

Why You're Suffocating in This Noose of Bondage

It starts out so simple for someone who is hooked on pornography. They probably saw an air-brushed photo of a model online or in a magazine when they were children. Over the years they would spend more time looking at porn, and eventually they reached a point where it was consuming more of their time—and their lives.

Dr. Ted Roberts is the founder of Pure Desire Ministries, where he has counseled thousands of men to freedom from pornography. He is also the host of a powerful cinematic study called the Conquer Series. In the Conquer Series, Dr. Ted describes the continually tightening grip porn has on a man's life as a noose of bondage. He explains that there are four elements of the noose.

The Noose of Bondage

1. The Root of Bondage: These are the deep wounds in a man's life from early traumas that influenced his ideas and perceptions of himself in negative ways. They are the foundations that his porn usage will grow upon throughout his life as he tries to medicate these wounds.
2. The Mindset: Dr. Roberts explains that addictive behavior is driven by a sense of shame. "Some part, some past issue, is lodged in their soul where they don't feel that they really have it together. They're not good enough. That works on them and then it begins to develop a lifestyle. They begin to develop a mindset that there's something wrong with me. They begin to develop what's called a 'shame perspective'. Shame is different than guilt. Guilt is 'I did something wrong.' Shame is 'There's something wrong with me.'"

3. The Lifestyle: Dr. Roberts says that for a typical Christian man, "It's binge, purge. He acts out sexually and he has an altar call and he comes forward and he says, 'God, I'll never do it again, I promise' ... Guess what. Takes a while, and he'll act out again. It's binge, purge, binge, purge."
4. The Cloak: Because of the massive shame associated with pornography addiction, a man will do his best to cover up his usage. That sets up a strong denial structure. As a Christian, a man is even more concerned about his porn addiction being exposed because the church has so much shame associated with it.

'How Do I Get Free?'

There are three steps in the process of breaking free from porn addiction.

1. Break the denial structures.

Dr. Roberts explains that men addicted to porn engage in constant denial because of the shame involved. But breaking through the denials is vital to recovery.

"I've never counseled a guy in the last 20 years," said Dr. Roberts, "who doesn't love Christ with all of his heart, doesn't read the Bible on a daily basis, doesn't pray regularly and yet he can't stop his sexual behavior. He cannot. He's lost the ability to do it. It's starting to affect his brain. It started out as a moral decision, but now it's affecting his brain. And so he loses the capacity to do that."

"I've never had anyone walk into my office and say, 'Dr. Roberts, would you help me? I'm in sexual bondage.' They always walk in and say, 'My wife caught me, but I've never done it before.' ... I don't buy that. I buy that you've been doing this stuff since your early teenage years. You've been medicating your pain. You have to break the denial

structures.”

2. Understand the addictive (bondage) cycle.

Dr. Roberts says, “The problem is not primarily moral ... The primary problem with sexual bondage is it is a brain problem. It’s the way your brain works. And after a period of time, once you’re involved in a masturbation cycle or pornography cycle, it changes the literal structure of your brain. You lose the capacity to stop it. So ‘just stop it’ is not going to fix it. That’s why the church has not been able to really effectively solve the problem. We have to understand what the problem is so we can bring to bear supernatural resources to help guys get free.”

3. Access the deep wound.

According to Dr. Roberts, sexual bondage is not about sex. It’s about how someone has learned to medicate the pain in their life.

“I’ve lost count of the number of times I’ve had a man sitting in my office who’s struggled 10, 20, 30 years, and finally he begins to understand the answer to the problem is not trying harder.”

“The turning point for them always takes place when they understand the problem isn’t willpower. It’s a wounded heart. They’re carrying shame within their soul.”

The Recovery Ranch gives another example of the impact of trying to medicate a deep wound. “Dissociation in sex addiction frequently occurs when the problem is related to an early trauma ... Its core function is a way of ‘switching off’ something unpleasant, a way to get through the situation without dwelling on the details. This is effectively the same as not wanting to focus on the sensation of having a tooth pulled; it’s much better to try to ignore it as best you can.”

This doesn't mean that every man who struggles with porn has big trauma like sex abuse in his past. Sometimes the pain is gradual, like neglect or abandonment.

Helping a Loved One Break Free

Some of the best ways to help someone get free from the noose of bondage are to practice open communication, be supportive and encouraging about his progress and learn about addiction and the struggle he is facing.

The LifeStar Intensive Outpatient Program noted, "Addiction affects basic brain chemistry, hijacking normal functions and imprisoning the user in a cycle of shame they can't break. What began as a few poor decisions or minor mistakes has become a debilitating problem they can't solve on their own."

"The more you can learn about addiction—how your spouse has become trapped, how it alters their brain functions, and how they will need help to heal—the more peace you will find. By understanding their addiction has nothing to do with you, you'll begin to free yourself from the shackles of betrayal trauma, and reclaim your hope for the future.

"Recovery is an ongoing process, and rebuilding trust takes time. During this time, practice being present and not dwelling in the past. Instead, focus on what is happening now, and enjoy the time you're spending with your spouse, family and friends."

A Tool to Help You Get Free From Pornography

The Conquer Series is helping over one million men around the world overcome pornography through small groups or individual study.

Sean from Tennessee shares how he was able to break the noose of bondage in his life:

"I have been in church the last 12 years and have tried

everything I could think of to get a grip on my sexual addiction, but it just got worse and worse. Finally, God brought me to a place where I was introduced to the Conquer Series, and I have been 100% sober ever since!"

Learn more about breaking free at