

Procrastination and Sexual Addiction

Although most people procrastinate at different times in their lives, those who struggle with addiction to pornography and other sexually compulsive behaviors find themselves procrastinating much of the time.

In this article, I will outline the causes of procrastination, make the link to sexual addiction, and suggest ways to redirect impulses to procrastinate.

Procrastination is simply the desire to avoid perceived pain. In other words, certain tasks or responsibilities are avoided because of the pain that they might cause. People who struggle with procrastination don't necessarily procrastinate in all areas of their lives. They typically only procrastinate in areas that will cause them discomfort.

The relief that an individual experiences when they are procrastinating often provides the same type of temporary relief that a chemical addiction provides. Additionally, it creates a sense of entitlement that the individual "deserves" to not feel the pain associated with the task.

When an individual views pornography and engages in sexually compulsive behaviors, they are often using the addiction to mask feelings of discomfort, guilt, and shame. As a matter of fact, most sexual acting out happens when an individual is procrastinating. Whether or not the procrastination involves sexual acting out, the end result has similar outcomes.

There is a loss of self-respect, time, productivity, and an overwhelming sense of guilt and shame.

The best way to begin overcoming tendencies toward procrastination is to change the pressure to "finish it" with the invitation to "begin it". Most responsibilities are given with ample time to complete them. Beginning a task creates some natural anxiety, however, when the initial effort is made with the goal of simply starting the task, the anxiety typically decreases quickly.

As an experiment, think of one thing that you've been putting off. Write down the one thing on a piece of paper right now. Decide how you can get started on this task right this minute. Maybe you need to make an initial phone call. Maybe you need to speak to someone in person. Maybe it requires you to look something up. Take the first step toward accomplishing this task and notice how the perceived pain quickly disappears.

Congratulations! You have just interrupted a cycle of avoiding pain that could have potentially weakened your efforts at overcoming pornography addiction. If you're a partner or loved one of someone struggling with pornography addiction, you'll notice that doing the same exercise decreases the tendency toward feeling resentment and can boost your sense of well-being. This is a critical step toward living a healthy and balanced life.