



The Solution to PMO and Sex Addiction: Understand It, Deconstruct It, and Move On

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FORWARD

Research for The Freedom Model began nearly 40 years ago in the early 1980's. At that time the addiction disease model was spreading across the globe but was largely limited to the substance using demographic. Since then, researchers began seriously questioning the drug and alcohol disease model (and later the brain disease model), and a brave few completely debunked it and wrote about it. We have cited many of them throughout our comprehensive book on the subject, *The Freedom Model for Addictions: Escape the Treatment and Recovery Trap*. We will be referring to the Freedom Model text as the "Master Text" throughout this book.

"Porn or sex addiction" or PMO (porn, masturbation & orgasm) addiction as a disorder or disease of the brain, however, is a relatively new idea (when compared to the 80+ year substance use addiction disease model mythology). While it hasn't been officially labeled as a disease or disorder yet (2024), the writing is on the wall that it will be given the same inaccurate label and classification soon. There is too much money to be made by big pharma and the rehab industries in "treating" a problem of this kind to let it stay seen as the self-created habit it is.

To be expected, the trend of increased problematic PMO habits coincides with the universal surge in the public's exposure to internet pornography and other troubling international geopolitical problems such as human sex trafficking, child pornography, and forced prostitution being normalized in Western civilization, just to name a few. While PMO and extreme sex habits are nothing new (think ancient Rome here), the distribution channels for the content is more efficient than in ancient times making the exposure more culturally universal.

Regrettably, the increase in PMO issues throughout societies has been, and is, amplified by the same addiction and recovery mythology that the substance use arena already wrestles with: the false addiction disease theory, the various misleading hijacked brain theories, the disempowering addict self-image, bastardized moralism that implements destructive shaming and fear mongering, the self-limiting abstinence-only deprivation approaches, unneeded residential and IOP behavioral addiction treatment, harmful 12-step cult memberships, among many other inappropriate ideas, therapies and proposed "solutions". These all create deeper confusion, pain, false hope and, eventually, utter hopelessness.

While there are many similarities and parallels to be made between substance use habits and PMO habits, accurately presenting the nuances with this specific class of habits matters if one is to understand it and move past it permanently. This is why we

decided to create this book/course specific to PMO issues. In this book and corresponding workshop we will not only debunk the various myths that are keeping you hostage to your PMO habit, but we will also show you the path to moving past them. Understanding your issue - your “why” - is the only way this can happen. So we will begin by giving you a glimpse of some of the **erroneous ideas** we will be debunking:

- The hijacked serotonin/dopamine theory (the “brain disease”)
- The argument that *everyone* feels the *need* for orgasm and that orgasm is inherently irresistible
- Once you’ve found the repetitive imagery of pornography pleasurable, meaningful, and valuable, you will become temporarily (or permanently) incapable of performing sexually with a partner. This is called Porn Induced Erectile Dysfunction. (PIED)
- You must feel guilty and shameful about your sexual preferences and fetishes
- PMO habits will inevitably and uncontrollably lead you to “darker” forms of pornography and that you will end up a “monster” (similar to gateway drug theory and progression theory of addiction)
- You are an “addict” and that you’re “addicted”
- You (and everyone who engages with pornography or socially unaccepted fetishes) need formal “treatment”
- You are broken and something is wrong with you for liking and developing a PMO habit
- ...and more

We have also include other topics that will not need to be debunked but require thorough discussion to help you solve your problem and they are: how to let go of shame and guilt; how to deal with morality in regards to a PMO habit; how to understand what’s behind your PMO fetish (your “why”); how to move on with life after your problem is solved; how to determine if abstinence is preferable to moderation or vice versa, and more.

Like substance use habit mythology, much of the folklore with PMO issues centers around the biochemical argument that you are run by your brain’s biochemistry. Also, like the common folklore surrounding substance use habits, there is the idea that porn is inherently irresistible (like drugs supposedly are) and that orgasm is also inherently irresistible and that both have the power to enslave and addict you. You might be thinking, “Of course orgasm is inherently irresistible!” And we might even agree with you if it weren’t for that small word, *nuance*. While we definitely agree that orgasms feel good (to the vast majority of people) - that is nature's way after all - how one gets to that place *where orgasm occurs* is a different story entirely, and this is the nuance that

actually matters here. So as you will see, the details matter if you're going to move into a stage of less PMO'ing and more living.

This brings us to one last topic, and it tends to be a terribly uncomfortable one - what if you are a pedophile or are engaged in illegal activities related to PMO. This can't be ignored, as the legal ramifications and harm to others are real in such choices. While everything we say in this course will help you move past the habit you have created (no matter how deep), should you choose to remain on this unfortunate track of victimizing humanity, you are accepting responsibility for all the risks and legal ramifications of such a choice. This is true for any risky or illegal activities you do within the pornography or sexual space, in general.

The Freedom Model makes no claims about curing the pedophile nor are we implying that we hold a neutral stance on it either. We aren't and we don't; The Freedom Model is opposed to any actions that hurt humanity and especially actions that hurt or disrupt the lives of minors/children. Pornography is littered with illegal images that can be made and distributed through illegal means. And while this may be obvious, we at The Freedom Model must state the obvious - that this course assumes that you take full responsibility for the type of fetish/es you choose.

We will always talk in general language throughout the course, because we cannot possibly know what type of pornography or fetishes you choose for yourself, and frankly it's none of our business. So, by using general terms, it allows *you* to apply that language to *your* habit, no matter how deep or how minor. This keeps The Freedom Model out of the legality of these issues while also allowing us to provide real solutions to you to change your help thereby helping all who may be involved in it. In the end, we provide a method of analysis and the data for you to challenge the preferences you've developed over time, but you are responsible for changing your perspective internally, and changing your behaviors.

Important Notes to the Reader:

1. In regards to Freedom Model Coaching or our in-person workshops and programs, The Freedom Model does not provide private coaching to anyone actively involved in illegal sexual habits such as pedophilia or rape, etc. For those cases we recommend reading our books, and/or using our online programs and prerecorded workshops to learn The Freedom Model.
2. We will use the terms PMO (the acronym for porn, masturbation, orgasm) and PMO'ing, fetish/es, porn habit, or object fetish, or fetish object throughout this book, among other terms. Some of those are slang, and they are generally

interchangeable terms. Even though it may be slang in some instances, it's what people understand and are currently using to describe their problematic porn and sex habits so we will use them here. The term PMO'ing will be universally used throughout the text to describe or explain any active engagement with your preferred fetish object/s and/or masturbation and/or your desire for orgasm's, etc.

3. This book is a research work in progress. Baldwin Research Institute, Inc. is the parent, not-for-profit research company of The Freedom Model and all its iterations. As such, we publish manuscripts, like this one, and then update and perfect them over the course of years. This is the process of how The Freedom Model came to be. This copy will be consistently updated to reflect new research, more effective means of helping you, and will reflect changes as trends in the PMO world evolve over the course of those years as well.

With all this said, let's hit this straight on - the current "treatments" aren't solving the PMO problem, they are adding fuel to the already established inferno. Just like the treatment and recovery industry in the substance use space, we are now seeing the disastrous results of these ineffective and harmful techniques being used as "solutions" for problematic PMO habits. These include: skyrocketing mental health issues, young men and women (and middle-aged and seniors) with altered sex lives and harmful self images, and a burgeoning and greedy PMO treatment and therapy industry that is fleecing families and individuals of their finances, their rights, their reputations, and their hope yet is completely ineffective at helping people to solve their problem.

But there is good news - *none of this needs to continue*. There is a real solution based on accurate, well-researched information and common sense; and it's affordable, effective, logical and puts all the backwards biochemically-centered arguments about PMO and its causes right where they belong - in the scrap heap. You don't have to keep struggling with a marginalized sexual life. Know that you can end your PMO issues for good and build a life of healthy and vibrant sexual habits. Now, let's get started!

INTRODUCTION

You may notice that we say addiction, which is defined as a compelled behavior, is a myth. That also means that “addicts” and “alcoholics” don’t exist either. These are not small points to be dismissed or glossed over! The commonly held definition of the out-of-control addict with a condition called addiction (i.e. enslaved by PMO), is a cultural construct; it is an idea and not an objective reality. No PMO’er is enslaved beyond their free will. We will show you the data that proves this point, and you should be encouraged as you read this.

Please understand we are not saying that people aren’t in genuine pain, or aren’t deeply lost in their destructive habits. Many are, and they struggle horribly, and some even tragically. So please do not assume that the last paragraph is being dismissive of your struggles. But also know we will always boldly represent the truth regardless of the rub it may cause with the current flawed narratives and terms used to validate their falsities. This book is about truth and facts, not panic, coercion, shaming or the false definitions that fuel a treatment industry that is designed around profit rather than credible solutions.

