



Freedom in Christ

Dr. Grant Carey

WHAT WE'LL COVER...

- An Epic History of Masturbation/Porn Around the World
- Pornography & the Confessions
- Luther on Porn & Lust
- A Brief Word Study on *"Porneia"*
- Pornography: The Brain Science
- Bringing it all Together– The Myths of Porn & Helping Others Dealing with Porn

AN EPIC HISTORY OF MASTURBATION/PORN AROUND THE WORLD:

*A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF
CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES*



Based on Josh O'Conner's 2017 article in Dose.com

INTRODUCTION

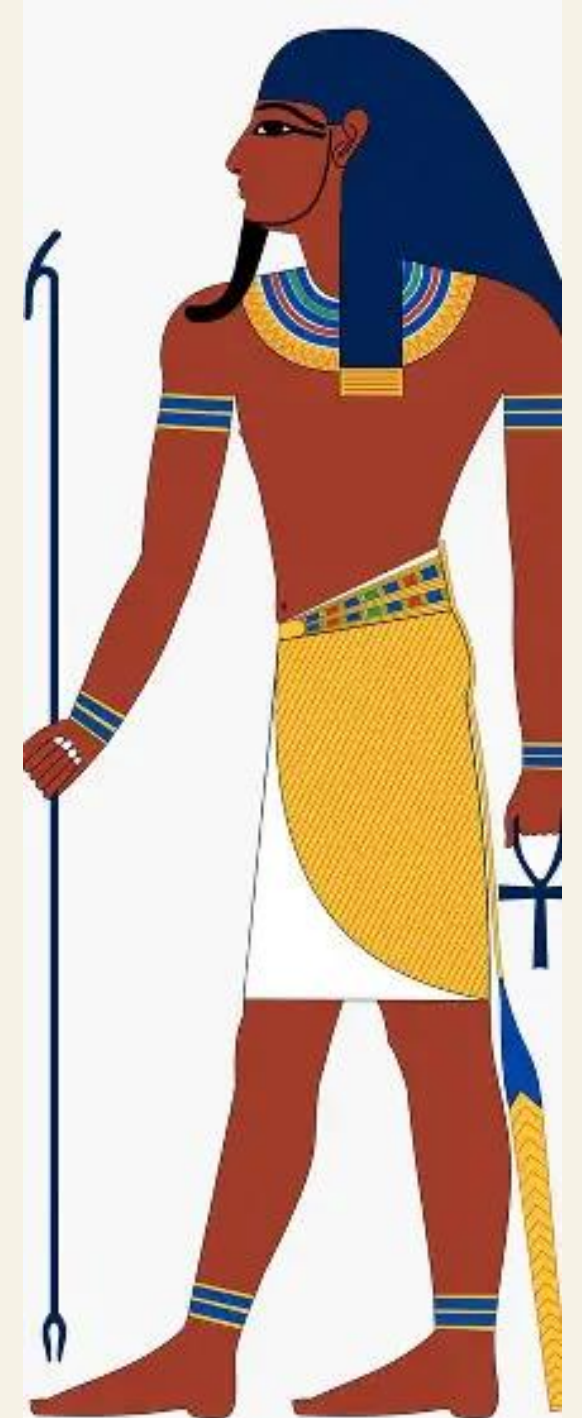
- Attitudes toward masturbation have changed dramatically throughout history.
- Different civilizations viewed it as:
 - *Sacred*
 - *Natural*
 - *Sinful*
 - *Medical*
 - *Spiritually significant*
- These beliefs were shaped by religion, philosophy, medicine, and culture.

ANCIENT EGYPT

- The god Atum was believed to create the world through masturbation.
- Annual rituals reenacted this act to ensure fertility and successful harvests.
- Some accounts describe Pharaohs performing fertility rituals involving the Nile River.
- Sexuality was often connected with divine power and creation.

Main Takeaway:

Masturbation was viewed as sacred and life-giving.



JUDAISM

- Genesis 38 tells the story of Onan.
- Traditionally interpreted as condemning masturbation.
- Many modern scholars argue the passage is actually about inheritance law and refusing family obligations.
- Views differed among Jewish communities

Main Takeaway:

Interpretation—not simply the text itself—shaped religious attitudes.



ANCIENT GREECE

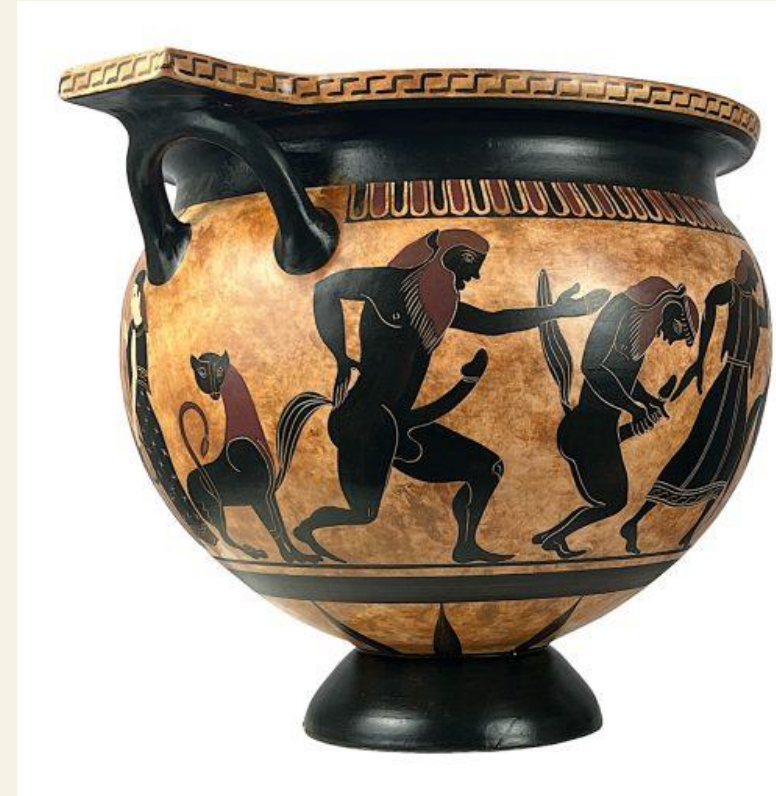
- Generally accepted as a normal outlet for sexual desire.
- Frequently appeared in:
 - Comedy, Vase paintings, Literature
- Philosopher **Diogenes** famously practiced it publicly to make a philosophical point.

Women's sexuality:

- Women were expected to be modest.
- Historical evidence suggests women also used sexual aids privately.

Main Takeaway:

Greek society generally normalized male masturbation.



ANCIENT ROME

- Roman literature references masturbation frequently.
- It was considered acceptable in the culture
- Poet Martial joked about it in several poems.
- Considered largely acceptable, though sometimes discussed humorously or morally.

Main Takeaway:

Romans generally inherited the relaxed Greek attitude.



