

7 Steps To Take After A Relapse

You just relapsed with porn or masturbation. What should you do now?

If you're trying to break free from your addiction to porn or masturbation, relapsing can be one of the most crippling things that can happen to you in your journey. And oftentimes, if you have multiple relapses over a short period of time, it can be enough to make you want to give up. But a mindset like this - this kind of limiting belief - will keep you shackled to this unwanted behavior forever.

So here are 7 things you need to do immediately after a relapse.

1. FORGIVE YOURSELF

Shame is just a really bad strategy when you're trying to find freedom from addiction.

If you're trying to get free, no doubt you've been trying for years. And you probably have a subtle belief that you cannot and will not break free from this addictive, unwanted behavior.

So if you do have a relapse, realize you can't change the past so you need to have some grace for yourself. This can be an opportunity; it can be a chance to learn more about yourself and about what it's going to take to finally be free.

2. OWN WHAT HAPPENED

Even if you've only been free from porn for a week at this point, there have been things that you were doing in that week that, at this point in time, you stopped doing.

Find that moment in time when things began to spiral out of control. When you do, you'll be able to identify the patterns that led you back to relapsing. You've got to get clear on what the device, the environment, and the triggers were.

Identify exactly what happened, and own your choices all the way through.

3. INVESTIGATE YOUR TEMPTATIONS

You need to start getting curious about your cravings. Instead of piling on the shame (which isn't helpful), observe what it was that made you feel a certain way, what it made you feel, and why your first thought was to turn to porn instead of taking that feeling to God and to other people.

When you start to observe your temptations more like a scientist and less like a defense lawyer, they'll start to reveal the pathway back to the pain or brokenness or isolation in your heart that you've been trying to shelter this whole time. Your hurt can lead you to your healing.

4. IDENTIFY THE RIGHT CHOICE

At that moment you decided to relapse, you were at a fork in the road. There was a decision you made to do one thing and not do another thing.

At that fork in the road, there's a choice that you made that led to a series of events where you eventually relapsed.

Identify what that was vs. what would have been the right choice. What would have been the choices, decisions, and actions that you should have taken that would have kept you moving forward towards your life of freedom?

5. CREATE A PREVENTION PLAN

At this point, you need to plan how you will prevent this from happening again.

Like I said at the beginning, when you give yourself some grace and forgiveness, you have to look at this as a moment of learning and growth. Here is the opportunity to do that.

- When presented with a similar situation in the future, what better choices and decisions will you make in the future that will prevent a relapse?
- What do you need to get rid of?
- What changes does your environment need?

6. ACTIVATE YOUR PLAN

So you made a plan. Good job. But here's the truth: if no one knows about steps 1-4, they don't have to know about your prevention plan either. You can write the world's greatest plan **and still relapse** because you have no one to hold you to it or walk with you on the journey.

Writing a plan is one thing; accomplishing your plan is a different thing. And your plan won't be activated until you share it with an ally, an accountability partner, or a trusted friend - someone who won't shame you for being honest, but also won't let you get away with excuses.

7. GO GET A WIN

Here's the final step to bring this all home: go get a win. You need to do something today that moves you closer to the man that you want to become tomorrow.

Got an incomplete task? Finish it. Working toward a goal? Accomplish the next step toward it. Complete the loop.

- Do a workout.
- Wash the dishes.
- Clean your room.
- Etc.

Do something that is task-oriented, that has a loop completion cycle. And then, at the end of that task, recognize yourself for doing the difficult things. Get the win. Enjoy the win.

Recap:

1. Forgive yourself.
2. Own what happened.
3. Investigate your temptations.
4. Identify the right choice.
5. Create a prevention plan.
6. Activate your plan.
7. Go get a win.

Understand that if you're early on in this journey, this may happen again. It's possible that you may have to go through these seven steps a few times. Hopefully, you only need to do it once.

But a relapse doesn't have to be a wasted moment; ***it can be a chance to level up.*** You've been presented with something that you're lacking, and you need to figure out what that is.

You've got this and I believe in you!



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