

GATEWAY

TO WHOLENESS

WORKBOOK

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SESSION

1

INTRODUCTION AND INVITATION

EXERCISE I.I

Problems with Pornography? Take a Screening Measure

Check one of the following boxes for each item. Rankings for concern levels are as follows: **Not at all (1)**; **Slightly (2)**; **Somewhat (3)**; **Mostly (4)**; **Very (5)**.

In regard to my use of porn, I am concerned:

1	2	3	4	5	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I have tried to stop using porn but have been unable to do so.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I might use porn more often than others.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Others have told me that I have a problem with porn.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	My porn use is causing spiritual or religious struggles.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I am feeling guilty or shameful about my porn use.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Porn is making it difficult to live up to my values.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I am spending more time using porn than I originally wanted to.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I use porn more often when I am stressed or depressed.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I need to use porn for longer periods of time in order to feel the way I want.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	My porn use is causing work, family, or social problems.

EXERCISE 1.2

Personal Goals Regarding Your Porn Use and Gateway

Check the goals you would like to achieve.

With regard to my porn use and Gateway, I would like to achieve the following goals:

-
- Reduce the amount of time and energy I invest in viewing pornography

 - Learn more about the many issues associated with viewing pornography

 - Reduce my negative feelings about myself, such as shame or guilt

 - Increase my motivation to seek further treatment if needed

 - Develop a comprehensive plan for personal growth and wholeness

 - Reduce my feelings of loneliness and disconnectedness from others

 - Increase my sense of spiritual health and vitality

 - Increase my awareness of the consequences and costs of pornography

Other goals I would like to achieve:

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2

COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES

EXERCISE 2.1

👆 What are the Benefits of Porn Use for You?

Check all the reasons below that apply to you.

Why do I use porn?

-
- Because it's fun.

 - Pornography spices up my sex life.

 - Porn relieves my stress after a long day at work.

 - It's a way to pass the time and to overcome feelings of restlessness and boredom.

 - It's much more private than going to an adult video store.

 - When I'm watching pornography, I feel less lonely, if even for a few minutes.

 - Porn helps me release sexual tension.

 - I have the opportunity to imagine erotic activity that my romantic partner won't allow.

 - It makes me less nervous than engaging in real-life sexual encounters.

 - Porn allows me to meet other people with similar sexual fantasies.

 - Porn is a safe way that I can engage in sexual activity, while learning more about my own sexual preferences and identity.

Other benefits of porn use for you:

EXERCISE 2.2

What are the Costs and Consequences of Porn Use for You?

Reflect on the following questions about the cost and consequences porn use has for you.

1. In what ways has your porn use affected your overall lifestyle?

2. In what ways has your porn use affected you emotionally?

3. In what ways has your porn use affected you physically?

4. In what ways has your porn use affected you relationally?

How has your porn use hurt others in your life?

EXERCISE 2.2 CONTINUED

5. In what ways has your porn use affected you spiritually?

6. In what ways has your porn use affected you financially?

7. What are you afraid will happen if you don't make changes in your porn use? What is the **worst** thing that could happen?

8. What other costs, consequences, or concerns have you experienced or fear as a result of your porn use?

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BECOMING THE BEST VERSION OF YOURSELF

EXERCISE 4.1

Learning About Spoken Reflection as a Way to Become the Best Version of Yourself

What is a spoken reflection?

A spoken reflection is an affirming word or phrase that is spoken out loud repeatedly in order to focus the mind or redirect thoughts away from a difficult or tempting situation.

How do spoken reflections work?

The simple practice of spoken reflection helps shift the mind from your temptations and cravings to positive, uplifting phrases that help remind you of your inspired self. Because you can engage in spoken reflections privately without anyone else knowing what you are doing, you can practice this activity anywhere and at any time.

How do I try a spoken reflection?

The first step is to pick an affirming word or phrase that is significant to you (see [Exercise 4.2](#)). Once you have selected one or more reflective and affirming phrases, you can try to use them in a variety of situations. You might repeat the word or phrase to yourself in your everyday life, such as when you are waiting in line at the grocery store or a coffee shop, before mealtimes, while exercising, or at the moment you wake up each morning or as you are falling asleep at night. You can also use the phrase when you are upset, worried, sad, or tempted to make a choice that does not reflect your core values — anytime you feel a need to calm your mind and refocus your thoughts. As you do this, it will strengthen your connection to that inspired part of your spirit that has your ultimate best in mind.

What if my mind wanders in my spoken reflection?

Don't worry. That's perfectly normal. At first, as you engage in this activity, your mind may drift off to other thoughts. That's okay. Don't get down on yourself — just refocus your thoughts back to the affirming word or phrase you have chosen for your spoken reflection.

EXERCISE 4.2

Selecting an Affirming Word or Phrase for Your Spoken Reflection

Below is a list of words or phrases that people have found helpful in creating their spoken reflections. Try these words or phrases out to see how well they work for you as you practice your spoken reflection.

Review the list of words or phrases and place a check by the ones that appeal the most to you.

