

LivingIntegrated®

FOUR TASKS FOR GETTING YOUR LIFE BACK

TASK TWO: TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT YOUR LIFE

You are here because you think you have a problem.
So it's important to figure out what kind of a problem you have.

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How big a problem is it?

The following exercise will help you do a healthy assessment of your challenge. _____

Set aside some time. Maybe two different time periods to work on this. So, work on it, and then put it away. Come back to it a day or at most two days later.

THIS IS IMPORTANT: Keep what you write down somewhere safe; it's for your eyes only, unless you decide you want to share it with some else, someone you know you can trust, someone who is safe to you.

PERSONAL INVENTORY QUESTIONS _____

1. You are here because you sense a problem with your behaviors. What exactly is bothering you?
Write it down.
2. If pornography is your problem, what kind of porn are you looking at?
3. Has your appetite for a specific kind of porn changed over time?
4. How would you describe the progression of what kinds of porn you find arousing? (Remember: this is really only for you to think about; no shame here, no judgment; but it is important to be honest with yourself)
5. How old were you when you first began looking at porn?
6. How long have you been consuming porn?
7. When do you think it became a habit?
8. If your primary sexual behavior(s) is something other than porn, what is it or what are they?
9. Does your behavior (porn use or other) leave you satisfied or unfulfilled?

10. Does your behavior connect you with others in a healthy way?
11. Is it personally fulfilling or do your sexual behaviors leave you feeling empty or disconnected or alone?
12. Do your sexual behaviors leave you feeling guilty or frustrated?
13. When during the day do you engage in sexual behavior? Do you have a daily pattern?
A weekly pattern?
14. How much time are you spending on thinking about sex, looking at porn or acting sexual?
Really think over your days and weeks.

DO A TIME LOG

Take an ordinary two-week period and keep a time log when you are engaged in sexual viewing, fantasizing, behaving. Your goal here is to create for yourself an honest appraisal of the time your problematic sexual behaviors are costing you.

Some people will binge on sexual activity and then go through a cold phase of shaking it off. So don't pick two weeks where you are in a purge mindset, avoiding sexual thinking and behaving at all costs. You want to pick two weeks that are representative of your normal sexual behaviors and preoccupation.

After you've made the time log, look at how much time sexual thinking and behaving is taking. How does that look to you? The key is for you to match where your time goes with what your values are.

SELF-EVALUATION

Now, thoughtfully look over both your answers to the **Personal Inventory Questions** and the results of your **Time Log**.

“ How does what you see here fit your idea of the life you want to live? ”

Remember, the goal of this task is to take an honest look at your life. It's important that you give some time and energy to thinking these things over. Don't react based on quick feelings of irritation, shame or what you think others would say.

What are your values of your life? How do you feel about where your time and energy are going?

SOME IMPORTANT DYNAMICS TO CONSIDER

Here are a few very important things to keep in mind. The longer most people go on consuming porn (and the same is true for other sexual behaviors, too) three things often occur:

1. Your appetite and drive for different and more extreme kinds of porn (and behaviors) will grow.
2. You will run a greater risk of your habit turning into a compulsive behavior that reinforces itself in your life-management skill set (this is the beginning of addiction).
3. You will find it increasingly difficult to connect or stay connected to another (real) person in a healthy, mutually attached relationship.

SUMMARY ACTION STEPS

- Watch the companion video for Task Two: <https://youtu.be/i7MhPIC7tS4>
- Do the Personal Questions Inventory
- Keep a two-week Time Log
- Review the Dynamics to Consider
- Reflect on how you feel about what you've learned—are you living in a way you respect, in a way that is congruous with how you want to see yourself?

Have a heart-to-heart conversation with yourself. Are you currently using your sexuality in ways that nurtures your soul? Does your use of your sexuality create for you a healthy connection with another person? Does your sexual life reflect your spiritual values?

If your answers are yes, then great! But if your answers are no, then what are you willing to do to bring your life in balance?

BIBLE TEXTS FOR THINKING ABOUT OUR SEXUAL HABITS

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

Psalm 139:23-24

“For those who live according to the flesh (*ego or false self*) set their minds on the things of the flesh (*ego or false self*), but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh (*ego or false self*) is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”

Romans 8:5-6

PRAYER

Prayer is a conversation with your Father in Heaven over matters that concern you and him.

*God my Father, I offer my life to you for you to do with as you will.
Cleanse my mind and my heart that I may fulfill the purposes you have for me.
Amen.*

