

You Can't Control What Your Spouse Does

Andrew Love
April 19, 2018



Marriage is such an intense relationship. We come into it with expectations based on all the influences of our family life and the culture we grew up in. Often we're not completely aware of how those influences have created emotional patterns and habits. Add to that the differences between men and women and you've got the set up for misunderstanding and conflict.

How can you deal with this relationship when your spouse is preoccupied with porn?

A Good Relationship Begins With Good Communication

Do you talk about your hopes and dreams together? Do you discuss what you'd like your relationship to look and feel like? These topics make us feel vulnerable so they're often left unspoken. But how can you build a life together if you don't understand the most precious parts of each other?

The best marriages are built on good communication. Even people who are vastly different can get along well if they understand and accept each other. But we don't always learn these skills growing up. Many parents give commands, instructions and information but fail to engage in meaningful dialogue. This leaves us lacking in our ability to open up and share honestly with each other.

When we understand each other's hearts we begin to adjust our own expectations of the relationship. We make room for growth, discovery and learning together. We become broader and deeper people by embracing someone else's way of thinking. This is part of the healing process in a relationship and it's part of developing true intimacy.

Supporting Your Partner's Recovery

Learning to communicate well can take time. If your partner's struggling with a porn problem they may not be ready for these types of conversations yet. But if they're in a good recovery program like Ascend, they'll get there. While they're on this recovery journey there's a lot you can do as a supportive partner.

Since you can't control what others do, say or think; the only place to start is within yourself. You have to decide how you're going to relate to your partner's porn habit. You can only manage your own mind, body and emotions, and doing that well will have a good impact on your spouse.

Here are some ideas that other spouses have found beneficial in supporting their partner's recovery:

Become informed

Understanding the recovery process lets you know how to give support. Change doesn't happen overnight. Make use of your time by learning all you can about the habit, its effects, and the stages of recovery.

Get inspired

Learn how others have overcome unwanted sexual habits and how their spouses have contributed to their recovery. Search the internet for video testimonies of other couples who've overcome this.

Be approachable

Prepare yourself to listen to your spouse non-judgmentally and with true love. This will probably be the most supportive thing you can do.

Be constructive

Learn positive ways to respond to your spouse's habit. You will have more influence by engaging in natural conversation and activities instead of focusing on your partner's sexual issues. Make the good parts of your life and relationship the center of attention.

Create boundaries

Learn how to be supportive within proper boundaries. Support doesn't mean compliance.

Get support for yourself

Sometimes we expect more from our partners than they're able to give at this point in their life. But you have a lot to deal with too, so you need support as well. Find comfort in other relationships with friends and family, and find someone you can talk to about what troubles you.