Today tens of millions of people feel out of control of their behaviors. They believe they are compelled beyond their free will to do all kinds of things that damage their lives and the lives of those around them. They are utterly confused as to why they seemingly can’t stop themselves from these various PMO behaviors. They attend counseling, rehabs, and meetings, but their problems continue, and as we said, in many cases, those problems get worse the more they seek this help.

This comprehensive addendum to our original revolutionary book on drug and alcohol addiction, *The Freedom Model for Addictions: Escape the Treatment and Recovery Trap*, will provide you the answers you’re seeking specific to your PMO habit. It is designed to show you exactly how to solve your habit without treatment, rehabs, steps, meetings, or inappropriate or ineffective therapies. You don’t need to feel deprived as you learn to moderate or abstain from your current level of watching porn, masturbating, or fetish indulging. You can learn how to rebuild your sex life even if it feels like its been “taken over” by your pornography habit or other object preoccupation. You will also unlearn and move past the lies being peddled in the addiction treatment and recovery communities about “hijacked” dopamine and serotonin being the culprit behind your preference for your fetish/es. All of this information will be enlightening and massively empowering!

Important Tools for Your Journey - Don't Skip This!

When reading this book you'll see where we refer you to our original substance use book, *The Freedom Model for Addictions, Escape the Treatment and Recovery Trap*, which we will refer to as the "Master Text". The written version and audiobook of the master text are both included with this workshop. When there are applicable chapters in the master text to read or to listen to on the audio version, you'll be directed to the appropriate chapters in that Master Text. When reading them, you may need to replace the substance use terminology with your PMO terminology, as the original book is specifically written for the substance user demographic. However, we do have specific reasons for directing you to those chapters, so please take the time to read (or listen with the audiobook) and understand them before going forward with reading this book.

Know that the recommended master text chapters will be applicable to your situation and the content in this book. Once done reading the recommended topic in the master text, return here, and continue forward. Of course some of you may have already read the master text, but rereading or listening to the recommended chapters as you go may still be helpful to you as you can never learn too much of the truth and supportive data.

If you are struggling to read and apply what's being presented or reading is just not your thing, you can always contact us at **1-888-424-2626** or email us at info@thefreedommodel.org to discuss our private coaching options. Know that we have a custom built solution that will fit your needs!

Chapter 1: Is Porn or Sex Addiction a Real Thing?

(Before you begin this chapter, read the following Master Text chapters: The Preface, Chapters 1, 2, & 3.)

Let us start this book by building the terminology we will be using throughout the text. First we must define addiction, so you know exactly what we are debunking. For the purposes of practicality, we will use the following definition: **addiction is a disease or disorder that causes compelled behavior, and the compulsion to engage with the object or behavior is greater than one's free will to choose not to do it.** Of course, our stance at The Freedom Model is that this definition is false and rooted in mythology, and the good news is the research and data support our stance. However, most of you that are reading these words have learned or been taught massive misinformation, and therefore believe that those “afflicted” with “porn addiction” (maybe yourself) are compelled, out of control, and without free will in this area. It's our goal to show you that this is not the case, and that you can move past these issues no differently than you've moved past *any* other habit you've solved in the past.

Another issue that can muddy the waters is the fact that the definition of addiction is a constantly moving target. There is no single universal agreed upon definition for addiction. As you try to define it in various ways, you'll usually end up adding in or eliminating certain activities based on the differing definitions of addiction. For example, if the definition is *an activity you keep doing in spite of it having high costs or consequences*, well then, many habits, activities, and behaviors will qualify including PMO, overeating, driving a car, working late, being in a tough marriage, using credit cards, owning a house, etc. In that definition, as you can see, a number of activities that are a normal part of daily life could qualify as an addiction. The opposite is true as well, meaning, if we narrow the definition to *- only those substances or activities that have measurable withdrawal* - certain drugs might fall into the classification (say heroin) while others won't (cocaine has zero physical withdrawal symptoms - yet using it can be massively problematic). Both widening and narrowing the definition of addiction has its problems.

Defining “PMO and sex addiction” in this book has but one goal - to be an accurate portrayal of what *most people* typically believe about their PMO and/or sex habits. By doing so, we will have the basis to debunk an entire mass of myths that are harming a large group of people who are in desperate search for an answer to their problem. If we miss the mark here, we will not have a solid starting point in which to debate and debunk. Our motive is to be as helpful as possible, and we believe the definition we've chosen fits the bill as an accurate starting point.

So here we go...is a PMO or sex addiction really **a thing that causes compelled behavior and that this compulsion to engage in fetishes is greater than one's free will to choose otherwise**? That's our definition and notice that we've put it in the form of a question. We had to do it this way because The Freedom Model premise is that you are not addicted, but rather that you have a personal preference that is causing trouble and confusion in your life. But if we take that definition - it's **a thing that causes compelled behavior, and that this compulsion to engage in fetishes is greater than one's free will to choose otherwise**, more questions need to be asked:

- Is addiction in your brain tissue?
- Is addiction causing you to masturbate compulsively, and if so, how?
- Do sexual images, videos, and other fetish objects have the power to addict you, to enslave you, to render you powerless, out of control, and incapable of being intimate with others?
- Frankly, *is PMO & sex addiction a thing at all?*

These are among the many other questions that come up when confronting the sex addiction industry's questionable narratives.

In the following chapters we will answer all these questions and many more. Let's get started debunking these lies by addressing the giant elephant in the room - *your brain, how you think, and why this is important.*

Chapter 2: The Mind and The Brain

(Before you begin this chapter, read Chapters 3, and 5, and Appendices A and B in the Master Text.)

Our discussion about the mind and brain, and the differences between the two, remain as relevant in the PMO world as they do within our original work in the drug and alcohol realm. Ultimately, the conversation about how to move past harmful PMO habits is a conversation about thoughts, ideas, motives, desires and beliefs, our resultant actions and behavior, and also the world in which we live, and ultimately, how we interpret all of these factors within our minds.

However, the conversation must start with a focus on the brain because that's the most talked about subject in regards to a problematic PMO and fetish habit.

The Brain is the Physical Middleman

The human brain gets a bad rap because its role in the human experience is regularly misrepresented and misunderstood. This physical organ is endlessly portrayed as the singular culprit behind addiction and disease of addiction ideologies, whether that's with substances, gambling, porn, food, gaming, shopping, etc.. Big pharma, the porn industry, the sex trade industry, the alcohol industry, the illicit drug cartels, and all that financially feed off those entities, enjoy the financial fruits that come from the focus remaining in the false hijacked-brain narrative.

It makes sense that they want your focus to be on your brain. The "bio-hacked serotonin & dopamine" argument being used as "the cause of addiction", produces an endless stream of lifelong customers in those respective industries and in the addiction/recovery industry as well. I am sure you've seen that even the porn and sex industries themselves actively promote the "powers of fetish" mythology to keep people watching and buying their products and services. After all, if you believe you are powerless over their spell, you will begin acting out that belief thereby making you a dedicated and loyal customer. Eventually you take on the identity of the "out of control addict", and they reap all the rewards.

The porn industry would lose millions, if not billions of dollars annually if these habits are brought back into the realm of common decision making and choice. But much like the alcohol industry, their goal is to keep people in Western culture tied to a false narrative that there are certain people who become "addicted" and "can't stop" and are "compelled to (add fetish here)." The suppliers of vices whether that is tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceuticals, casinos, pornography, etc. are dependent financially on the heavy user demographic. The relatively small population of "heavy habitual users" provides

more than ½ of the gross revenue to these industries. For example, Fifty percent of all alcohol industry revenue is created by 10% of the drinking public ([Ausick, 2020](#)). The online porn industry eclipsed \$100B in revenue in 2022, with the vast majority of revenue being generated by habitual participants, not occasional observers ([Huston, 2023](#)). The addiction treatment industry, combined with the pharmaceutical industry, also earns more than \$100B annually in the U.S. alone treating 'addictions' of various kinds ([Statista, 2023](#); [Indivior FY 2023 Financials](#)). Whether it's substances or behavioral habits, - *they need you to believe that you can't stop investing in your fetishes; their financial model depends on it.*

Regardless of their constant promotions meant to keep you in the dark about your innate ability to overcome these habits naturally and mindfully (without treatments, rehabs, or medications), reality and logic win the infowar here. Consider this, most people who engage in problematic PMO'ing outgrow it with successful moderation or abstinence ([Grubbs et al., 2021](#)). In essence, these folks who once felt "addicted" move past these issues, and they do that internally and *mindfully, not through some third party intervention, protocol, or recovery based treatment or therapy.* Based on the cold hard facts and overwhelming data, a PMO habit is not a brain chemistry issue, nor is fetish preoccupation a matter of the body or brain. It is a direct product of your mind, which is where your likes and dislikes and choices to prefer one thing over another, reside.