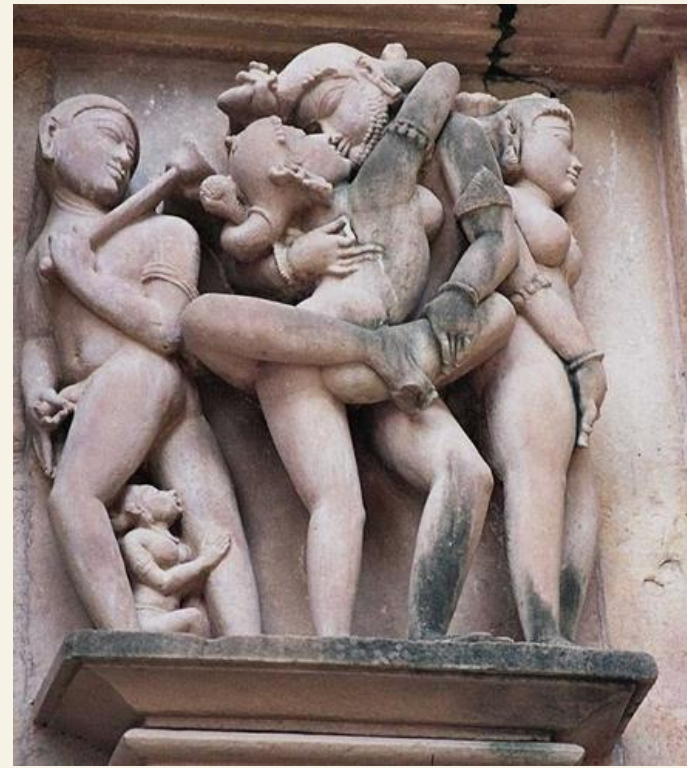
ANCIENT INDIA & TANTRA

Sexuality as Spiritual Practice

- Tantra embraced many forms of sexuality.
- The Kamasutra discussed numerous sexual practices.
- However:
 - Ejaculation was often viewed as a loss of spiritual energy.
 - Some traditions encouraged self-control.
- Later Hindu traditions sometimes required prayers or rituals after sexual emissions.

Main Takeaway:

Sexuality was accepted, but ejaculation carried spiritual significance.



CHINA & EAST ASIA

Taoist Perspectives

- Taoism adopted many Tantric ideas.
- Sexual activity was generally accepted.
- Loss of semen was viewed as loss of vital life force.
- This encouraged restraint rather than frequent ejaculation.

Japan:

- Erotic art openly depicted many sexual practices.
- Later became known for innovation in sexual products.



EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Changing Moral Priorities

- Early Church focused primarily on:
 - Fornication
 - Adultery
- Masturbation initially received less attention.
- By the 1700s, religious writings increasingly condemned it.
- Puritan influence helped popularize the belief that it was a serious moral offense.



VICTORIAN ERA

Fear and Medical Myths

Victorian society associated masturbation with:

- Physical illness, Mental illness, Moral decline

Attempts to prevent masturbation included:

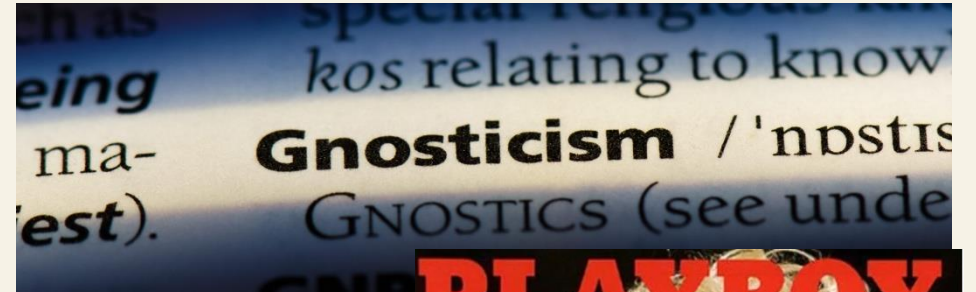
- Chastity devices, Spiked rings, Strict moral education

Main Takeaway:

Medical misconceptions reinforced moral fears.



MODERN SCIENCE



A Shift in Understanding

Research during the 20th century changed attitudes.

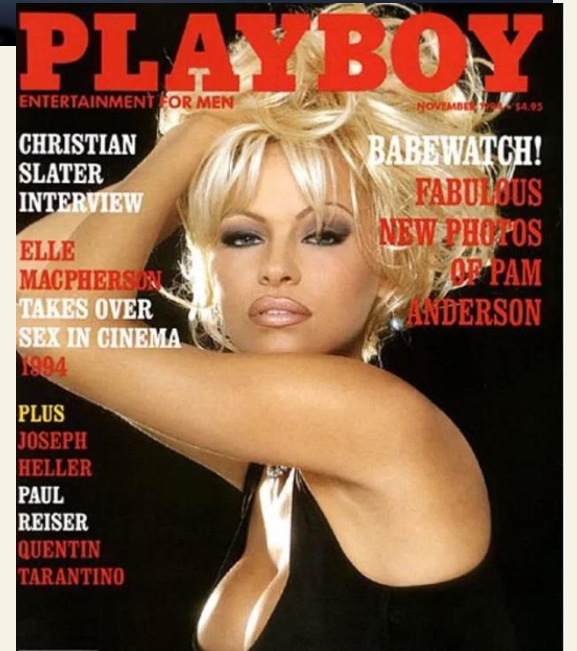
Alfred Kinsey

- Documented masturbation as common human behavior.

Later research found:

- Masturbation is generally a normal part of human sexuality.
- Some studies suggest possible health benefits for both men and women.

Modern medicine generally rejects earlier myths about physical or mental harm.



TODAY AROUND THE WORLD

Religious opinions still vary.

Often Accepted:

- Reform Judaism, Reconstructionist Judaism, Many secular societies

Still Discouraged or Debated:

- Orthodox Judaism, Hasidic Judaism, Some Islamic traditions, Certain conservative Christian denominations, Some yogic traditions

Views continue to depend on religious interpretation and cultural values.

HISTORICAL COMPARISON:

ERA:

Ancient Egypt

Ancient Greece

Ancient Rome

Ancient India

Ancient China

Early Christianity

Victorian England

Modern Era

VIEW:

Sacred act

Natural behavior

Generally accepted

Spiritually significant

Vital energy should be preserved

Increasing concern

Strong condemnation

Generally considered normal by “science”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think different cultures viewed sexuality so differently?
2. How did religion shape attitudes toward sexual behavior?
3. How did advances in medicine/science change public opinion?

PORNOGRAPHY/LUST & THE CONFESSIONS (AND LUTHER)



PRE-REFORMATION

- The clergy of the Middle Ages were obsessed with chastity and sexual purity.
- Augustine portrayed sexual intercourse in Paradise as occurring without lust and emotion.
- A vernacular catechism from 1494 elaborates the third deadly sin (impurity) under the title, "How the Laity Sin in the Marital Duty"

According to the 1494 catechism, the laity sin sexually in marriage by, among other things, having sex for the sheer joy of it rather than for the reasons God has commanded, namely, to escape the sin of concupiscence and to populate the earth.”

The conception of having sex outside the necessity of procreation was inconceivable to the believers of that time.

Porn at that time = Unthinkable as an option

LUTHER & SEX

Three models of Sexuality:

- 1) **Reproduction** or procreation was the primary goal of sex. RC Church affirmed this view
- 2) The **Pollution** model of sexuality focused on the impurity and pollution caused by sex. Unlike procreationists, it advocated strong limitations on the marital relations by restricting time, seasons, places and circumstances in which sex is allowed.
- 3) Marital sex as a source of **Intimacy and Affection** and a symbol and source of conjugal love. Subscribers to this school of thought regarded sexual pleasure more positively than the other two.