Peace

The Lord is my shepherd

Hope

Trust God

Love

Let it be

Freedom

Take a step back

I can choose my way into change

All is well

I am not a slave to my negative thoughts

Slow down

I am not defined by my struggle

This too shall pass

God is with me

Allow and trust

EXERCISE 4.3

🕒 **Five Meaningful Minutes: Reflecting on Your Inspired Self at the End of the Day**

Looking back over your day as it comes to an end, try to think about how well you were able to walk in step with your inspired self. To help you in this process, reflect on the following two questions. Feel free to write your reactions down.

1. What choices did I make today that were consistent with my inspired self?

2. What choices did I make today that were inconsistent with my inspired self?

3. What can I do tomorrow and in the days that follow that will help me move forward into a better version of myself?

EXERCISE 4.4

↩ Your Reactions to the “Focusing on the Inspired Life Exercise”

To help you make the most of this exercise, consider the following questions.

1. In your inspired life experience, what kinds of inspired memories came to mind?

2. What kinds of feelings did you have as you were recalling an inspired moment in your life? What was the overall experience like?

3. How did the feelings you had in recalling your inspired life experience differ from the feelings you have when you have expressed your impulsive self?

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GUILT AND SHAME

EXERCISE 5.1

Ways to Cultivate Self-Compassion

Think about ways you can show self-compassion.

List five ways you can show compassion toward yourself. Even if it's hard to imagine being compassionate toward yourself, write down some possibilities anyway.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Below are some other ways you might be able to show compassion to yourself.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Avoid putting yourself down. | <input type="radio"/> Invest in your personal care. |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Verbally encourage yourself in light of the changes you are trying to make. | <input type="radio"/> Get sufficient sleep. |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Prioritize your faith development and spiritual practices. | <input type="radio"/> Eat three healthy meals each day. |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Reduce extra sources of stress in your life | <input type="radio"/> Exercise or engage in a physical activity at least three times a week. |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Decline or step away from non-essential obligations. | <input type="radio"/> Tend to your personal appearance and hygiene. |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Ask others to help you complete tasks hard to manage. | <input type="radio"/> Socialize with supportive friends. |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Focus on one significant life choice at a time and accept that some of your goals can be postponed into the future. | <input type="radio"/> Avoid alcohol and recreational drug use to numb emotional pain. |

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ACCESSING SUPPORT

EXERCISE 6.1

Your Support Wish List

Think about what you would like from other people to help you with your porn-related problems and concerns. Reflect on your own support “wish list.” What specifically would you like from other people? What kinds of support would you most appreciate? On the other hand, what are the types of support that you don’t find helpful?

Everybody is different, and that is okay. Some people are looking for general information; others might appreciate specific guidance and advice; others desire emotional support and encouragement; and still others want someone to just sit and listen to them talk through their situation.

Jot down some of your thoughts below on the kinds of support you find most helpful and the kinds of support that you do not find helpful.

1. What kinds of support would you find most helpful?

2. What kinds of support would you not find helpful?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Information about online support groups, spiritual resources, and related readings and websites can be found under Resources at gatewaytowholeness.com

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RELAPSE: WHAT IF YOU STUMBLE?

EXERCISE 7.1

How to Challenge Your Negative Thoughts

In this exercise we would like you to think about some ways you could question and challenge a negative thought.

Consider the following thought many people have when they are in pain:

"I CAN'T BEAR HOW MUCH THIS HURTS."

Think about this statement for a minute. Now we want you to think about this statement from a different perspective. To help you take a new point of view on this statement, consider the following questions. Feel free to jot down your thoughts in response to these questions:

1. How might you look at your situation in a different way based on your past experiences?

2. How might you look at your situation from the perspective of a good friend?

3. How might you look at your situation from the perspective of your faith?

EXERCISE 7.1 CONTINUED

4. What is some evidence that this statement may not be completely true?

5. Think about times in the past when you have weathered a very difficult situation or emotion. Write down a few examples.

EXERCISE 7.2

Finding Coping Strategies That Work for You

Below think about the strategies that have helped you cope with your desire to use porn or other challenging problems. Consider the following questions and jot down some notes.

1. What tools have helped you cope in the past? Try to think of both behavior tools and reflection tools.

2. What tools might you like to try to help you cope in the future? Once again, try to think of both behavior tools and reflection tools.

EXERCISE 7.3

What to Do When You Feel Vulnerable: Building Barriers to Porn Use

Think about the barriers you can put in place in your life to make it more difficult for you to use porn. Try to recall those times when you feel especially vulnerable to using porn and not being the best version of yourself. What kinds of barriers could you create to make yourself less vulnerable to porn?

Jot down your ideas about these barriers below.

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FINAL WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

EXERCISE 8.1

✚ Reflection on Your Place in the Pornography Behavior Cycle

Think about the stages of the Pornography Behavior Cycle:

FEELING BAD,
WORTHLESS,
AND HOPELESS → ACTING-OUT → SHAME AND GUILT → ACCEPTANCE → RECOVERY

1. What stage of the cycle are you currently in?

2. In what ways do you feel you have made progress in breaking the cycle?

EXERCISE 8.4

! Reflection on Your Greatest Challenges in Applying the Skills from Gateway

Applying new skills can be a real challenge. Think about some of the factors in your life that make it particularly challenging for you to apply the skills you have learned for dealing with pornography.

Jot your thoughts down below.

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