Think about the following: Statistically speaking, nearly everyone worldwide masturbates or has masturbated at some time in their lives ([Herbenick et al., 2021](#)). Also, a great percentage of those same people across the globe watch or have watched pornography of some kind. Yet only a tiny fraction of that population has a problematic PMO issue ([Grubbs et al., 2021](#)).

According to research published in 2019, while nearly everyone in the survey sample of more than 2000 people in the U.S. said they watched pornography, just 11% of men and 3% of women self-reported that they feel addicted to pornography ([Grubbs et al., 2019](#)). Similar research in Australia showed much lower numbers, with just 4% of men and 1% of women reporting they believed themselves to be addicted to pornography ([Rissel et al., 2017](#)).

So what gives? If so many people naturally engage in sexual fantasy and masturbation, and many actively engage with pornography as they do so, how come so few people have serious problematic habits built around it? If it were a simple matter of porn-induced brain chemistry changes, then wouldn't *all* those engaged in this manner be suffering with a problematic PMO issue. But they aren't; and here is why that is.

What You Believe Matters... A Lot

Most people aren't aware of, or simply don't listen to the narrative being pushed that porn is, in and of itself, powerful, or that it biohacks the brain and compels the formation of an uncontrollable fetish. Much like with substance users, their lack of awareness of these myths protects them from "addiction". In essence, being naive to that false narrative saves people from the "powerless porn/sex addict" ideas and self-image, and from taking an active role in creating a problematic habit.

Unfortunately the inverse is also true, as more people are exposed to the damaging "powers of pornography" propaganda, the percentage of people who believe they are addicted will continue to increase. Over the course of our 34 years (2024) of coaching people for a variety of difficult and complex behavioral habits, we have witnessed a dramatic increase in young people with age-appropriate masturbation and other common sexual habits, labeling themselves as sex or porn addicts. It's a disturbing trend as this sex addict narrative destroys the individual's self-image as a free person with the ability to choose, adapt, and evolve their likes and dislikes. This narrative creates secrecy, guilty feelings, shame, hopelessness, depression, and anxiety. Those that become concerned that they may have a problem with PMO typically research the problem online, or in treatment or addiction support circles, or with professional sex therapists. In each of these "help" outlets they are provided with the false narrative that their brain is in charge, and that they are helpless slaves to their biochemistry.

But here's the problem with this view - this brain-first perspective is *just a theory*, and while it is popular, it's wholly inaccurate. These brain-first proponents have the relationship between the mind and the brain in reverse. They (we will call them, and any others who promote a brain-first ethos as brain-centrists throughout the text) see the brain as the engine, or driver of the behavior train, while it's actually one of the middle cars. The truth is, your mind -which is where you hold your ideas and beliefs - is the engine driving your habit, *not your brain tissue*. Yet, if you were to research the web for the topic of "the mind in relation to PMO habits", you will not find this discussion or debate; *yet your mind is the very center of why you have a PMO habit!*

Many experts are now acknowledging that your brain is the physical hardware component of human behavior ([Pessoa, 2014](#)). The best and simplest way to view the brain's role in the human experience is to see it for what it is - *the processor* of the mind's instructions. It acts like a computer's hard drive, while the mind is the intelligent and limitless software telling it how to run and what to do.

The following is crucial information to know: the brain doesn't do the thinking; it doesn't make choices or create ideas or formulate perspectives or motives, or *observe* anything. Instead, it *processes* those very things, all of which emanate directly from your

mind, which is the engine of all behavior. It's important to recognize that your brain and your mind are not the same thing. However, it's quite common to hear people conflate the two as if they are one in the same, causing even more confusion.

Let's be clear: the brain is the physical, chemical, electrical middleman that sits squarely between your metaphysical mind and the physical environment. Your brain's job is to convert metaphysical information provided to it by the mind into physical applications, and it also takes in physical data from your body's senses and the environment, and swings that sensory information back into the mind to be evaluated, interpreted and thus, *experienced*. Processing this back and forth flow of data between the physical environment and the metaphysical mind is what this amazing thing we call the brain is designed to do. It's the grand, complex physical hard drive that's needed to be able to live out our lives in a harsh, challenging, physical world. But know this: the brain is not designed with its own separate intelligence, understanding, or emotions and does not contain the ability to be analytical; those tasks are all accomplished solely within your mind.

The Mind - The Metaphysical Creator

Unlike the physical brain, the mind is the software of the human experience. It is the metaphysical intelligent originator of all actions, the creator of all thought, the analyst, the interpreter of experiences, the maker of human applications and plans, the observer of all experiences, and the creator of emotional interpretations of those experiences as well. Like we said earlier, it's the engine driving the train of life. As the interpreter of your life experience, it provides all meaning to your emotions, and produces the drive to your habits, *including all of those within your PMO fetish realm*.

Therefore a big part of what we will be doing in this book is to teach you how to analyze your mind and its contents, then challenge and modify your beliefs, as well as your thoughts and interpretations, which will then allow you to change your preferences. Your brain tissue will, of course, also be changed *as a result* of the changes you are making in your mind. As you change the habits of your mind, this changes the circuitry of your brain. Remember, your brain is a physical slave of your mind.

But with all that said, it's vital to avoid putting too much stock in the "brain changes" conversation. Whether your brain changes through your upcoming mindful work is inconsequential to you making changes in your life, *as all change happens in your mind first through your free will, re-interpretations and evaluations, and choice*. The Freedom Model is a mind-first ethos, not a brain chemistry-centered ethos.

The mind-first approach isn't a small, inconsequential point, so don't blow past it or dismiss it. When you fully internalize the fact that *your mind is in control, and you are*

your mind, and you are a conscious being that thinks, and that what you think and believe matters, you can then abandon the false idea that physical brain chemistry is the culprit behind your PMO preferences and habits. All the talk about serotonin and dopamine become meaningless as you realize you have full control over your mental and emotional narratives, and you always have been in full control of them. You choose your reality, even when indulging in your PMO habits.

Focus on Your Thoughts

To begin the process of personal change you must focus on your thoughts and beliefs that exist within your mind. The solutions or changes to a fetish preoccupation can only happen when you challenge and change your beliefs about the benefits you see in those fetishes that are held and nurtured within your mind. There is no other way to modify your behavior than to focus on the perceived benefits you see in your habits and rituals, and then challenge those perceived benefits in various ways.

So whatever neuroplastic changes that manifest in your brain tissue as a result of your work here, is really just a meaningless end result of the work you will be doing challenging your beliefs and drawing new conclusions for yourself. In short, the beliefs you hold in your mind matter, but what happens in your physical brain as a result of changing your beliefs and behavior doesn't matter much at all.

What Exactly is the Mind?

So what is the mind? Truthfully no one really knows because it's not a physical thing that can be quantified, measured, or studied. In addition, everyone's mind is unique, and we have limitless free will to think whatever we want to think. This includes the fantasies we imbue with such deep value and meaning in our PMO habits. I think we all can agree on one significant point - we, as humans, *think*. We also know from our own observation that our thoughts themselves have no physical substance; consciousness seems to be the only part of us that's truly metaphysical.

If you had no thoughts, no consciousness, no soul, or whatever you want to call it (we prefer mind), then would you exist? Would you have the life you have right now? I think you would agree that you would not. You would be, for lack of a better term, a mindless meat suit. A physical body with no ability to be given mindful instruction from an intelligent source is a body with no ability to function in time and space. In short, without thoughts, we can't function or experience life physically, mentally, or emotionally. Your mind is, therefore, everything! It's quite literally... *YOU*. Because without it, you're a lifeless body, a train with no engine to drive it down the tracks.

Does Your Brain Need to Heal?

Now, this brings up the next topic, the idea that the “addicted brain” must heal. The truth is, there is no “brain healing” that needs to take place because your brain isn’t broken or “addicted” to anything. We are sold all kinds of snazzy brain chemistry jargon in relation to a PMO habit. We hear how serotonin and dopamine are hijacked, creating all manner of addictions. But if you look closer at the people telling you this, they all have their own agendas which are often rooted in financial greed, morality, control, or just plain ignorance of the facts. Research that seems to support their brain-centered assertions is flawed and most often funded by the very people that make billions off you believing that you’re hijacked by your brain chemistry ([Satel & Lilienfeld, 2013](#); [Ioannidis, 2005](#)). But this view is clearly backwards: remember, the brain is a slave to the mind, not the other way around! This makes their claims nonsensical.