A CONFSSIONAL LUTHERAN PERSPECTIVE

What does the *Book of Concord* teach about pornography?

Answer: NOTHING

- The *Book of Concord* never mentions pornography directly.
- It was compiled in 1580, long before modern forms of pornography existed.
- However, provides biblical principles that confessional Lutherans apply to the issue today.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

"You Shall Not Commit Adultery"

Martin Luther's Large Catechism teaches that Christians should:

- Live sexually pure and honorable lives.
- Avoid unchaste thoughts and actions.
- Honor God's gift of marriage.
- Help others remain faithful and pure.

Application Today

- Pornography intentionally encourages lust outside of marriage.
- Therefore, it conflicts with the purpose of the Sixth Commandment.

LARGE CATECHISM- 6TH COMMANDMENT

212 “For where nature has its course, as it is implanted by God, it is not possible to remain chaste without marriage. For flesh and blood remain flesh and blood, and the natural inclination and excitement have their course without let or hindrance, as everybody sees and feels. In order, therefore, that it may be the more easy in some degree to avoid in chastity, God has commanded the estate of matrimony, that every one may have his proper portion and be satisfied therewith; although God’s grace besides is required in order that the heart also may be pure.”

LARGE CATECHISM 213-214

213 From this you see how this popish rabble, priests, monks, and nuns, resist God's order and commandment, inasmuch as they despise and forbid matrimony, and presume and vow to maintain perpetual chastity, and, besides, deceive the simple-minded with lying words and appearances [impostures].

214 For no one has so little love and inclination to chastity as just those who because of great sanctity avoid marriage, and either indulge in open and shameless prostitution, or secretly do even worse, so that one dare not speak of it, as has, alas! been learned too fully.

LARGE CATECHISM

215 And, in short, even though they abstain from the act, their hearts are so full of unchaste thoughts and evil lusts that there is a continual burning and secret suffering, which can be avoided in the married life.

SIN BEGINS IN THE HEART

More Than Outward Actions

The *Confessions* teach:

- *Sin affects both actions and desires.*
- *Original sin corrupts the human heart.*
- *Christians struggle with sinful desires throughout life.*

GOD'S GIFT OF MARRIAGE

Marriage as God's Design

According to Luther:

- *Marriage is God's created order.*
- *Sexual intimacy belongs within marriage.*
- *Marriage protects against sexual immorality.*

AVOIDING TEMPTATION

Wisdom for Christian Living

Luther regularly encourages Christians to:

- *Avoid situations that invite temptation.*
- *Practice self-control.*
- *Seek lives of holiness.*

Application: Viewing pornography deliberately places oneself in temptation rather than fleeing from it.

CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN APPLICATION

Most confessional Lutheran churches conclude that pornography is sinful because it:

- *Violates the Sixth Commandment.*
- *Encourages lust.*
- *Objectifies people made in God's image.*
- *Damages marriages and relationships.*
- *Distorts God's gift of sexuality.*

"I refused to pick the low-hanging 'Moral Outrage Fruit' of Liberals and Conservatives about porn. Now, there are issues of justice and exploitation within the porn industry, no question, but it doesn't mean consumption of pornography should be shamed. **There is ethically sourced porn.**"



Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber,
ELCA pastor

THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

The Law

- Reveals our sin and calls us to repentance.

The Gospel

- Proclaims complete forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
- Gives comfort to repentant sinners.
- Empowers believers to grow in holiness through the Holy Spirit.

BIBLICAL WORD STUDY

“PORNEIA”



porneía

A selling off (surrendering) of sexual purity;
promiscuity of any (every) type. A false substitute.

**Occurs 55 times in the NT Greek (in various forms)*





πορνεία

porneia: immorality, fornication, fornications

Original Word: Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: porneia

Pronunciation: por-NAY-ah

NASB: immorality, fornication, fornications, immoralities, sexual immorality, unchastity

Word Origin: [from G4203 (πορνεύω - committed immorality)]

- 1. prostitution (including adultery, incest, and porn)*
- 2. (by extension) unwedded stimulation or fulfillment of sexual desire*
- 3. (figuratively) idolatry*

“Porneia” isn't always about literal sex.

In John's Revelation, porneia frequently becomes a metaphor for idolatry and covenant unfaithfulness.

FLEE!

1 Corinthians 6:18 Paul says: “Flee from sexual immorality.”

Paul doesn't merely say: “Don't commit sexual immorality. “Flee sexual immorality. ”The verb is φεύγω (pheugō) — flee/run away.

Paul doesn't suggest we: negotiate with it, see how close you can get, manage it, rationalize it, determine whether it is technically sinful,
He says: Run!

PORNEIA AND SANCTIFICATION

Paul writes: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality.” (1 Thess 4) The important word is ἁγιασμός (hagiasmos) — sanctification/holiness.

Paul isn't treating sexual ethics as an isolated issue. The larger argument is: God has called you to holiness. Then sexual behavior becomes one of the concrete places where that holiness is lived out.

PORNEIA COMES FROM THE HEART

Jesus' teaching in Matthew 15 and Mark 7 is important.

Jesus lists: “evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, porneia, thefts, false testimony, blasphemies.”

