

More About Sex & Porn Addiction

“Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real sex and porn addicts. No person likes to think they are bodily and mentally different from their fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our past sexual behavior has been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we were not addicted.

For every sex and porn addict, our great obsession is the idea that somehow, someday, we will control and enjoy our compulsive sexual thinking and behaviors. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many of us pursue it into the gates of insanity or death.

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were sex and porn addicts. This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.

We sex and porn addicts are men and women who have lost the ability to control our sexual thinking and our sexual behavior. We know that no real sex and porn addict ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals —usually brief—were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. We are convinced that every sex and porn addict is in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period, we get worse, never better. In our experience, sex and porn addiction, like alcoholism, is an illness that can be arrested but never cured.

Despite all we can say, many of those who are real sex and porn addicts are not going to believe they are in that class. By every form of self-deception and experimentation, they will try to prove themselves exceptions to the rule. If anyone who is showing inability to control their sexual thinking and behavior, can do the right-about-face and stop sexually acting out, our hats are off to them.

Heaven knows we have tried hard enough and long enough to stop acting out sexually!

Here are some of the methods we have tried: watching pornography without masturbating; watching subtle, soft pornography only, fantasizing only, masturbating once a day, masturbating without using pornography, masturbating without finishing, throwing out all of our erotic material, limiting our Internet porn to a half an hour a day, getting married, monogamous relationships only, flirting and leading others on with no intention of a relationship, cruising without picking anyone up, exercising compulsively, reading self-help and inspirational books, flirting at 12-step meetings under the guise of fellowship—we could increase the list ad infinitum.

We do not like to diagnose any individual as a sex or porn addict, but you can quickly

diagnose yourself. Just visit the nearest beach, bar, mall or favorite Internet site (including dating sites and social media sites) and try some controlled sexual fantasizing. Try to fantasize and stop abruptly. Try it more than once. It will not take long for you to decide, if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a tremendous amount of pain if you get a full understanding of your condition.”

(Adapted from Chapter 3 of Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition / a.k.a. AA “Big Book”)