It is true that your brain adapts and changes as you indulge in your PMO habit; we agree on that point. But that’s no different than any skill you learn and behavior you engage in regularly. Habitual masturbation or any fetish indulgence is no different to the brain than when you learn a new skill like riding a bicycle, driving a car, or playing the piano (the social implications are of course quite different). The changes in the brain are a result of you becoming more proficient at the skill but these adaptations don’t render you powerless over said habit or fetish.

For example, have you ever felt like you were a slave to driving your car? Of course not. Yet, it's a habit with all manner of complicated neuroplastic brain changes and mindful habitual rituals. But because we all agree on the moral good of driving (even with its trade-offs of risk for mortality and personal injury), and we accept it as a positive social norm as well, we don’t classify it as an “addiction”. Nor should we. Driving is a normal relationship between something we want, something we engage in, something we are willing to pay consequences for, and something our brain adapts to for efficiency. A PMO habit is no different albeit with different societal and social implications.

Brain Changes are the Norm

Brain changes are the natural physical results that occur with anything you care deeply about, think about often, and engage in regularly. Your brain is doing what it always does; that is, to carry out the instructions given to it by your mindful beliefs, ideas, and thoughts on sexuality and all your preferred activities that go with it. Once a habit is formed *in the mind*, the brain tissue adapts through natural neuroplasticity to make the application of said thoughts efficient in the physical applications of those newly formed mental habits. When you change your beliefs, thoughts, and actions, there is no “brain healing” that needs to take place because this is normal brain functioning and natural adaptation.

In the final analysis, there is just “changing your mind”, which *then* changes your brain. This is a seamless process that occurs when moving from one habit to another in life, which, if you look at your life, you've already done with past habits that you no longer feel serve or excite you. PMO habits are no different, *with the exception of the extreme high value you've placed in it, and the myths that are keeping you tied to it.*

Again, your PMO habit is no different than any other habit you've created, except for one important factor. With your PMO habit, *you have taken on the erroneous belief that it is different from other habits*; you believe it is more “powerful” and makes real intimacy impossible or at the very least, marginalized. You might believe you have altered your brain chemistry through masturbation, orgasms, observing pornography, and other sexual fetishes, rendering you powerless to stop doing it. You may think because orgasms feel good, and are a “climax” to your PMO experience, that it is at a level above any other habit you've developed in the past. We understand your confusion, and we will address the orgasm debate later. But here is reality: ***The level to which you believe that your PMO habit is different or more powerful than other habits you have and regularly modify with impunity, is proportional to the exact amount of mythology you are carrying in regards to your PMO issue.*** Read that twice!

It's not that PMO habits are “powerful” in and of themselves, or that orgasms have a special type of pleasure to override free will or choice, but rather that you've given PMO and the objects of your desire massive meaning, and thus, outlandish and romanticized importance. In these circumstances, it becomes easy to define such a negatively judged habit as an “addiction you have no control over” rather than a habit you've chosen and nurtured. It's also easy to blame brain biochemistry rather than see the truth, that it's a habit that you've created in your mind based on the personal benefits you see in it.

Here's where things can get really confusing: the fact that your mental and emotionally driven PMO habit can sometimes have downstream physical side effects, such as erectile dysfunction or loss of intimacy with your partner can be misconstrued as evidence that you have a brain disorder that's rendering you addicted, impotent, and uninterested in relationships with real people. The following chapters will deconstruct these myths and provide solutions for these issues. First we will tackle whether regular or habitual indulgence in PMO fetishes are, in fact, addictions (spoiler alert - they are not), and then we will deconstruct the mythology that pornography itself and engaging in PMO is the direct cause of erectile dysfunction and other physical performance issues. Then we will spend the rest of the book covering the myriad of topics that create confusion and distract you from looking for solutions where they actually exist - within your mind.

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Chapter 3: But I Can't Sexually Perform Anymore!

(Before you begin this chapter, read chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, and 14 in the Master Text.)

It's not uncommon when coaching people who habitually engage with pornography that they tell us they find it difficult to perform sexually with a real person. The story goes something like this; "Watching pornography on a regular basis makes me impotent." This phenomenon is now called Porn Induced Erectile Dysfunction (PIED). While this seems to be primarily occurring with men, there are women who have reported they are no longer able to feel sexually "turned on" with a partner after consistent porn use.

In cases where someone's ability to physically perform sexually is compromised or seemingly eliminated as a result of a PMO habit, there are 3 main proposed causes for such cases:

1. The first is the claim that brain chemistry (specifically dopamine and serotonin) has been adversely affected by regular and habitual observation of pornography (or other sexual fetishes), and the resultant chemical brain changes make "real sex" impossible. The theory goes on to say the "reward center of the brain" now prefers pornography over sex with a partner. This view sees your brain as having full control over the physical expression of your sexual behaviors and ignores the presence of the mind and its role in interpreting and experiencing sexual arousal and pleasure.
2. The second supposed cause of PIED is the "power of porn" ideology. Just the term, *Porn Induced* Erectile Dysfunction gives up the ghost here. This theory proposes that porn imagery such as videos, pictures, and other non intimate sexual props (we refer to these as "fetish objects" throughout the book) have a certain power in and of themselves to modify a person's sex drive and sex organs. Much like similar drug lore, these objects are seen as being able to "addict you", to enslave you, and to render you out of control in their use. In this scenario it's implied that the human is unable to stop themselves from interacting with their fetish objects, whether that be pornographic images, video's, sex toys, etc. In this class of mythology, the object has all the power, and the individual is without any power or free will to choose real sexual relationships over their PMO'ing. Again, this view places all the power in objects, not in the individual, their free will, or choice itself. This view also ignores the human mind as the operative force in human decision making.
3. The next viewpoint, although also a misguided concept, is the only perspective of the 3 listed here that includes the individual's mind as part of the PIED equation. This view is seen in statements like, "I'll never be able to find a woman (man) like

the ones I watch on the internet. Porn's made it impossible to see real people as viable options for me. It has made me believe that I could never get anyone like I see in porn, and because of watching porn, I can't have a normal relationship or have the kind of sex that I prefer and watch on the web." This third class incorporates the mind and beliefs as center to the equation of what is the reasoning behind their PIED. The previous two focus on external and physical causes outside the realm of one's beliefs or thoughts on the topic.

So which of the three views is right? The answer is there are bits of truth in all of them mixed with a whole host of misinformation and mythology that is causing a tremendous amount of confusion! Let's sort this all out and get to the full truth so you can accurately understand what's at play in a PIED issue and begin working to reverse this intimacy stealing pattern.

First, any explanations for PIED that don't take into account your thoughts, internal powers of reasoning, and mental desires cannot be taken seriously. All physical behavior, including sex, is initiated first in your mind. All PMO habits begin in your thoughts *based on the perceived benefits you see in porn and orgasms (or whatever fetish objects you personally prefer)*. A preference for porn and orgasm is born from one's expression of their Positive Drive Principle (*see **Chapter 7** in the Master Text for more on this important point*) and nothing else. If you saw no perceived benefits in the objects of your desire, you would not choose to indulge in them. As such, you reason your way into a PMO habit like you do with any other habit.

When we pause and take a look at our chosen habits including a PMO habit, our personal expression of our Positive Drive Principle is the only logical explanation for developing the habit. On its face it makes perfect sense; you might even say it's a simple answer. We see benefits in PMO'ing; we wouldn't indulge if we didn't. If you let go of your embarrassment or judgments for just a moment, you'll see that you choose your habits carefully and you indulge in them for their perceived benefits, so there's little to argue here.

But then, with a little more thought analysis, you can also see that there is usually more involved in this habit. The answer isn't so simple when you read through numbers 1 and 2 above, and start to ask if there's more to a PMO habit than just mentally chasing the perceived benefits. The analysis gets cloudy when we add in erectile dysfunction as a physical manifestation of the PMO habit. This physical side effect of your habit seemingly takes the causes for PIED into a larger conversation that goes past the mind and pulls in the topic of brain chemistry, the physical body, and the supposed powers of pornography back into the forefront. This then begs the following questions:

Does porn actually have power over the mind? Does a habit take over and displace free will and compel PMO'ing? Are brain changes to blame for my "addiction" and my PIED? And ultimately, does my preference for PMO'ing bring on PIED?

Is PIED Caused by Changes to Your Brain?

Let's start where we left off in the previous chapter. Is neuroplasticity, or "brain changes" as they are sometimes called, a cause of PIED?

We know that your mental and emotional preference for PMO combined with engaging in it are creating and pruning neural pathways in your brain tissue. As we stated in the previous chapter, neuroplastic changes are completely normal as they are the result of learning. There's nothing special about this process, even when porn or sex is involved. Neuroplasticity is a physical manifestation (a result) of every single habit we build and those we let go of as well. Each time we engage in a habit, the neural pathways in our brain are strengthened through repeated use, which physically alters the brain's structure. Conversely, when we stop engaging in a habit, the brain undergoes 'pruning,' reducing the strength of these neural connections. This dynamic process is what allows the brain to adapt continuously throughout our lives ([Verywell Mind, 2023](#)).