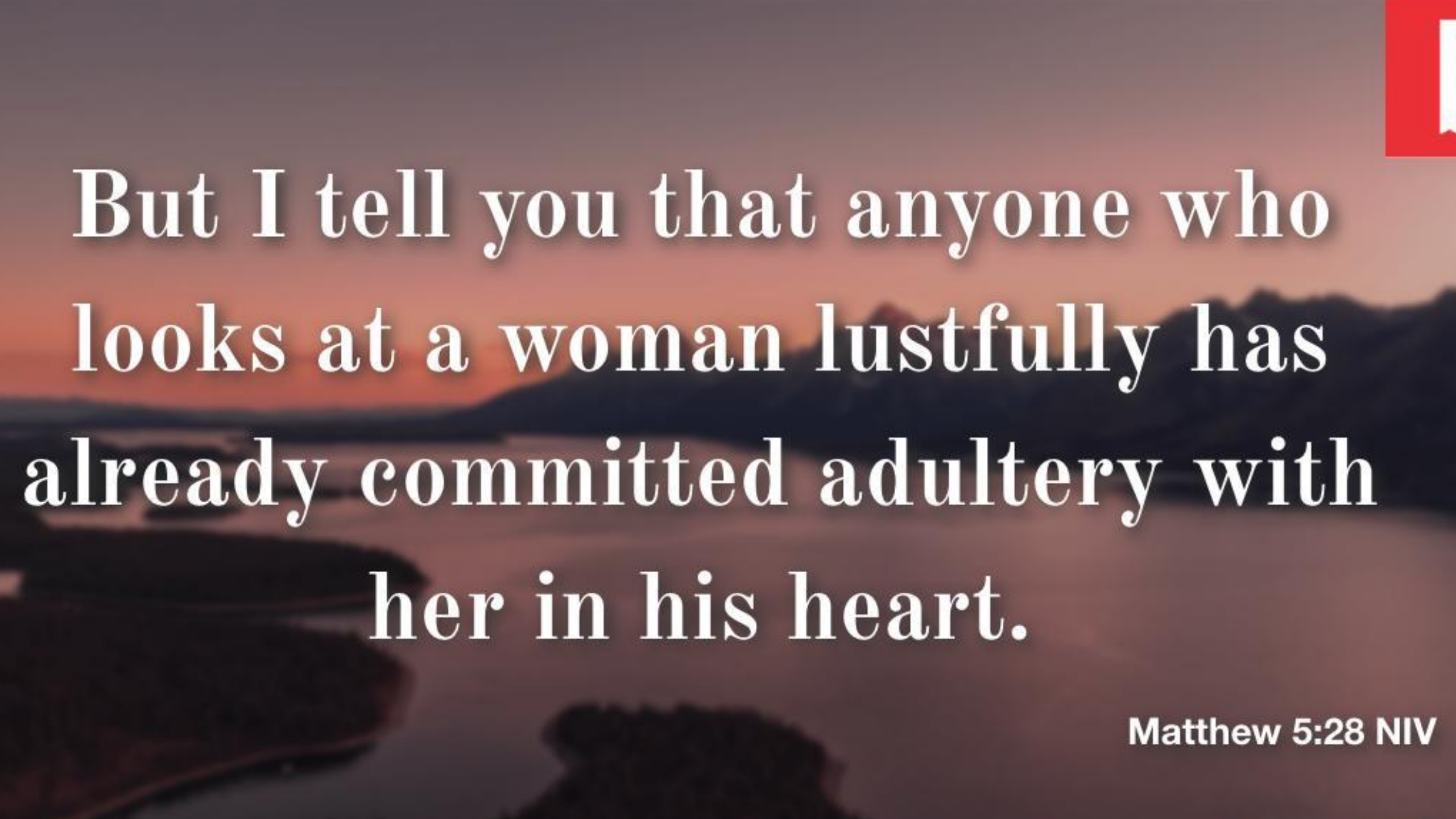
Sexual sin isn't merely an external behavioral problem. It comes from within the human heart.

Pastoral care moves toward sin, desire, the heart, repentance, forgiveness, and transformation.

PORNEIA ≠ PORNOGRAPHY

We need to ask: what theological principles does the New Testament use to evaluate sexual desire, sexual behavior, the body, lust, marriage, and exploitation?

Good passages to study: Matthew 5:27–30, 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8, 1 Corinthians 6:12–20, Ephesians 5:3–5; Colossians 3:5



But I tell you that anyone who
looks at a woman lustfully has
already committed adultery with
her in his heart.

Matthew 5:28 NIV

DISCUSS:

If married, has marriage made temptation easier or harder for you to be tempted?

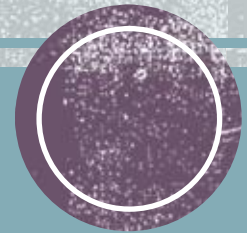
Is there any room for ethically sourced porn? Why or why not?

What do you think about how Paul connect sexual ethics with sanctification? (1 Thess 4:1-8) How can that be lived out well?

Porn to Love:

Talking About the Dirty Little Secret

Grant Carey



Awkward



5 Myths About Pornography



MYTH #1

Porn is common, and normal.



Top 20 Countries by Traffic



Who's Consuming Porn?

	Weekly	Monthly	Country
All Men	46%	92%	U.S.
All Women	16%	60%	U.S.

Journal of Sex Research, 2026



Rank	Statement	Is Morally Wrong
#1	Stealing	88%
#2	Cheating	75%
#3	Lying	71%
#4	Not recycling	56%
#5	Not accepting others' points of view	55%
#6	Overeating	48%
#7	Overconsumption of electricity or water	38%
#8	Envy	32%
#9	Viewing pornography	32%
#10	Reading pornography (no pictures)	27%
#11	Watching sexually explicit scenes on TV	24%



-It's very Accessible

-It's Anonymous

-It's very Affordable

-It is very Addictive





APRIL 11, 2016

TIME

PORN

Why young
men who
grew up with
Internet porn
are becoming
advocates for
turning it off

By Belinda Luscombe

time.com

MYTH #2

Porn will satisfy you.



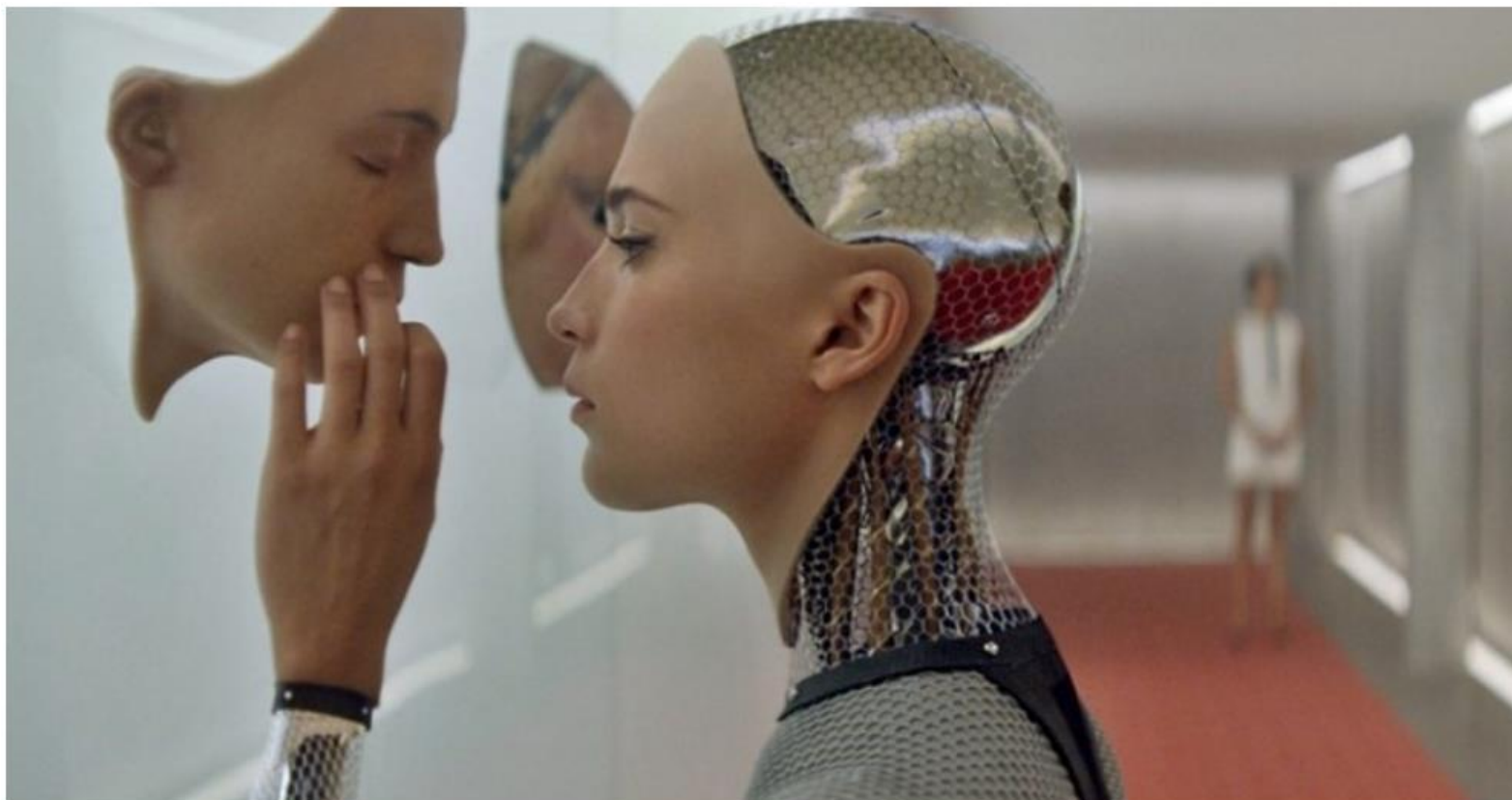
porneía

A selling off (surrendering) of sexual purity;
promiscuity of any (every) type. A false substitute.

