

This Is the Hardest Addiction to Break

Sex addiction can hook its victims in a much worse way than other vices, such as drugs or alcohol. *CBN News* spoke with one of the world's most renowned experts to find out why.

Dr. Doug Weiss was a main speaker at a marriage enrichment retreat recently in Rockaway, New Jersey.

"Sexual addiction is probably one of the hardest addictions to walk out of because it's part of who you are," Dr. Doug Weiss, head of the American Association for Sex Addiction, explained.

"Drugs aren't a part of who you are," he said. "Alcohol isn't a part of who you are. [It's] something that you do. Sexuality is part of who you are."

Weiss offered more insight on why this addiction is so hard to break.

"The Scripture says when we sin sexually, we sin against our own body. What happens is you get these endorphins, (it) hits the excitement center of your brain, then BOOM, you literally glue to whatever you're looking at," Weiss explained.

"Well, if that's an object, now you've created an appetite for an object, and that can create lust, sin and death in your life," he said. "That's James 1:15."

As Weiss pointed out, this is deadly serious as well as hard to beat.

"The actual sexual chemical is stronger than anything you can take," he said.

Once an Addict

Many addicts stay addicted because they believe there's no way they could ever break out of it. But Weiss explained that's far from true. He himself escaped the cycle.

"I was conceived in adultery. So you don't start off well there. And I was put in foster homes. I was sexually abused. I was an alcohol and drug addict, sex addict," he revealed.

But he didn't stay that way, and he tells others they don't have to either.

"They could get better. They could have a fantastic life. They could be free from pornography and sexual addiction—I've been free for 29 years," Weiss stated.

But he told those at a "men-only" session at the retreat that you can't do it alone.

"Anybody can be free if they're willing to do the work," Weiss assured. "But the first work is getting honest, and a lot of Christians—we're not confessing our faults one to another; we're not talking about what's going on."

"I was in Bible school and yet still fully sexually addicted. I tried, cried, fasted, prayed and memorized Scripture, but still I would fail again and again," Weiss writes in his book *Clean*.

He shared in the book how he'd confess his sexual sins to the Lord over and over but couldn't find healing. That is, he didn't find healing till he fully accepted these words in James 5:16: "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

How to Get Free

Weiss realized it's crucial to confess to at least one other human being and get them to pray for your healing.

"There's hope once we open the door of telling somebody, 'This

is what's going on with me,'" Weiss told *CBN News*. "And tens of thousands of guys have taken my word for that, and they have told somebody, and they start to get free."

Weiss began to confess to his seminary roommate every time he committed a sexual sin. It was embarrassing and humiliating, but he persisted. Very soon thereafter, he was healed and his sexual addiction went away.

But Weiss says you'll still face struggles, so he advises to take the next steps. For instance, stay in prayer and in the Bible.

"Be accountable," he added. "Get into support groups. We have support groups all over the country called Freedom Groups. And there are other kinds of support groups all across the country."

Other Tips on How to Get 'Clean'

In his book, Weiss writes, "To change a behavior you might want to change your conditioning from positive rewards for lust to setting up a negative reward for this behavior."

"If you look at something or do something inappropriate, have a consequence set up and enforce it," he wrote.

He offers the following list of suggestions:

- No media for one, two, or three weeks
- No cellphone for one, two or three days
- Walk to work
- Pick up trash for two to four hours
- Give money to a political or nonprofit organization you really disagree with
- Eat a raw onion
- Run two miles (if you're not in shape)

"Get a rubber band and place it around your wrist for at least

30 days," Weiss writes on page 91. "Every time you lust, objectify, double take, rubber neck or have a past image hit your brain, snap the rubber band."

"Men have told me over the years that this negative reinforcement has shut down as much as 80 percent of their lust life and reduced the power of their land mines within a month," he said. "Some men have found it helpful to quote a Scripture after they snap the rubber band."

Scriptures to Keep on Hand

Weiss offered the following examples of Bible verses that have been helpful in refocusing men's attention and healing their brains:

- "(Treat) older women as mothers and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity" (1 Tim. 5:2).
- "What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?" (Rom. 6:1).
- Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things" (Phil. 4:8).
- "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship" (Rom. 12:1).

"If you don't have an accountability partner, get one," Weiss writes. "The enemy of your soul looks for easy prey. The easiest prey for our enemy is a man who is not honest or accountable; in other words, he is alone" (pg. 93).

"'You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness,'" he said, quoting Psalm 45:7. "Jesus not only loved righteousness, he hated wickedness. I believe there is a place in our hearts in which we need not to coddle our lust and sexual sin—we must

hate it" (pg. 97).

"Unfortunately, your flesh doesn't change overnight. Be persistent," he adds on pg. 94.

Authority Over the Nations

Weiss tells groups everywhere he goes the rewards of freedom are awesome. He points to what the resurrected Jesus told a church afflicted with sexual sin in the book of Revelation.

"If you just die to that thing, kill that and just live for me and don't be duplicative sexually—be monogamous sexually—then I'll give you authority over the nations," Weiss said, paraphrasing Jesus.

He related how the path of his own life shows it.

"That's what we do: We help heal others from sex addiction all across the globe," he said. "I've set thousands of people free, seeing them get well."

Weiss also shared that freedom will make your marriage better and very likely bring you prosperity.

You Could Double Your Income

"Most of the guys I work with doubled their incomes within 12 months of being free," he stated.

How could the two possibly be linked in recovering addicts' lives?

"Their self-esteem goes up, their creativity goes up, their spiritual and moral and emotional maturity. Their marriage level of satisfaction is higher. So they're just much more productive beings," Weiss explained.

"And without the guilt and shame, without the thing that says, 'If you really knew me, you wouldn't love me,' eating at you every day," he added. "You are free to create, you are free to

prosper, you are free to connect, and the favor of God comes on your life.”

Weiss said to get there will take swallowing your pride and opening up.

“It’s going to hurt. But one bad day of being honest is better than decades of struggling,” he said.

Many addicts stay addicted for decades because they are so afraid of that one moment of telling the truth.

“Anybody can get free if they’ll get honest and they get accountable,” Weiss assured. “I started accountability with my roommate in seminary. And then you start getting free. And free is so much better than trapped.”