The narrative that neuroplastic changes involving your dopamine and serotonin function as *causes* for your porn habit and *causes* for PIED is wrong. The changes in your brain's chemicals and circuitry *are a result* of your desires, thought life, and actions, not a cause of them. So while it's easy to make bold claims about "brain changes" causing impotence and other physical issues, those brain changes are created by your thoughts and beliefs of the perceived benefits of porn and masturbation, as well as you engaging in it. It's not the brain chemical adaptations that cause PIED, but rather the thoughts and beliefs (that you have reinforced with your actions) that you prefer porn and masturbating over sex with a partner that is driving your impotence. Your problem is centered around your ideas, not brain chemicals. Change your thoughts, beliefs, ideas, and preferences, and you will change the process that happens downstream in both your brain and your sex organs. This important nuance is what is missed when people point exclusively at brain chemistry while skipping over the thoughts, beliefs, ideas you hold in your mind that ultimately are causing PIED. Focusing on brain chemistry is a useless diversion from actively observing your thoughts and rituals that drive your deep preference for porn and other fetishes.

Having the more specific belief that "porn is more powerful than real sex", can have real damaging physical ramifications on your ability to perform intimately in the real world as well. This belief, along with acting out that belief through observing pornography rather than actual intimacy with another person, is what initiates the issues here. The porn observation, the masturbation, the orgasms, the resultant brain changes and PIED

itself, can't happen without first believing that porn is powerful, meaningful, valuable, and has the power to displace real sex.

Ignoring your emotional preference for porn in your analysis for the causes of PIED is a massive part of the problem! Things get even muddier when the powers that be in the sex industry marketing departments begin to insert their false narratives into the mix. For example, the porn industry has been highly effective at pushing the narrative that their products and services are "addictive" and "powerful." Make no mistake, they want you to believe this. It makes them billions. Consequently you start to believe it's the porn itself; the pixels on the screen, the images, the videos, the toys; all are seen as "powerful, addictive" things. *By indulging in such mythology, you end up imbuing objects with powers they do not, have not, and cannot, possess.* Don't ignore this last statement; this nuance is important! Reread it as many times as needed to get a good understanding.

Objects don't contain the ability to co-opt the human mind. Only you can do that by believing they can, and then making that your reality. When believing that objects can co-opt the mind, it becomes easy to shift your sex life away from having satisfying sex with a partner, and into the false narrative that you are an out-of-control sex addict who is "addicted to porn". This misleading self-image not only ignores you and your mind as the reasoning behind your intense fetish, but it also makes lifeless objects into living entities with the power to addict you and destroy your intimate relationship with a partner.

Those who benefit from your fetishes would have you believe the narrative that lifeless things and images have motive and human-like powers to actively and powerfully manipulate you and "make you addicted" to them. This is straight up mythology, powerful marketing, and utter nonsense. But if left unchecked by logic, these ideas about the powers of porn, the powers of your phone, the powers of your computer, and the powers of images, become accepted, internalized, and very real for you.

By ignoring your emotional and mental participation *in giving meaning and value to these objects*, you come to believe that you have no capacity to find better alternatives than a quiet date with your computer or phone screen. The full downstream physical manifestation of this belief can be PIED. Once stuck in this miserable cycle of manifesting PIED, you might react to it by trying to abstain from porn altogether, only to find that your intense preference for porn has remained unchecked, unchallenged, and thus fully intact. So you go right back to "the devil you know." This cycle of forced abstinence and then returning to porn reinforces the addiction mythology you've taken on because no one has shown you that your mind is the operative agent creating the value you see in your PMO fetishes in the first place. You're so busy trying to avoid the

screen, the images, the toys, and your rituals *that you believe are so powerful*, that you simultaneously ignore the reality that all of your PMO preference comes from within you and not from the objects! You can stop reinforcing this misattribution, and certainly stop giving credit for your self-created habit to the “powers of porn” or any other sex industry false narratives.

Building Meaning and Value - MIED

These objects, in and of themselves are meaningless without a human mind to define them and place value in them. The sex industry has done a masterful job of making their definition of “addictive pornography” a powerful icon in world culture that brings in billions in revenue. So let’s now take back the narrative by labeling this physical issue with the proper name and acronym - MIND Induced Erectile Dysfunction, or MIED.

Providing meaning to objects with our mind is what humans do. We are constantly creating value here, and devaluing there, and so on. This process is also what effective sex industry marketing is all about. When a marketing presentation provides meaning and value of an object or concept to the consumer, and that value and meaning is romanticized, overblown, and untrue, as is the case with the “powers of porn” narrative, it’s easy to get confused when the promises of that narrative and the actual results of the product or service don’t match. We hear our students say how turned on and excited they are when anticipating their PMO episode, and then how utterly unfulfilling the experience is when the session and climax are over. The promises of the marketing never equal the reality of the habit.

With enough repetition of these false marketing narratives, the product or service becomes your new truth. And if you believe these false narratives enough, you will blame yourself when the results of your PMO’ing don’t match the marketing promises. Instead of re-evaluating the value and meaning you’ve been spoon fed by the industry, you label yourself a hopeless sex addict who can’t even get PMO’ing right.

This is how indoctrination happens; the industry lies enough to redefine something that isn’t inherently powerful or valuable into something that is *now seen* as highly valuable and highly powerful. This is what the sex and porn industry has accomplished in the last few decades with its online world marketing campaigns. Said enough times and in enough ways, porn is believed to be so powerful that it can replace even the most wonderful of all things - intimacy with another person. This replacement lie then becomes your mental construct; your new, valuable, and fully installed PMO construct.

Here’s where this unfortunate reinterpretation of your sex life goes:

- Reality won't budge; and so eventually, like any habit, the fetish object doesn't satisfy you.
- The videos and other fetishes become boring while your intimacy with others dwindles.
- You are faced with a choice: double down in the futile chase to make these marketing narratives work, or...
- Face reality and *change your mind on the value you see and have created in PMO'ing and your fetish objects*. Challenge your beliefs!

Without fully understanding that you are the creator of your own fantasies about these objects and that you are the master of giving them such profound meaning, you won't be able to change that deep meaning back into the meaning/less. You will remain stuck believing that your fetishes have all the power and you are a minion to them; "you're addicted" after all. And so you will keep chasing that false narrative into deeper futility and pain.

Your mind creates this entire cycle. Know this! Logically then, by changing your perspectives and view on porn and its value to you, you can eliminate the issue just the same as you created it. But if you leave out the vital part that ***you colored the fetish with value and meaning***, there is no effective action to reverse this trend! In all PMO addiction help programs, the very tool used to create and nurture the value you see in these objects (your thoughts) is completely ignored. Consequently, any actions you employ to run away, try to ignore, distract yourself from, replace, or pray away your preference for your fetish object/s fails, thus reinforcing the narrative that you're powerless, hopelessly addicted, and weak, and will never be able to get erect or turned on with a real person. Once you are at this point, you've fully built your MIED construct.

Knowing that you've taken on a false narrative of the supposed "powers of porn and orgasm" is the vital first step in realizing you can change that harmful disempowering view, and devalue that which is currently vastly overrated and misrepresented in your mind. If not for the mind's ability to interpret the porn as something you prefer, you could never have reinforced the mental construct that porn is powerful and preferable to real sex in the first place. It is not the pornography that's *causing* your physical performance struggles or other intimacy problems. Rather, it's the priority you give porn and self-pleasuring *in your mind*, as well as interpreting *in your mind* porn as beneficial and powerful. This is what's causing your physical issues in your sex organs.

The question is then, why does our culture focus so heavily on the powers of porn and the brain changes argument rather than focusing on the actual driver of a PMO habit - that being beliefs, interpretations, and your "why" behind your preferences for pornography, fetishes, and other sex industry services?

The answer is wrapped up in the morality, shame, guilt, and overall negative views of porn and sex industry services in our culture, which you likely hold as well. Instead of facing your self-created overblown view of porn and orgasm, you deflect your responsibility for having created and nurtured your deep preference for it, and then point at the porn itself and say, “It’s powerful and I’m weak!” You further deflect your embarrassment and responsibility for your preference by saying “Look at the brain science! You see, I don’t have a choice! My dopamine and serotonin have been hacked!” This then ends with, “I’m a sex addict; I can’t stop!” Whether these kinds of statements are a conscious deflection of the judgments of others or just ignorance of the facts doesn’t matter. The belief and your adherence to it, is a factor causing your MIED issues.

