

3 Keys to a Wife's Response to Her Husband's Addiction to Pornography

My husband and I had been married only a few years when he came home from work one day to say he had been suspended for **online pornography**. I was then pregnant with our second child. It felt like an atomic bomb had fallen on me: All that I thought was safe and stable in my life imploded, and everything around me went into slow motion.

Eighty percent of Christian men admit to struggling with an **addiction** to **pornography**. I had been a fairly good girl my whole life. I never dreamed that my marriage would become part of a statistic like this. Honestly, in order to reflect reality, the statistic should be much higher. **Pornography** is the church's dirty little family secret that no one is allowed to talk about.

My husband was one of many men in today's society who was exposed to **pornography** by the age of 6. Initial exposure to pornography is often not by choice but rather in the form of **advertising** or through another person's influence. **Pornography** is presented to men or boys as **entertainment** and, like addiction to gaming systems, its imprisonment comes as a total surprise. Pornography's iron fist is stronger than self-will or any counseling tactic.

But in one moment, God changed our story. After 30 years of struggling, my husband experienced **freedom** and **innocence** again. And his freedom was my freedom.

As a wife, you are in a place of tremendous influence in the situation. You can build or crush his faith in God, the only hope of his rescue. Your husband watches your words, attitudes and responses, and though he may not admit it, they bear so

much weight in the end result.

Here are some things to remember as a wife:

1. It's nothing personal. Sure, it feels personal, but an addiction has nothing to do with you. He isn't rejecting you. He is entrapped in something bigger than himself. Remind yourself often: "I am not the victim here. He is."

2. Decide to be compassionate. Your husband is human and flawed like everyone else. I would often have to remind myself of who I knew my husband to really be: a man who loves God and sincerely wants to please Him. If you can offer compassion to a drug addict that desperately wants to be free, why can't you offer compassion to your own husband?

3. Be careful not to view him as "dirty." If he is dirty, then you are too. Guilt is guilt, and we are all guilty of sin. Shame is not a gift from God, but is rather a tactic of Satan to drive the imprisoned deeper into hiding with their chains. Protect and enforce a safe atmosphere, free from criticism and judgment, for him to come to God and receive freedom. You can do that with carefully spoken words that build up his faith and reinforce proper perspective: He loves God and needs Jesus just like we all do.

Lastly, pray a lot more and speak a lot less. The Bible says that Jesus can heal with just one word. Pray for your husband frequently, and pray for yourself to have a right heart toward him. One word from the mouth of God created the universe. One word can recreate your marriage too.

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