

Braving the onslaught of Pornography

Interview with *Dr. Dominic Dixon*



Dr. Dominic F. Dixon (Psychologist) is the Provost at the Ethos Institute which researches Youth and sexual behaviour. He has presented research papers to the Prime Minister of India and to the President of India on Adolescent Psychology & Sociology and sexual behaviours.



In this eye-opening interview, he shares his wealth of knowledge in this area to help us understand the addictive dangers of pornography and the devastating effects it has on us as a nation.

Is pornography really addictive? Some people may think they just watch once in a while and it is harmless.

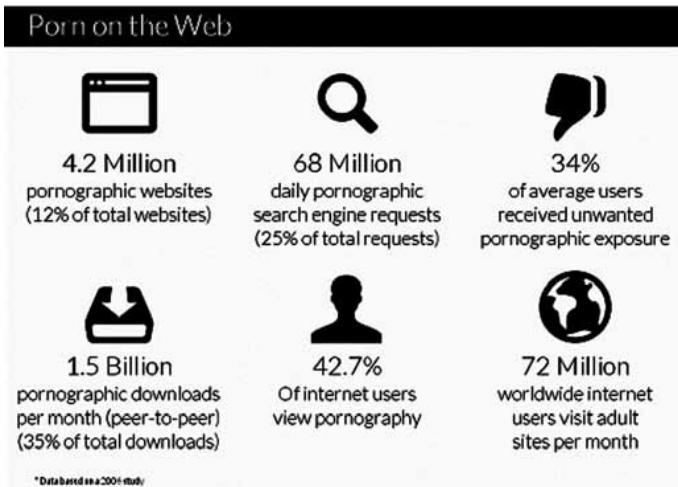
Addiction is the continued recurrence and duplication of a patterned behavior despite adverse consequences. In many cases, it is a neurological impairment that leads to such behaviors. Since we're dealing with the subject of pornography, a person may start off as a recreational user, then progress to a habitual user, then to a compulsive user and finally become addicted to it. A normal person who watches pornography over a consistent period of time will suffer neurological impairment because the brain wires itself to adapt to and conform to improper sexual understanding and notion.

To people who say that watching pornography is harmless, here is my answer. The brain is malleable and changes our thoughts and actions based on what we watch, hear and do. This is why advertising is so very successful by changing a person who hates a product to loving it.

Studies have indicated that exposure to pornography increases behavioral aggression. In acting out with a consenting or non consenting person, the aggression of the person acting out depends of the type of exposure to pornography, whether devious or violent, etc

After watching a porn film, a 22-year-old man lured a 5-year-old child with chocolates and brutally raped her. This alleged shocking confession of the Delhi rapist raises an uncomfortable question – Is easy accessibility to porn responsible for the rise in sexual crimes in India? NDTV. April, 24, 2013

Interview



How can one protect oneself and ones family against porn? What safeguards can parents set up to protect children from being exposed?

Like any other institution, the family will have to take measures to protect itself against the dangers of viewing pornography. Husbands and wives alike will need to be accountable to one another. If you find your spouse unusually taking their smart phone to the wash room and spending an unusual amount of time there, those could be signals. Another alert could be a spouse alone on the net while the other spouse is asleep.

When dealing with your children, educating them about the danger of porn will help them avoid it. Because if parents do not caution them, then world will lure and entertain them because pornography is a business.

It is very important to be vigilant with what's going on with your family members. It is when we are not watchful and disengaged with one another due to our busy schedules that these tendencies initiate and sprout.

If we know someone who may be addicted what should we do to support them (a family member or friend)?

The first way to support a person who is addicted with pornography is to not be judgemental. No abuse or addiction started overnight – it is always progressive. Many people have a single counselling session and think that it will end. No, that is wrong. Such people need to be journeyed with. And no one can ever overcome an addiction unless there is a firm will to overcome it, fighting all urges. The measures that such a person would need to take are to be accountable to themselves and to others. Disconnect the internet connection from your phone, home, etc. Get engaged with something else that occupies that time you spend with the addiction. Change your lifestyle and habits. Go to the gym or get involved in a hobby.