This deflection from the truth is a dead end road! The singular culprit for habit building is you and your mind, and without seeing this truth, you’ve taken the only thing that can solve your issue and thrown it out the window.

MIED - It’s A Result of Thoughts

Thoughts and beliefs have consequential downstream effects on your body, and MIED *is a real thing*. The people pushing the broken-brain theory are half right in this sense. Yes, brain dopamine and serotonin are affected by both the habits you create in your mind and how you act out those habits in your body in the form of masturbation, orgasms, and rituals.

The brain sits squarely in between the realm of the mind and the physical environment doing all of the processing. But there is a nuance to this that matters a great deal:

Those brain changes occur *as a result of your mind and your beliefs*, not the other way around! This is vital to understand. The order matters. Here’s why: you can change your mind, which changes your behaviors, which then changes your brain tissue and releases brain chemicals, which changes how your sex organs perform. But you can’t make that work in reverse, and trying to do so is impossible! This is why the neuroscience experts tend to get hopelessly trapped in the circular “brain changes cause addiction” argument. If you truly want to reverse MIED, you’ll need to understand *why* you like porn and feel you need it for your happiness - and then change your mind about the value you’ve placed in your PMO fetishes. When doing this analysis (which is what this entire book is about) you can stop worrying about what your brain is doing!

A physical erection, or any physical feeling of being turned on, male or female, is formed *first within your mind*. Said another way, being “turned on”, and *what* turns you on sexually, is a completely subjective experience created and held by you in your mind. Nearly everyone enjoys a physical orgasm, on that we all agree, but what makes you

turned on enough to have an orgasm is a completely subjective interpretation held in the privacy of your mind.

Is it any wonder that if you believe that porn is your best or only answer for sexual pleasure and satisfaction, that you would have trouble performing with a partner? Your mind dictates your sexual experience after all. You've prioritized your mental porn fetish at the top of the list, and it stands to reason that your brain and body reflect that idea when in the presence of your preferred fetish props like pornography. It's also understandable that your belief that those props hold all the power will also lower your chances of having great sex with someone in the absence of those props.

It's not that the porn imagery (or any other fetish) has some sort of replacement power over your intimacy with others; rather *it's your belief that it does, that drives MIED and other intimacy issues*. In a nutshell, the belief that watching porn automatically equals inevitable erectile dysfunction or any other intimacy issue is a damaging self-fulfilling prophecy. Change those thoughts first, then change your actions, and your body will respond in kind!

SIDE NOTE ABOUT ED: There are physical causes for erectile dysfunction, such as illness, injury, medication side effects, or hormonal issues. These causes will keep you from being able to get and keep an erection in virtually any situation. If you are experiencing ED, we recommend seeing a licensed medical professional who can test for physical issues and provide treatments or medications that may be able to correct the problem. These tests can also rule out a physical cause so you will know that you can fix the problem by changing your thoughts, beliefs, and preferences in your mind. With all this said it is important to understand that if you can get an erection while watching porn (or when engaging with your fetish), but don't get one during sex with a real person, then your problem is most likely rooted in your mind and not being caused by a physical problem in your body.

Reinforcing the Sex Industry's Marketing

As a result of feeling broken and now seemingly unable to perform sex in the conventional manner, you might then reinforce the sex market's agenda and "powers of porn" ideology by diving deeper into porn or your other sexual habits to wring out as much meager pleasure as you can from it. So many people do this instead of challenging the sex industry's marketing, imagery, products, and services' false narratives.

By not challenging these narratives you never gain the understanding that your belief in the narratives is the issue, and so you don't begin to explore new preferences outside that narrow artificial realm. Without a change in your beliefs about porn or whatever

fetish you're invested in, you will chase the futile goal to make it exciting again, and dive deeper into it fueled by the parallel belief that you are now incapable of "real sex". Again, this is a horrible negative feedback loop that you and the sex industry marketing world have co-created. It's the perfect trap to keep the harmful, self-limiting cycle going while the industry keeps you a lifelong customer of said products and services.

If you do fully take on the "sex addict" identity, you might also feel as if there are "withdrawal symptoms" present when you stop using porn or engaging in your fetish activity (we address this myth later on). You might be afraid that your brain is bio-hacked and chemically driving your habit. You might have all manner of powerlessness narratives running through your panicked mind. *This is all mythology*, but when believed and reinforced, these become self-fulfilling prophecies all the way to the downstream physical effects we described above. These beliefs and the physical manifestations of them can create a deep level of guilt and shame. We will cover all of this in further chapters, so keep reading.

There's a Better Way

All of this painful mental and emotional jockeying is based on the misinformed idea that the power is in objects as well as in your ever changing brain tissue. You can reverse this belief by realizing the objective truth that all the power has always been in your miraculous, free-will-oriented mind all along. You simply were provided a narrative of the romanticized powers of porn and other sexual fetishes *that was never true!* No wonder you've been so confused!

Watching pornography is an activity that you combine with fantasy. On its face it's nothing more, nothing less. Remove the fantasy and its value goes down quickly and dramatically. It is important for you to know *why* you've held steadfast to these fantasies. How to figure out your "why" behind your PMO habit is covered throughout the following chapters in this book, so make sure you read all of them.

When you take on the belief that lifeless objects have the power to replace actual intimacy with another, that belief manifests in all sorts of ways, which can include physical ramifications. Change the belief and you can reverse MIED. Remember, being turned on is a mind-based interpretation - *then* the body follows. Allow for the possibility that intimacy with another can and will be better with practice, and eventually the body will follow, as will a more satisfying overall sex life.

Know this - *you are always in control of your mind*. This is evidenced by the fact that nearly everyone gets over 'addiction' regardless of physical brain changes, circumstances, traumas, triggers, and difficult lives ([Heyman, 2013](#)). Letting go of the brain-centered view, and bringing it back to a mind-centered perspective is the

foundation that will allow you to reframe your preference for PMO'ing and rebuild your sex and intimate life to one that is joyful, more fulfilling, and certainly less emotionally and physically draining. In short, you have a problem *with ideas* about porn, sex, fetishes, your body, your brain; and by changing these misinformed ideas to those that are based in objective reality, you can then change your preferences as well as your sexual performance and abilities, and thus, you can change your life!

I'm going to say it again: *you are fully capable of solving your problem* regardless of how "addicted" you feel, and how badly things have gone for you. As you read this book, it is crucial that you open your mind to the possibility that not only can you solve your problem, *but also that it will be much easier than you think.*

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Chapter 4: The Method to Reverse MIED

(Before you begin reading, read Appendix A and Chapter 6 in the Master Text, and revisit Chapter 5 and Appendix B if needed.)

As we explained in the previous chapter, by believing in a direct causal link between active participation in your fetish and your physical sexual performance issues, you've created a negative feedback loop. You think that you'll never have and enjoy normal sex again because you believe your brain is broken, and this erroneous belief becomes the reason you return to pornography over and over again. With that belief intact and then the reinforcement of that belief when experiencing MIED, you begin to feel completely "addicted to porn and PMO'ing". The good news is, the method to reverse this self-limiting loop is actually quite simple and effective.

A Story - Watching Porn Has Wrecked Me Forever

I was talking with a young man I was coaching on this very topic. He was 24 years old, and had never had sex because as he put it, "Porn makes it so I can't get it up. I've been watching porn for 13 years, and now that's the only way I can stay hard and have an orgasm. I'm lucky because I have a girlfriend who understands, but I want to have real sex, and now I've wrecked that." He went on with the usual "my brain is hacked by porn" and "I'll never be able to be normal" ideology.

I have these same conversations with dozens of individuals I coach everyday. They feel hopeless because they've been taught to focus on the wrong things. Everything they have read to curb their habit has focused solely on their brain and ignored the mind. Because they have no knowledge of the mind, or no understanding that the mind is the source of all sexual interpretation and reasoning, they believe that their broken brain is causing their sexual performance issues. They also do not understand the "why" behind their preference (later chapters discuss analyzing why you PMO and what's behind this preference). As they experience performance issues, these young men return to porn hoping they can at least have their private orgasm experiences. The combination of what they learned and now believe, coupled with their personal experiences and behavior, reinforces the very mythology that's keeping them in the destructive loop.

When coaching these young men, I first explain the facts described in the previous chapters about mind vs. brain and their misplaced focus on the objects of their desire being the "cause" of their current inability to perform with their partner. I take the time to make sure they understand the fundamental facts that *their ideas* that the objects are the cause of their struggle is a big part of the problem. However, because they have reinforced their view that porn or whatever object of desire is the issue, and also that

their brain compels them to continue with their fetish, I have them do an experiment to help them move in a new direction towards learning their “why”.

