

Here Are 6 Reasons Why People Ultimately Quit Watching Porn

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There are many logical arguments, personal reasons, and researched-based facts that could motivate someone to stop consuming porn.

Any of these reasons to give it up might make sense, but in the end, what *actually* drives people to change their behavior and remove porn from their lives?

Sexologist and addiction treatment specialist Dr. Robert Weiss recently shared these common reasons his clients ultimately decide to quit.

1. Disconnection from intimate relationships.

Many porn consumers keep their habit a secret from their partner and report habitually lying or leading a double life to hide their behavior. This cycle of secrecy can make them withdraw emotionally from their significant other.

According to Dr. Weiss, “Lying and keeping secrets about sexual and romantic behaviors creates emotional and sometimes even physical disconnection in their relationship, and they don’t like the way that feels. Essentially, they’ve withdrawn from their partner, a person they genuinely love and care about, because of porn, and they feel terrible about it.”

Some even complain about losing sexual interest in their partner the more they consume novel, exaggerated pornographic fantasies.

2. Sexual dysfunction or lack of romance in their relationship.

Eventually, these feelings of disconnection can evolve into significant dysfunctions in a relationship.

Dr. Weiss finds that even couples who *openly* view porn on their own or together often report avoiding sexual intimacy with their partner, using porn as a primary sexual outlet rather than intimacy with each other, and that one or both partners are only able to reach climax by replaying porn scenes in their mind and seem distant or disconnected during sex.

“Both research and anecdotal evidence indicate that porn use can distract users from real-world romance and sex. Even worse, heavy porn use can lead to sexual dysfunction—or Porn-Induced Erectile Dysfunction—in otherwise healthy young men,” he said.

PIED is a motivating factor for many to stop consuming porn.

3. Their spouse is angry or hurt by their porn consumption.

When a couple has pre-established relationships boundaries or the non-consuming partner has objections to porn, continued porn consumption can be a form of betrayal.

Partners may feel uncomfortable with porn in general, the nature of the content, or the frequency of their partner’s porn consumption. They often compare themselves to what their partner is viewing, feel like they don’t measure up, or perceive that their partner has chosen porn over them.

Betrayal trauma in partners of those who consume porn is real, and seeing the pain porn use can inflict on a partner is often a significant motivating factor to stop.

4. Inner conflict with the attitudes and behaviors normalized in porn.

Some people feel profoundly conflicted by consuming porn fantasies that are against their core values or promote attitudes and behaviors that are harmful to society.

Mainstream porn is filled with themes like violence or degradation toward women,

violence as an indicator of power, male dominance, objectification, and emotional disconnection during sex.

These harmful attitudes—and many others normalized in porn—are often contrary to what a consumer views as acceptable, yet they may notice themselves becoming desensitized, numb, or aroused by things that once disturbed them. This inner conflict can motivate consumers to remove porn from their lives.

5. The development of a compulsive behavior or addiction.

Dr. Weiss observes that sex addiction/compulsivity—or Compulsive Sexual Behavior Disorder as coded in the ICD-11—is an increasingly common behavioral concern in today’s digital era.

For some, porn is a gateway that escalates to other sexually addictive/compulsive behaviors and reinforces the isolation and secrecy of these behaviors.

“We are seeing and documenting increasing numbers of men and women concerned with the ways their sexual fantasy life and behaviors (including but not exclusively using porn) are negatively affecting their day-to-day and overall functioning,” Dr. Weiss said.

Many report preoccupation or obsession with porn, loss of control over their sexual behavior, multiple failed attempts to cut back or quit, a lack of interest or experience with dating, intimacy, or romance, erectile dysfunction, inability to feel pleasure, trouble at school or work, an inability to form or maintain intimate relationships, social and emotional isolation, financial issues, depression, or anxiety.

“Sadly, those who identify as porn addicted/compulsive often report that heavy porn use during their teen and young adult years has escalated into a life filled with not much else,” said Dr. Weiss.

He continued by saying, “They report sitting home alone with porn—feeling lonely, disconnected, and ashamed of who they are and what they’re doing. They are often isolated from peers, avoiding age-appropriate social and dating activities. As a result, they feel stuck, depressed, and alone, often not piecing together their porn use with their related life problems.

6. A desire to end their contribution to sex trafficking.

For many people, a powerful motivating factor to quit consuming porn is learning about the corruption within the porn industry and the direct links porn has to sex trafficking.

Once individuals understand that not all of the porn they consume is consensual and children and adults are exploited in the industry every day, many no longer want to fuel the demand for sex trafficking and commit to stop.

Hope for recovery

Whatever the reason “why” someone ultimately chooses to walk away from porn, the end result has proven to be a happier, better connected, more fulfilling life.

Those ready to take on this journey don’t have to do it alone. Our friends with the Fortify community connect tens of thousands of users across the world who are using their platform to experience freedom from pornography.

Watching isn’t worth it, but quitting definitely is.