

Why are the easiest questions the hardest to answer? My Son keeps asking the same question. I keep trying to answer, but it does not satisfy. I don't think my answers will ever satisfy. Why would a person capable of sensitivity, kindness, fairness and justice (me) be sitting in prison for a decade for possession and distribution of child pornography? No amount of explaining of the chain of events can ever adequately cross the divide between my image and actions.

What I have learned about how addictions work is that they override rational logical thought. So if the question is how can I make sense of someone's acting out behavior then I will come against a wall. There is no reasonable explanation. So if I start with the assumption that an explanation can not be adequately presented, then I can proceed to explore the inexplicable.

The beginning was an the emptiness at my core which needed filling or engaging. But instead I responded by denying it. I used various methods of busying my mind. Work, activism, but when I found the internet. I meet a truly effective medium for distraction. Always on. Always more. Never get enough. I was hooked and addicted to the moment to moment distractibility that was at my fingers. Then the next step was adding pornography. The combination was toxic. They tapped into deep parts of my psyche giving me pleasure and distraction on scale and pace unmatched by the real world.

Addictions, especially sexual addictions are progressive in nature. What stimulates today, may not tomorrow. So more, becomes looking for newer and then more extreme expressions of sexuality. For an addict the ability to make logical rational choices about what one chooses begins to break down. What a year ago would have been unthinkable, begins to move as the ground under my feet shifts as my desires to tap in a greater hit sink in. The old hits are just not good enough. I desire more, newer, more extreme. So as my boundaries change to accommodate the my changing pleasure desires, so I made choices that eventually crossed legal boundaries, not just taste.

Once in the bottom of the well, the idea of climbing up the walls seems too daunting. I could not fathom not continuing to drink and digging even deeper. I was out of control. My life was totally unmanageable as long as I was committed to a life in addiction to internet/porn. What started as something that was a small part of my life taking a few minutes a day, gradually grew to consume all my waking energy. It was all very fast, probably beginning to end maybe four years.

I thought for a long while the emptiness I felt was uniquely mine, due to my particular history (raised by a an unmediated paranoid schizophrenic - it is so easy to "blame mom" or "mom's disease"). But I have come to see the emptiness as really the human condition which we all experience. I could have chosen a path from the emptiness that led anywhere. But my particular choices led me into escape and delusion (and to prison) and not into engagement and clarity. The past five years has been about changing my patterns of behavior from escape, denial, and illusion toward engagement, reality, and awareness.

So why? Denial. I wanted to escape being human. We all have to face the abyss and choose a path in response. I tried to escape that choice by hiding in the illusory world sensory stimulation. Once caught in a web of my own making I devolved quickly. It was not a necessary path. There is nothing logical nor reasonable about it. I created my own prison before the federal agents came to take me away.

The only one who can undo those prison walls is me. The government, my lawyer, my pastor, my mama, my friend, my lover all are powerless to tare down what I created with my own mind. Only my conscious and aware mind has the power to liberate myself from my prison.