The Experiment

I say, “Here’s some homework. The next time you want to watch porn (or engage in your fetish), I want you to engage *without masturbating* and *without fantasy*.” I further tell them, “Simply engage with the object without any sexual goal in mind. No orgasms, no masturbating, just observe without the physical sexual release present or as your goal.” This takes practice, especially trying not to imbue the objects with fantasies. So I encourage them to do their best. “As you look at the object without coloring it with your fantasies or a goal to orgasm, ask yourself, how exciting is the object *in and of itself as a stand alone thing?*”

What you are trying to accomplish with this exercise is to see if the object itself really has the power to cast a spell on you, your mind, and your sex organs; the goal is for you to see how much “sexual power” and value *is actually contained within the object itself*. By eliminating the fantasy-factor (the creations of your mind) that are necessary for you to become turned on and orgasm, you will see that the pornographic images, or sex objects, or toys contain no sexual power in and of themselves. The reality that they are physically separate from you, and therefore have no intrinsic “sex power” begins to come into focus. If you look at porn without coloring those images and videos with value and fantasy, they become relatively meaningless images of naked people mating and playing in various forms and ways.

What you discover is that if you don’t actively imbue the object as “powerful” and something you “need” to orgasm, you begin to see the only sexual value in the relationship between you and the object, is the sexual value you give it in your mind; the fantasy is the real value here. Your mental and emotional *interpretation* of the object is required for it to become a valued fetish. You need your mind to interpret that object as stimulating in order for it to be so. This is also true with respect to being with another person. Because you’ve placed so many emotional resources towards your preferred fetish objects, it’s difficult to use those same resources towards your sexual relationships with real people. Is it any wonder you’ve had MIED when you are with a real person?

When creating value in porn and PMO’ing, you build mental and emotional value in the object that you then misinterpret as something that has control over you and your sex organs. This is called a misattribution; *you’re giving credit to the porn for something you are creating within your own mind*.

Watching porn, or whatever the fetish may be, while taking the orgasm goal off the table; while removing the fantasy-factor as best you can; while observing the videos and pictures without a sexual goal in mind; one finds the object of their desire suddenly has little value and/or implied power at all. It can be shocking the amount of devaluing that takes place with just a few short sessions completed in this way. The removal of mind-driven fantasy and the romanticized “powers of porn or sex” brings the object and its lessened value to you into sharp focus. It also demonstrates how much of the value is created directly by you in your mind and the extreme meaning you bring to the table as well. (Later, we will discuss figuring out why you feel the need to create certain fantasies, and what’s behind your desire for certain genres of porn. We call this “the why behind your preference” - and figuring out your why will be crucial to challenging that perceived need.)

Another Experiment

Here’s another way to perform this same exercise, but framed in a different way. Try to masturbate without porn present at all and pay attention to where your mind goes. You’ll find that without the physical object of your desire present, you’ll have the tendency to create your own version of porn or sexual experience from your memories. What does this exercise tell you? It demonstrates that porn isn’t powerful and neither is any fetish - they are merely chosen props that you imbue and color with your mind.

Both experiments will show you that *sex is what you think*, not how you physically masturbate or what you watch or participate in. If you want to solve your MIED, you’ll need to understand why you’ve chosen your fetish object/s, and then reinterpret the value you place in your fetish, and then also - and this next part is crucial - reinterpret the value you see in your relationship and intimacy with your partner or another person, in general. You do this first by devaluing porn and unplugging all the misplaced “power” you’ve given it as explained in the experiment above.

Seeing these objects for what they truly are is a crucial first step in solving your MIED. Next you must gain an understanding of your PMO construct (belief system) in detail and this includes your “why”. After you’ve learned why you value your fetish object/s, and then learn to challenge that perceived “need for” the fetish object/s, you can refocus on your sexual encounters with a partner on a completely empowered basis.

Chapter 5: Understand “Your Why” - It’s the Key

(Before you begin reading, read Chapter 13 in the Master Text)

People have said to us, “I’ve read The Freedom Model, I’ve watched all the podcast episodes, and it all makes so much sense! But even with all this, I still don’t know why I keep going back to PMO’ing.”

First, know that the master text and the podcast, and much of our content for public consumption is substance-use topic dominated. We’ve been helping that demographic for 34 years and consequently there’s a massive archive of that substance-use specific material. Not everything we’ve written or said in those substance-use focused outlets applies to a PMO issue. This chapter is one of those nuanced topics. You will not be able to fully solve your PMO problem until you gain a thorough understanding of why you like it so much.

As a logical starting point, it’s important to recognize that whenever *you enter* a PMO session or binge, your underlying motive for that activity is to be happier through PMO’ing even though the end results might be unfulfilling and at times, even miserable for you. In other words, you see benefits in PMO’ing or engaging in your fetish when making the decision to do it.

We’ve already determined that porn and brain chemistry aren’t the actual problem, but rather, it’s the value and meaning you provide the fetish objects. In this perspective, let’s now see what your personal PMO construct is, *why* you enjoy PMO’ing so much, and *why* it has resulted in a net loss in your happiness.

It’s Not Always About Physical Pleasure

Contrary to most people’s thinking on the topic, a PMO habit is not exclusively based upon a pursuit of “physical pleasure”. Yet, the focus of most arguments surrounding PMO’ing tends to be centered in the orgasm lens, aspects of brain chemistry and porn props, which are all physically oriented factors. People naturally gravitate to seeing the physical components as the sole reasons behind their binges because they tend to be the most obvious. However, this view is desperately incomplete. These are only surface deep explanations. There is a lot more to a PMO habit than the pursuit of an orgasm by looking at pretty naked people engaging in sexual acts.

What then explains the massive preoccupation with these problematic habits? The answer is *your why*.

It's All in the Context of a Bigger, But More Personal Picture - "YOUR WHY"

There are poignant moments (or eras) in people's lives that are life changing in both good and bad ways. Life is a giant pile of experiences, memories, relationships, and events. A lot of them matter a great deal to the individual. Some of these important moments might also play a role in the development of the PMO binge rituals and sessions.

These moments or eras in one's life may be something like the following: maybe it's an especially lonely time in the person's life that is changed suddenly when someone walks into their life and lights it up with love and companionship. Maybe that person is a mentor, a girlfriend or boyfriend, or someone they've married. Maybe it's someone that represents something extremely important at the time. It could be a one night stand that was magical. Maybe this person is a boss or coworker that helped them move up the corporate ladder when no one else seemed to care or notice all their hard work and dedication. Maybe it was a friend or a distant cousin that ended the lonely streak when they showed up and brought life back into what was a dark time. Maybe it was winning a championship or award or getting the lead role in the school play. The point is, we all have moments of life where light enters the seeming darkness.

On the other side of the coin, sometimes the life-changing event might be marked with intense pain or humiliation: the death of a loved one, a divorce, ill-health, being bullied, being molested by a friend, a stranger, or a family member, being beaten, suicide attempts, depression, substance use issues, rape, etc.

To understand a PMO binge construct and ultimately what's behind it, one must understand themselves, their life events - both good and bad as described above - *and the context that the PMO fantasy plays into that array of factors both past and present.* This might sound complex, but I'll tell a story of someone I coached recently that will make it easier to understand.

Once you comprehend what *you are trying to accomplish* with your preoccupation with fantasies and fetish object/s in the bigger picture of your overall life story, you will be able to see *why* you've held so fast to your PMO binging and *why* it's so valuable to you. When you understand yourself and your reasons behind your habit, you will be able to see your way out of it. (The process of discovering "your why" behind your PMO'ing is the goal of our FM Coaching model as well.)

A Story - A Coaching Case Study

John (not his real name) had been celibate in his late teens and early twenties because as he said to me in one of our coaching sessions, “I’m not especially good looking. I’m not that smart. I work at (fast food joint), and frankly I’m super tired all the time, depressed, and fat. When I go out, I feel awkward and like I don’t add up. I don’t like meeting girls. I’m embarrassed and I fumble a bit when I’m near them. Most of my days are spent at work, playing video games, or PMO’ing.”

We talked for a while on the specifics of this self-image and his background and experiences as I built what I call “the puzzle” in my own mind. (Those of you whom I’ve coached will remember our first sessions of “building the puzzle” together.)

Once the basic puzzle of his background was built in my mind, I then moved the conversation to the PMO arena, “What are your fetish specifics and why do you like them so much?” I asked.

He replied, “I like looking at women who like to have doggystyle sex. But they have to be ethnic. Not the regular looking black women, but the really, really dark skinned ones. I especially like the Ethiopian women who have extremely dark skin and are tall and thin. That’s what I go searching for on (porn site).”

I said, “That’s really specific. (This didn’t surprise me, most fetishes are). Do you dabble with other genres?” I asked.