**Occurs 55 times in the NT Greek (in various forms)*







Shock horror: experts say AI sex robots are a moral threat to society

Researchers want to ban sex robot companies from marketing them as replacements for real human relationships





**THE LEAST POPULAR
DAY OF THE YEAR FOR
VIEWING PORN IS**

**THE MOST POPULAR
DAY OF THE WEEK FOR
VIEWING PORN IS**



● **THE LEAST POPULAR
DAY OF THE YEAR FOR
VIEWING PORN IS
THANKSGIVING.**

**THE MOST POPULAR
DAY OF THE WEEK FOR
VIEWING PORN IS
SUNDAY.**

LOWEST



HIGHEST

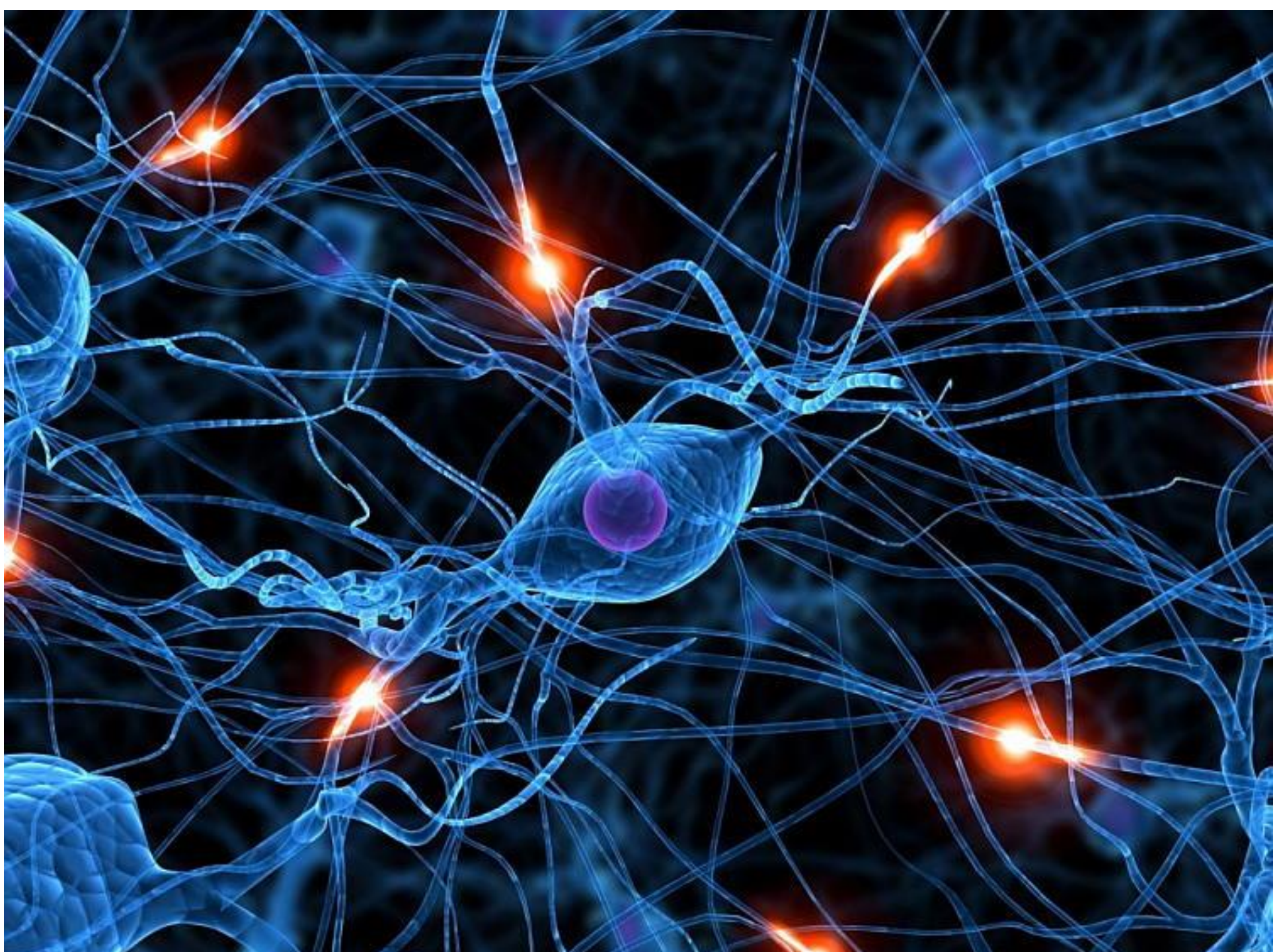


MYTH #3

Porn has no lasting impact.

And, you can stop anytime you want to because you are in control







JOE S. MCILHANEY, JR., MD AND FREDA MCKISSIC BUSH, MD

H O O K E D

NEW SCIENCE ON HOW CASUAL SEX IS
AFFECTING OUR CHILDREN



Dopamine

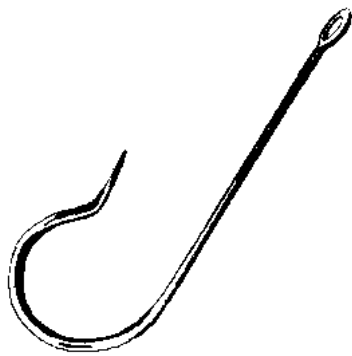
- Chemical that makes you feel good when you do something exciting or rewarding
- Can reward a healthy and life-enhancing excitement
- Can also reward exhilarating but unhealthy and destructive behavior:
 - Over the Counter Drugs
 - Non-Marital Sexual Involvement
 - Excessive Drinking
 - Dangerous Thrill-Seeking
 - Porn
- Dopamine makes us want MORE!



Sex is Dope...

“Sex is one of the strongest generators of the dopamine reward. For this reason, young people in particular are vulnerable to falling into a cycle of dopamine reward for unwise sexual behavior- they can get hooked on it...

...But the beneficial effect of dopamine for the married couple is that it “addicts” them to sex with each other.” (Hooked, 35)



Remind you of God's Design?



Oxytocin

- Primarily in Females
- The Female body uses it at 4 times:
 - Intimate touching with another (Bonding with another)
 - Intercourse (Bonding with another)
 - Labor (causes contractions)
 - Nipple stimulation after delivery (produces flow of milk)
- Bonding agent between female and partner and child





Do You Struggle with Porn??

