



Review The Gametape

Learning From Your Last 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.

The goal here is to learn from what happened, not to get defensive. If you want to learn from this moment so you can improve next time, you need to approach it more like a scientist or football coach than a defense lawyer. Don't give all the reasons why you couldn't help yourself; observe all the factors that were present to see what you can take ownership of. Learn what you can do differently next time.

More often than not, your history of relapses happen in the same way, at the same times, in the same places, on the same devices and apps. Before we offer excuses or reach for changes, let's just write out what factors were present.

WHAT? OWN YOUR ACTIONS.

Before changing anything, you need to start by owning the behavior. Find that moment in time when things began to spiral out of control. Identify exactly what happened, and own your choices all the way through.

What happened? And what actions did you take that led to relapse?

HOW? NAME THE DEVICE(S).

Now here is something that seems obvious, but often gets overlooked - your device. If you were watching porn, you were watching it on a device of some sort that was able to access porn. And a lot of people who are asked about their device get defensive. They think that their device - or the specific freedoms allowed on their device - are more necessary than they really are.

Ask yourself this: what matters more to you: unfiltered internet access or your freedom? What is truly more important?

Start to list all the devices that you have relapsed on before, what you still have access to, and what kinds of restrictions currently exist on those devices.

Now that you've made a list, write down what action steps are necessary to truly prevent you from accessing porn on these devices - even if it means getting rid of a certain device. Not sure? Ask an accountability partner to help you with this section.

WHERE AND WHEN? DESCRIBE THE ENVIRONMENT.

Once you've identified the devices that aided your relapse, begin to remember the environment you were in. Where did the relapse take place? Were you in the bathroom? The bedroom? At work? Somewhere else?

And when did it take place? Was it late at night? Was it early in the week? Was it right after a big fight? What was going on - or about to happen - in your situation?

More often than not, your history of relapses tend to happen in the same places, the same times, and in the same way. If you can identify where and when your recent relapses have happened, you will begin to see a pattern emerge. This is very valuable data.

WHY? UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FELT.

This might be a little more subjective, but your emotional experience is very much connected to your unwanted behavior. It's easy to minimize how you are feeling at times, but your temptations don't just pop up out of nowhere. Your triggers and urges are actually an emotional longing for some kind of connection, relationship, care, respect, safety, or love.

So you need to start getting curious about your cravings. 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 like this, they can 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.

YOUR OBSERVATIONS

Below, compile all the observations you listed above about your latest relapse(s). And the describe what actions you need to take to prevent a relapse like that from happening again. It could look like this:

Last week, I relapsed twice. Both times, I was scrolling on TikTok before I eventually chose to watch porn, using the _____ app on my iPhone. I really need to delete all my social media apps and install an internet filter on my iPhone. I am going to get Covenant Eyes and ask _____ and _____ to be my allies and receive my accountability reports.

I have noticed that 2 of the last 3 times I have relapsed it's been early in the week and once it was right before I went to the gym. All 3 times, I was feeling really stressed out about the hard things I needed to do, even though I was nervous that I wasn't going to do a good job. I really was craving some affirmation and a sense of connection. Next time, I'm feeling that way, I am going to pray for help and then reach out to my accountability partners to ask for their support.

You've got this and I believe in you!



Brant