret pornography use involved. You can question yourself more like, why do you want that? What kind of relationship do you want?

Many of you are afraid to give up the pornography because you're afraid that you won't receive that same sexual stimulation or that same excitement in future relationships. You're afraid of giving up this exciting thing. And if that's you, I want you to be really honest with yourself that that's something that's keeping you from quitting porn. And be really vulnerable and admit that to yourself.

It's not a problem. All that does is it shows us that there are some things that you want in your life. And maybe one of those things that you want in

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your life is a great sexually fulfilling relationship with your spouse. So instead of demonizing that and being like, "There's something wrong with me because I really like this sexual stimulation." You can be like, "Oh, yeah, this just shows me something that I want in my ideal life is to have that with my partner instead of having that alone."

And what I want to show you and offer you today, too, is that maybe that unwanted pornography use is keeping you from developing that with your spouse. And maybe it's true that you can quit pornography and still have a very exciting and fulfilling sexual life that is even better than what you find from the porn. This might resonate with some of you.

I'll have clients who also tell me you know, "I get to the point where I don't even like it that much anymore, but it's just, I don't know why I'm holding on to it so much." Maybe there's something even better for you, and more exciting and more sexually stimulating for you that is also filled with connection and vulnerability with a person that you really love.

So, some of my favorite resources for this, I don't do a lot of the sex coaching or, like, the marriage coaching, but I do have some amazing resources and some amazing coaches that I love, love, love. And my favorite ones are Jennifer Finlayson-Fife, I've talked about her in the podcast often. And Amanda Louder, her podcast is titled Sex for Saints.

It's a great one, I would definitely recommend looking into that one. If you decide, hey, part of my ideal future life is creating this sexually fulfilling relationship with my partner, Amanda Louder's podcast Sex for Saints is an amazing one to look at. And you can look into coaching with her too.

But the truth is, is that creating that relationship and creating that thing that you want is going to require you to stop overconsuming pornography. Okay? So this is a good example where we're putting this future desire ahead of the present desire. This future desire for this really amazing, beautiful relationship with your person over that desire to have that immediate pleasure from the pornography.

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Another way for me to say this is we're switching from consumption to creation. So instead of focusing on the consumption of pornography, switching to what you want to create. And stay with me, because if you don't have a person or a partner or someone that you can create this relationship with, or that you want to create this relationship with, that's fine. There are many other reasons that you can have to quit porn. Many other compelling reasons that we're going to talk about. But let's stay here on this idea of creating versus consuming, okay?

Your present desire, that present desire wants to consume. It just wants to consume all the time. We just want to be on our phones all the time, we want to watch Netflix all the time, we want to eat and consume all of the delicious, fatty, sugary food. But your future desire wants to create.

Your future desire wants to create these relationships that you have in mind. It wants to create a healthy lifestyle at wants to create beautiful things. It wants to create success; it wants to create connection. And so ask yourself, is your pornography use a part of that ideal future that you want? And if it's not, what is it about that ideal future that is so enticing that you could give up pornography for it?

All those questions are so good to just sit on and to journal on and to question. And here's another great question to ask yourself when you're trying to access this future desire and create this compelling reason. What is my pornography use keeping me from accomplishing in my life? Let me say that again, what is my pornography use keeping me from accomplishing in my life?

I want you to think about the time and energy that porn takes up. And if you had all of that time and all of that energy back, what could you do with it? What are you missing out on creating, or having, or experiencing in this life because your time and your energy is put towards pornography?

I have clients that tell me they wish that they would use that time that they spend on pornography to build a business, creating wealth, or doing

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something that they enjoy more. There are activities that feel better to them, that they enjoy more than pornography, but they don't do them because they're using their time looking at pornography and their energy looking at pornography. Maybe creating things, or building things, or going on walks, or exercising, or spending time with people that they love.

What is your porn habit keeping you from accomplishing? And let yourself go to what you really want for your future. What do you really want? And the time and energy you're using towards pornography, what is that keeping you from accomplishing that you really want in the future? Let yourself go there and let yourself think big and let yourself think from a place of joy and abundance and everything is available to me, I just have to decide what it is I want.

Some of you want to create a program to help a lot of people. Some of you want certain positions in your career. Some of you want to own a big ranch and spend your time homesteading or spend a lot of time camping and up in the mountains or traveling. Some of you want to run Ironmans and triathlons. Some of you want to make a lot of money. Some of you want to build furniture. Some of you want to create art.

All these things you could be missing out on because of your overconsumption of pornography. What is it that makes your heart excited? What is it that makes you excited about life? Access that and ask yourself is my porn use distracting me from getting this thing that I really want?

Do you see how this is so much more motivating than the fear tactics? And so much more exciting, and such a better compelling reason than, "Well, if you don't, your whole life is just going to go down the drain."

I want you to learn how to consume less and create more. I want you to learn how to create this life that you really want that gets you excited. I want you to learn how to put the focus on creating that instead of all the focus on the overconsumption and the buffering with porn and feeling out of control.

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This is what I mean when I say to my clients, I always say, “Hey, this is about so much more than learning how to quit porn. This is about learning how to create that future, that secret little future that you haven't really told anyone about but that you think about, and it gets you excited. It's about learning how to create that.”

I also want you to learn how to love your future self enough to sacrifice for them. You will have to sacrifice your present desires in order to get your future desires. And I promise you, the future can be so much more amazing than what you can get presently. And you can learn how to love that future self more, and you can learn how to love that future self enough to sacrifice for them in the moment.

I am so grateful to my past self that did things that were uncomfortable that have given me this really beautiful life right now that I have and that I love. I'm so grateful to my past self for having kids. That sucked. That sucked in the moment; that was so hard. But I love my life right now because of them. I'm so grateful that past Sara sacrificed that for me.

I'm so grateful that past Sara sacrificed putting myself out there and taking risks and getting all the mean comments for doing this work. It's created a life of impact that brings me so much joy. I'm so grateful that I was willing to sacrifice that comfort for what I have now.

And so when you think about your future self, what will your future self thank you for? What can you do right now to give your future self the life that they want? And specifically when it comes to pornography, what is your future self going to be so grateful for you that you did?

For some of you, your future self is begging you to tell that person that you need to tell, and get that help you need to get. For some of you, your future self is pushing you to join the program and really commit to doing this for good. What is it that your future self will thank you for? What are they asking you to do? And are you willing to sacrifice right now in order to get your future self that life that they really want?

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Such a powerful question. Oh my gosh, so powerful. All right, you guys. I love you so much. Keep up the great work. We'll talk to you next week. Bye bye.

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.