- Do you follow certain Facebook reels, Instagram models or watch suggestive TikToks?
- Do you get turned on by romantic novels?
- Have you felt guilt or shame over porn and masturbating?
- Have you tried to stop and couldn't?



Stages of Pornography Addiction:

1. Viewing pornography
2. Addiction
3. Escalation



The Searches that Defined 2019



Stages of Pornography Addiction:

1. Viewing pornography
2. Addiction
3. Escalation
4. Desensitization
5. Act out sexually

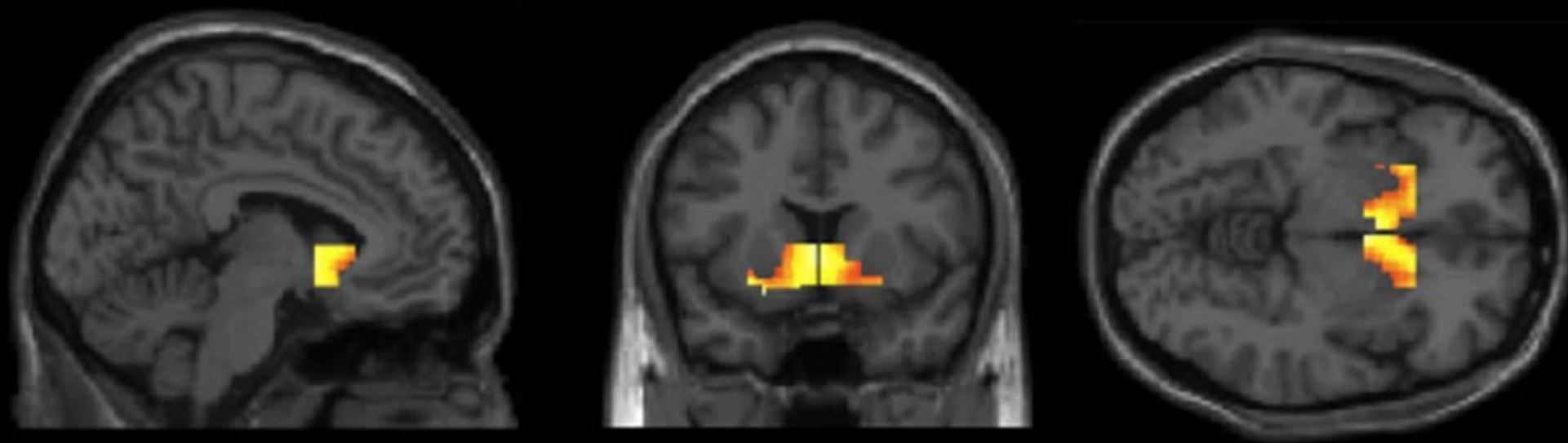




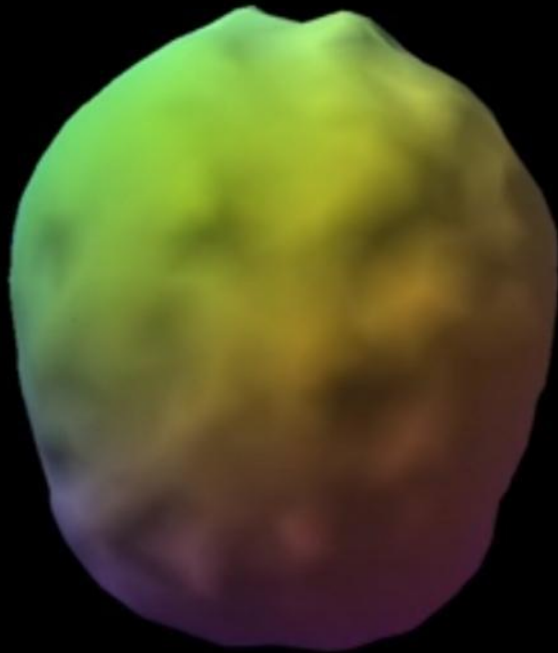
Healthy
volunteers



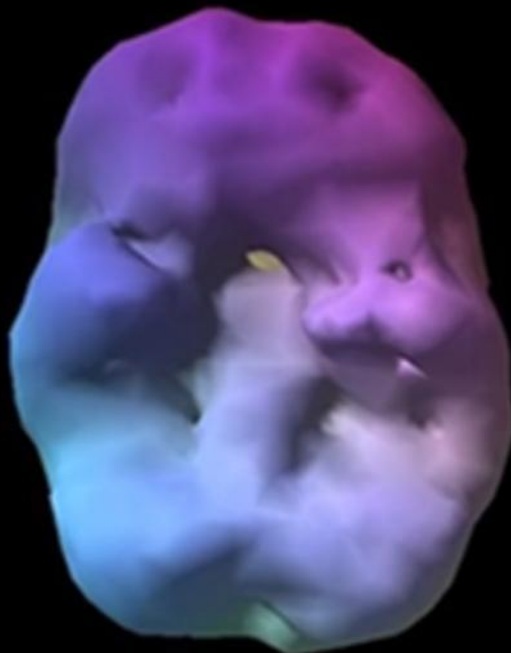
Compulsive
Pornography
Users



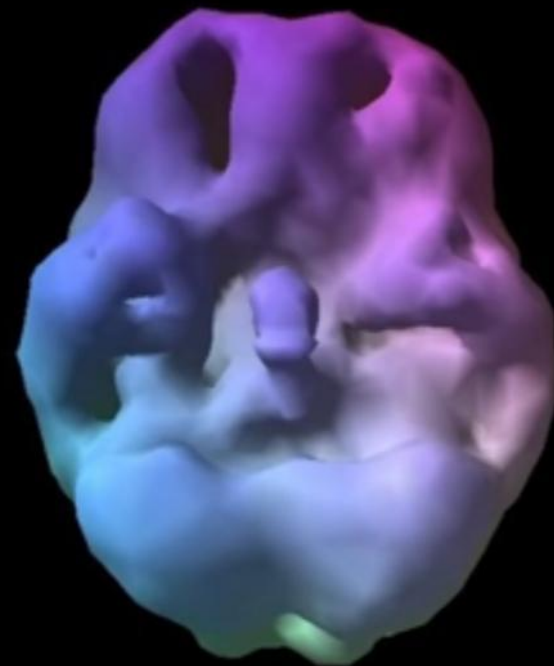
NORMAL BRAIN



COCAINE ADDICT



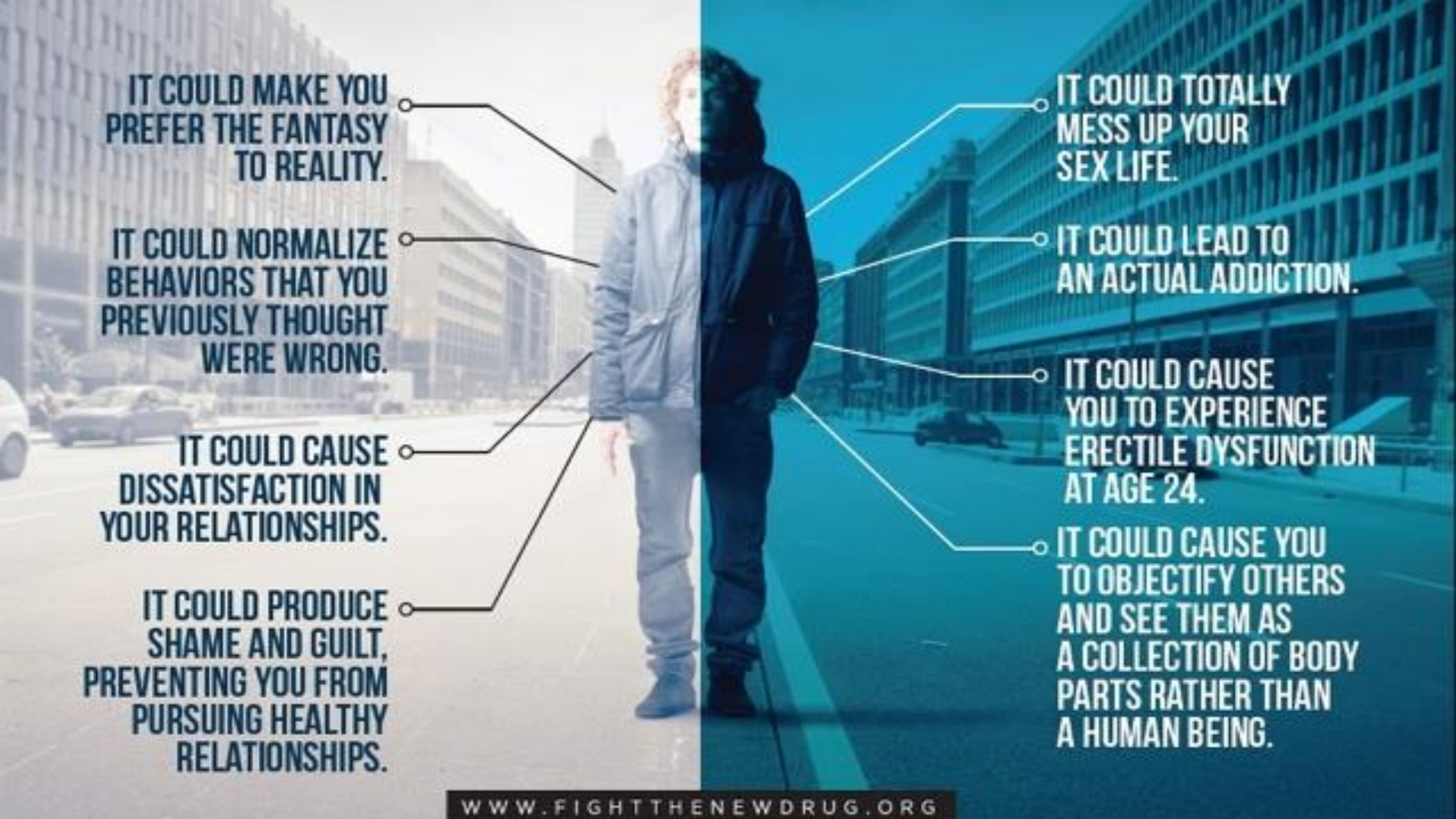
PORN ADDICT



MYTH #4

Porn isn't hurting anyone. It's an innocent way to relieve stress.
And you deserve that.





**IT COULD MAKE YOU
PREFER THE FANTASY
TO REALITY.**

**IT COULD NORMALIZE
BEHAVIORS THAT YOU
PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT
WERE WRONG.**

**IT COULD CAUSE
DISSATISFACTION IN
YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.**

**IT COULD PRODUCE
SHAME AND GUILT,
PREVENTING YOU FROM
PURSUING HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS.**

**IT COULD TOTALLY
MESS UP YOUR
SEX LIFE.**

**IT COULD LEAD TO
AN ACTUAL ADDICTION.**

**IT COULD CAUSE
YOU TO EXPERIENCE
ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION
AT AGE 24.**

**IT COULD CAUSE YOU
TO OBJECTIFY OTHERS
AND SEE THEM AS
A COLLECTION OF BODY
PARTS RATHER THAN
A HUMAN BEING.**



- Teenage pregnancy
- Pre-marital sex
- Rape
- Sex violence
- Sex trafficking

CASE STUDY:
**Porn Rate #1 in the
Philippines**

CASE STUDY:

Japan's Rising Singleness





CASE STUDY

**Ted Bundy,
serial killer**

LCMS Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne Student, [REDACTED], Arrested for Molestation of 2-Month-Old Girl; Investigations Continue in Indiana & Michigan; Was South Wisconsin District Vicar

Reportedly Has Had a **Pornography Addiction**, Including Child Sexual Abuse Material, Since He Was a Child; No Statements as of This Writing from CTSFW, LCMS, or Districts' Leadership

Recent Case Study

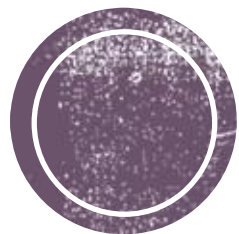
August 2026





**Can viewing porn
contribute to homosexuality?**

You may not become a serial killer but...



Porn can lead to:

Greater entitlement

Unrealistic fantasy

Decreased lack of relational health

MYTH #5

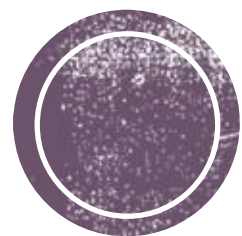
Doesn't God want you to be
happy and live your life?



Discuss:

- Which of these myths do you think is most common in our society? Among your members?
- Our brains are the most powerful sex organ. What do you think of the brain science behind pornography and how we have been wired by God?





