

“I’ve become addicted to pornography. It’s ruining my life. What can I do to break the addiction?”

Pornography is a widespread and serious problem. It hurts your spirit and infects your mind with unclean thoughts. It damages your relationships. Looking at pornography causes you to lose the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Getting over the addiction is not easy, but it is simple—decide now to stop looking at or thinking about pornography. Speak immediately with your bishop or branch president. Don’t feel embarrassed to talk to him. He can help you repent so the Savior’s Atonement can cleanse your thoughts and spirit. “By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:43).

Do everything you can to avoid pornography in the future. That might mean getting rid of your cell phone and your Internet access, except in public places, with strong Internet filters installed.

Make prayer, scripture study, service, and other uplifting activities the focus of your life. The Lord taught, “Cease from . . . all your lustful desires” and “let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly” (D&C 88:121; 121:45). With sincere repentance and the help of the Savior and His chosen servants, you *can* overcome this addiction.

Read Scriptures



Pray for strength. Enos prayed for an entire day, supplicating the Lord for his sins to be forgiven, and through his faith, he felt great peace and the guilt disappeared. Read the scriptures to obtain the Holy Spirit, since when you have His companionship, you will not think or do impure things. Read Psalm 24:3–5 (about keeping oneself clean). Keep busy: do sports, go out and have clean fun, and don’t let yourself be influenced by supposed friends. When temptations come, be decisive and

reject them. Remember that Heavenly Father knows everything you think and do.

Ana G., age 17, Zulia, Venezuela

Never Give Up

Pornography ruined my life, but I have finally broken the addiction after much suffering. The repentance process will be long and hard, but pray sincerely every day for the Lord’s help during this trial. Never think that you are unworthy to repent, as the Atonement is for everyone. Also remember that each time you are tempted, Satan is trying to bring you down into sin. But it will always be your choice to either give in or ignore the temptation. Never give up on yourself or the Lord, as He will give you no trial that you cannot bear (see 1 Nephi 3:7).

A young woman from Victoria, Australia

Talk to Your Bishop

Go talk to your bishop as soon as possible. It’s hard to take that first step, but you have to talk to him to repent. He won’t make fun of you or be disgusted with you. He cares about you and wants only what’s best for you. Jesus Christ suffered for your sins so you can feel free again from the crushing guilt and sadness you’ve been feeling for so long (see Alma 5:9). It’s not too late to change. You can feel true joy again. Ask God to give you the courage to repent.

Taylor P., age 18, North Carolina, USA

Sing a Hymn



Pornography is not of God. The repentance process is long and painful, but it is possible! You have to have the desire to change, to perceive the gravity of the sin, and above all to seek help from Heavenly Father. To avoid falling into temptation, I have a picture of Jesus Christ beside my computer. He is always there watching me! Whenever pornographic images or music comes into my mind, I sing a hymn and soon these evil things are forgotten.

Natália Q., age 18, São Paulo, Brazil

Pray

The power of prayer is indescribable; it gives us the strength to withstand adversity and come off conqueror (see D&C 10:5). If you seek Heavenly Father in prayer, He will give you the strength to free yourself from temptation. As you read the scriptures daily, you will be strengthened even more. If you trust in the Lord and not in your own strength, He will free you from the chains that bind you. It is through the Atonement that you can be healed.

Gian G., age 18, Rivera, Uruguay

Confess

I've had this problem. It still haunts me. First of all, stop looking at pornography. Go to Heavenly Father. I felt Him forgive me when I didn't think I could be forgiven. And then I thought I was fine. I didn't want anyone to know about it; I was so ashamed. But it's something you

need to tell your bishop. I tried not to. But over and over I heard the words, "If you have a problem with pornography, go to your bishop." One day, in my temple recommend interview, it just spilled out. And I felt so good afterwards. I was free. A burden was lifted. Afterwards, I told my parents. They were sad, but they accepted it. Don't be afraid to come out with it.

A young woman from Tennessee, USA

Tell Someone

I was trapped by pornography for a long time. It was only with my parents' support and my bishop's help that I finally broke free. Reduced Internet privileges or a few weeks of not taking the sacrament is a small price to pay for the joy of being clean. Professional counselors can also help and will not judge you. They are also a tool the Lord has given us.

A young man from California, USA



HOW TO GUARD AGAINST TEMPTATION

"Start by separating yourself from people, materials, and circumstances that

will harm you. . . .

"Acknowledge that people bound by the chains of true addictions often need more help than self-help, and that may include you. Seek that help and welcome it. Talk to your bishop. Follow his counsel. . . .

"Along with filters on computers and a lock on affections, remember that the only real control in life is self-control. Exercise more control over even the marginal moments that confront you. If a TV show is indecent, turn it off. . . .

"Cultivate and be where the Spirit of the Lord is. Make sure that includes your own home or apartment, dictating the kind of art, music, and literature you keep there."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Place No More for the Enemy of My Soul," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2010, 45–46.

NEXT QUESTION

"How do I 'stand in holy places' when there's so much unholiness around me, like at school?"

Submit your answer by September 15 at liahona.lds.org, by e-mail to liahona@ldschurch.org, or by mail to:

Liahona, Questions & Answers 9/12
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter: (1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.