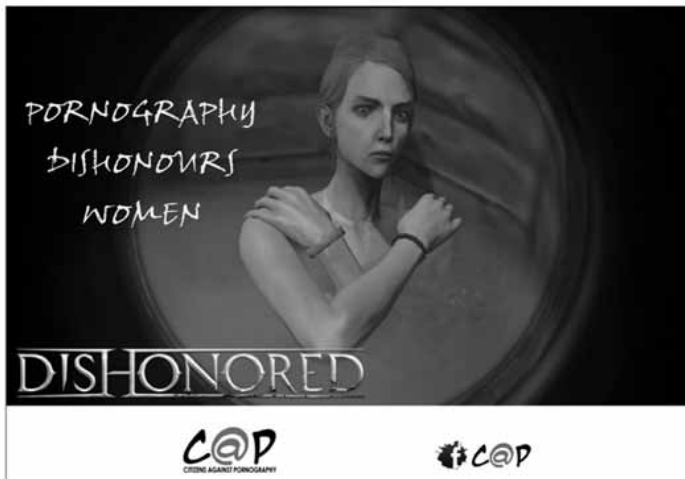
Addictions usually try to fill a void, a pain, a loss and unless that void is filled with something productive, something unproductive fill occupy it. Many victims, who filled their emotional void with positive things, are today's successful leaders. Many, who filled their emotional void with negative things, are today's criminals.

There are couples who say it's ok to watch porn together. It improves their sex life. What do you think about this?

That's the most vicious advice that anyone could give to a married couple. The fact that these couples are watching pornography and are stimulated by it is because they are fantasizing for the people on the screen rather than being stimulated by their spouses. Because the sexual act is not just physical, it comprises of the will and the emotion, couples will have to deal with those attributes too and not be virtually stimulated.

There have been couples who started off by watching pornography for sexual stimulation but later became addicted to it. Pornography will enslave the viewer to images that hijack their biological responses which are intended to bond couples. Over a period of time of watching pornography, that bond is loosened and lost.

Interview



We have counselled many men who struggle with penis erection dysfunction while engaging with their wives but are instantly aroused when watching pornography. This is because the brain is in tune with isolation and the marital bond has been severed. The man now has a relationship with a reel person rather than with a real person.

Many wives, whose husbands were frequent or addicted pornographic viewers, said that they were no longer sexually attracted to their spouses as the consumption of pornography by their husbands had impacted their sexual desires and their sexual relations had diminished. Most women have said that in the spousal sexual act, they were treated as a porn artist and as a sexual object rather than a real person in a real relationship.

What is the effect on a person if they have watched porn before marriage how does it affect their marriage?

If a person has watched pornography before marriage, then their perception of sex and sexuality would be skewed and they would have unreasonable expectations of sexuality. When there are unreasonable expectations, there are always frustrations. Marriages today are ending within a month due to unreasonable sexual expectations.

What would you suggest to schools and institutions to protect their young people?

There are many things that an educational institution can do to curb and prevent addiction. First of all, there needs to be a proper understanding of sex and sexuality and not according to liberalistic ideologies. When we understand our sexuality, then we would understand the integrity of it. In India, our institutions are more academic based and very little value based as they expect values to be taught at home. But that is ironic, because the best part of a student's life is spent on campus.

Institutions need to constantly have seminars on this topic, trained counsellors to deal with such issues. There would need to be poster campaigns, support groups, etc. Concerted efforts need to be implemented and not superficial ones.

What policy changes are you expecting from the govt to counter the onslaught of pornography?

Since democracies refuse to ban a viewer from watching pornography in the privacy of their homes, statutory warnings should be issued of the devastating use of pornography like how it is used for alcohol and tobacco. If the government is really serious about this issue, they will take strict measures to raid and arrest the sellers of DVD's that are so freely available. My only appeal to the government is to have statutory warnings. [fm](#)



Dr. Dominic F. Dixon is a Psychologist and Author, having extensively researched in Psychology of Emotions, earned his doctorate in Counselling Psychology, and furthered research studies in Philosophy of Ethics at the University of Oxford | Religion at the University of Harvard, US | Bio-ethics at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University, US | Masters Certificate in Justice at the University of Harvard, US.