

A former member of the group made the comment that he no longer considers himself an addict. Current members, feeling that we might have to struggle with this problem for the rest of our lives, asked him how he could make so bold a statement. Here is his reply:

Okay, so you want to know more about why I think I'm not an addict any more. To start, I went and looked up the word addict. It is someone who is "physiologically or psychologically dependent" on something. The key word is dependent. I am not dependent on porn any more. There was a time when I thought about it every day and looked at it every day (or almost). I would plan around it. I would not eat when I was deep in it. I would hurry through things just to get to more of it. When I was in college and then up till I got married, it was almost an everyday occurrence. In my working years, I have looked at it at work in my office and on lots of business trips I've gone on. This went on for about ten years. I was an addict for that whole time.

But, God is good and he helped me change my life. The recovery group at Bammel was key to that. Through the first years of being a member there, I was an addict, but in the last few years when I was helping facilitate I was able to control myself. It was during this time that I transitioned from being an addict to not being an addict any more.

It was not an overnight miracle, but I could feel the changes. I was able to go through days and not think about porn. I could spend time at home and porn wouldn't cross my mind. I definitely had a lot of "God moments" through that transition. Finally....well, finally isn't the right word. I have not achieved perfection on my journey to no more porn. I have looked at it, I can't forget about that. BUT, and this is a huge BUT....I am not dependent on it any more.

I can feel when the desire for porn starts to build. And I always know that it is the devil that is putting those thoughts in my head. That is the way of all sin. We can not live a perfect life. We can strive for perfection, but only Jesus has been able to do that. That is the sad part for addicts. The desire and the possible fall to sin is a life-long battle. It's obvious why...Because the devil hates us. He doesn't care that we have worked through our problems or have completed 12 steps....HE is addicted to wanting us to sin. Actually, we (yes all of us) are addicted to sin. Sin is something we don't want to do because we know it is wrong, but we do it anyway. Everyone from your grandma to the nicest elder at your church to your spouse. All of us are addicted to sin.

So, here is what I think about me (and I think this can apply to all of us). I am no longer an addict, but I am a sinner. I sin in various ways, I occasionally have anger when I shouldn't, I say bad things, I am jealous of people, I sometimes lie, I am a lukewarm Christian, I sometimes look at porn.

I can't say that any of those are worse than another. I don't think I am a bad person. I don't do these things in a dependent way. I don't plan my life around these things. I don't schedule time to do these things. I do however do these things sometimes...and I don't want to. Of all these kinds of sin, I think porn (and activities associated with looking at it) is the least frequent of them all.

The great thing about my life is that God has blessed me with a little extra strength to fight the desire for porn. I think it must be a gift. Don't think of it as some special Gift of the Holy Spirit gift. I think that God appreciates the effort I have put into fighting this particular sin and He has given me something to help fight it. Now that I think about it, I bet he would do something similar for anyone who fights so hard against a particular sin. I bet if you talked to someone in the drug and alcohol recovery group that has achieved years of sobriety, that they would say they feel that God has given them something extra to help with that particular sin. It may come from being so conscience about all the ways that the sin attacks us, but in some way it is a blessing from God.

Here is the good news: I am not an addict. The bad news: I still sin.

It's going to be the same for you. Get used to it. It is our life-long curse, thanks to Adam and Eve (well...and the devil). There is hope that you don't have to suffer from sexual addiction. Every day, whether you do well or slip, you will be getting closer to the day when you will no longer be an addict.

Use the tools that we have gathered for this recovery group. Read everything you can get your hands on to help yourself. Be real and share everything when you are at a group meeting. And pray a lot.

Jeff