Do you **WANT** to get well? *John 5*





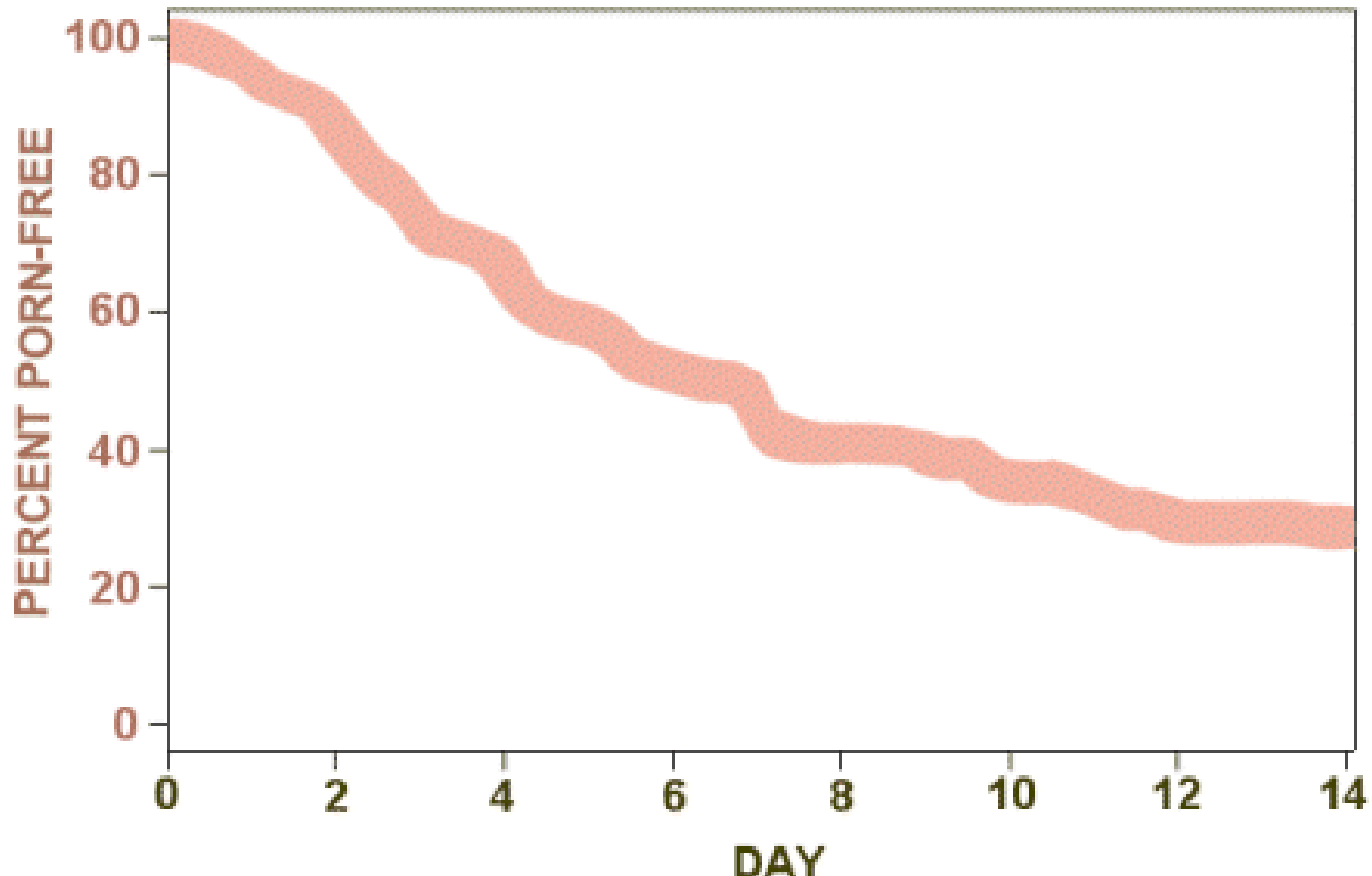
TOP 6

WAYS to help deal with
Porn Addiction





6) Flee! 1 Cor 6:18





**When Will I Be Fully
Healed From My
Addiction?**





The image shows three dark blue, textured suitcases standing upright. They have silver-colored zippers and handles. The suitcases are arranged in a slightly overlapping manner, with the one on the left being slightly behind the others. The background is a plain, light color.

5) Be Transparent Romans 3:23

4) Be Committed

Romans 12:2



“I have made a
covenant with
my eyes not to
look at a woman
lustfully...”

Job 31:1



Some Symptoms of Porn Withdrawal:

- Mood Swings
- Insomnia
- Social Anxiety
- Headaches
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Intrusive Thoughts
- Fatigue





3) Be Accountable James 5:16



xxxchurch.com

safeeyes.com

covenanteyes.com

freedombeginshere.org

fightthenewdrug.com

everaccountable.com

accountable2u.com

Celebrate Recovery

S.A. 12 Step Program

Revive40



xxxchurch.com

safeeyes.com

covenanteyes.com

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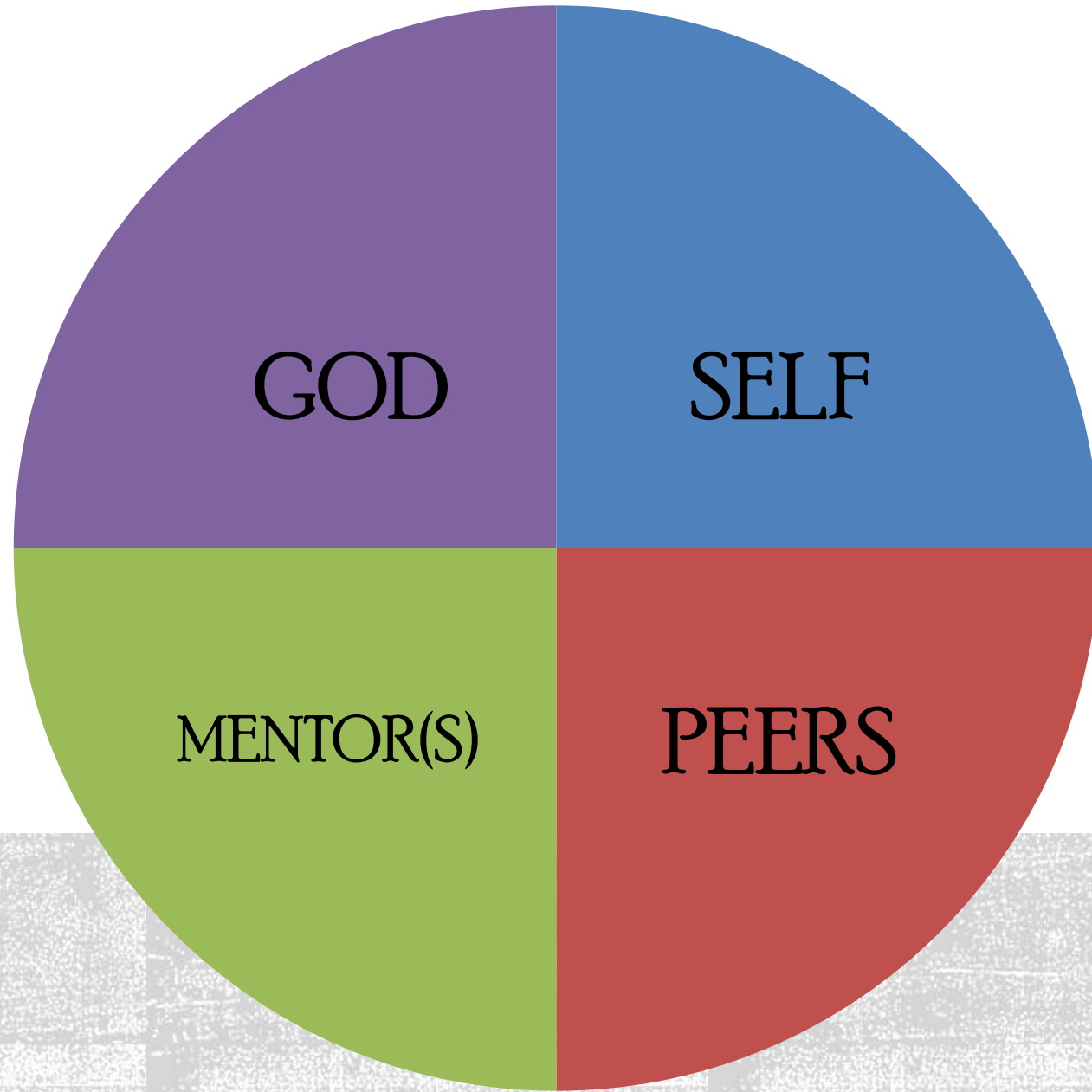
Celebrate Recovery

S.A. 12 Step Program

Revive 40

2) Pray Phil 4:6-7







1) Experience Grace Romans 5:8

Discuss:

What is your best advice/techniques for working with someone dealing with porn addiction?



What do you think our churches can be doing to better work with those dealing with this addiction?



Q & A Time

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