“Yeah,” he said. “But eventually I get right back to the ethnic porn.”

Now what’s interesting here is that he kept referring to it as “ethnic” porn. But when I pressed for details, he described a very specific body type, sex act, and skin tone that was really a package style he liked inside of the broader ethnic genre classification typically listed on porn sites.

I asked him, “So what’s the doggystyle preference all about? Why do you prefer that style over others?”

He thought for a bit and shyly said, “Because when a woman bends over, she’s giving you her best parts.” I knew there had to be more to this so I asked more questions, and eventually John looked at me sadly and said, with embarrassment, “That way, she doesn’t have to look at me, but I still get to have her.”

This was a very honest answer and demonstrated something important. All of his answers were stated in a way that if an outside observer didn’t know we were talking about an object (videos and pics on a computer screen), they would think he was talking

about real women he'd been with or wanted to be with. His answers were emotional, intense, and at first, riddled with shame. But within a few sessions, he was able to set aside the shame when he realized that I didn't judge him, and that there were logical reasons for his preferences.

Before I continue with the story, I need to digress for a moment to explain some things...

Needs and Fantasy Tend to Converge

If someone convinces you that fetish objects (whatever they are) are less scary than having sex with real people, and that the fetish objects can also be more reliable and controllable than the unpredictability and risks of real relationships, well *then logically*, a person will build a powerful fantasy and relationship to the object that represents this safety, control, and satisfaction. Furthermore, if they add sexuality and masturbation into that fetish object relationship, and that this sexual encounter is completely on the individual's terms, this level of control is quite attractive as well. Then add in the orgasm as the ultimate "climax" to the expression of the event with the object, and you can see that the PMO binge seems to serve a huge range of emotional needs including that of feeling a need for conquest, emotional validation, physical stress relief, revenge, a healing from humiliation or abuse, creating a distraction from responsibilities or the stresses of maturation, a general sense of relationship, a seeming loss of loneliness, and even just garden variety satisfaction, among many others. These emotional needs are what's behind your why.

The fact that the fetish object is just that - an object that can't actually serve you in some emotional way (it has no sentience) - can be easily overlooked in an artfully crafted fantasy session that is being used for such deep emotional needs. Orgasms feel good physically; this makes the inconvenient fact that the object can't "fix" anything all the easier to ignore or forget. You feel physical pleasure in the moment, so it becomes an active placebo of sorts that doesn't actually solve any emotional problems or fill any emotional needs. This is one more reason why people get down a PMO habit road and feel totally mystified about why they PMO. Their PMO rituals are so practiced, so habitually repeated, that they've forgotten the original emotional reasons that began their road to PMO'ing long ago. It all becomes rewritten into the popular narrative of a seemingly automatic "urge" and "addiction" perspective. The *why* behind their PMO rituals is lost to time's eraser.

To show just how far humans can go in attributing magic and unrealistic value to objects, there once was a show about "strange fetishes" where they interviewed people on TV with odd ways of dealing with life. In one episode there was a man who married a mannequin. He was fully invested in perceiving the plastic form as a real person. He

loved the object as a man might love a real-life wife. He was unapologetic, believed her to be absolutely real, and was relatively happy (except the obvious ridicule and claims of his insanity being made toward him). He held steadfast in his fantasy and for him, he was quite satisfied with this relationship. He did not talk about it as an object. As a matter of fact, he felt the interviewer was rude when they dared challenge her authenticity as a living woman.

One might say this man was insane, and I'm not here to make a claim one way or the other on his sanity. That's not the point. The point is, people are constantly giving meaning to objects. Some of that meaning, such as this man's relationship to a plastic doll, can be extreme. But if that meaning is believed to address a need, and that need is desperate, then the habit that develops based on that perspective becomes an intense pursuit to that individual.

To be clear, I'm not saying the mannequin is a real person, nor am I saying masturbating to porn or having a lot of sex with escorts will solve childhood issues, *but if you are taught they will, and you believe they will*, then you will use every logical argument you can think of to convince yourself to continue building a greater relationship to those powerful icons. This is where porn marketing, fantasy, and faulty logic converge to create a path of empty promises and the frustration I see in my students. The only answer to undoing this harmful construct, *is to identify what need they are attempting to address through PMO'ing and then challenge its ability to do so.*

PMO'ing is an attribution of meaning and value to an object or objects that is personal to that autonomous individual. This creates their internal dialogue language; their sexual expression language, if you will. This language or value ascription is based on beliefs that the fetish object serves emotional needs, past or present, in some way.

Know that those who use porn strictly to "snap off a quick one to relieve stress" aren't usually the ones reading this book. Their goal is quite different from those whose lives are dominated by their PMO habits. It's those who have a deep context of need in their lives, and usually one that they haven't sat down and spelled out and examined enough to fully understand and change. But know that you can understand *why* you engage in PMO'ing, and furthermore that this habit wasn't developed in a vacuum, but rather in the futile attempt to solve internal issues by coloring them with physical pleasure to "fix" them.

Not Everyone Uses PMO'ing to Attempt to Fix Their Lives

Before I continue with John's story, it's important to note that not everyone who PMO's problematically does so because they are using porn or other fetish objects to attempt to fix themselves or validate their emotional needs or solve issues from the past or their

present lives. Some people are simply fascinated by sex, or observing physical anatomy, and/or the value of distraction that focusing on PMO'ing can provide. These too can be habits that dominate one's life, but they do tend to be less complicated, easier to identify, and thus, efficient in their changeability. We will dive into this class of PMO'ing more later on in the book.

Now Back to the Story...

We started this chapter with the idea that there are times in life that have more significance than other times, and that this can play a role in one's reasoning behind their PMO'ing. In John's case, we were trying to figure out how his porn fetish, which is characterized by a desire to watch very dark skinned, tall, thin women, with the focus on the sex act being specifically doggystyle, had any connection to a need from his past, (or if it didn't). When a person has such a detailed PMO construct that is well defined, there is usually some reasoning behind that level of specificity. So it's worth exploring.

When we started our coaching sessions, rather than delving straight into his PMO construct and the specifics of that sexual fantasy arena, I spent a lot of time understanding John from many angles as I built his life puzzle in my mind. He explained his past, the things he loved, the things he hated, and the people and events that affected his life.

Once that puzzle was built and I was satisfied that I had enough background context, I then asked about the specifics of his PMO construct. Asking questions in this manner made John think about things he hadn't thought about in a long time. With that said, I don't want the reader thinking we are mining for a "cause" that doesn't exist. Nor would I go planting ideas about possible trauma or the like as being the causes behind John's PMO habit. That is dangerous ground that only hurts a student, as most of the time, the supposed "trauma causes" don't even exist, or if present, have a minimal role in the construction of the overall PMO habit. That's not to say that there aren't people who construct all manner of sexual proclivities based on a deep desire to fix past traumas, and that their current PMO habits become a horrible, unfulfilling goose chase to fix them. John's case was in the middle of these opposites - he certainly had some self-image issues, had been bullied, and was seeking validation, friends, and acceptance just like everyone does; and he had some traumatic instances as well. But his dominant issue was based on his own self-image more than the surrounding external difficult events he endured.

After he described how much he identified that style of sex as his way of being intimate without the "humiliation of being seen", and his admittance that this came from his extreme self-consciousness of his physical appearance, I asked about his preference for dark, tall, thin, "ethnic" women in his PMO construct. His reply was, "I just like 'em." I

asked the same question over and over again, but in different ways, and his response was the same blanket answer. This is where he was truly stuck. Understanding *WHY* he “liked ‘em” was the lynchpin of him understanding his PMO construct and then challenging it directly and eventually moving past it for good. So we had to get down to the nitty gritty of “the why”.

“The Why”

This line of questioning brought us back into his past where he stated that he began fantasizing and looking at porn in the 4th grade. He talked about 2 times he went into the coat closet in his homeroom class and masturbated because he was “so horny.” I explained that this act was relatively common among children and this surprised him.

I then asked, “What or who were you jerking off to, or was it just a physical release you were seeking?”

He replied, “I think I was in love with my teacher at the time, and I’d also just been introduced to some hardcore porn on (porn site) and found that I could cum. I was still shooting blanks, (he laughed) but it still felt awesome. I just thought about her while I was in the closet touching myself and it happened. Then I started jerking off at home a lot more.”

“What about her got you so excited?” I asked.

There was a long pause, he stammered, “She was the opposite of me, she was really skinny. I’ve always been fat, even as a kid. And nice, she was just really nice to me. I wasn’t used to that. And, (this is where I could see the lightbulb turn on) she was African American and had an African accent too. She was originally from Kenya. I remember her talking about that.”

This string of dialogue was actually just a small piece within the middle of many hours of talking. But I saw John change when he realized the following: that porn sites, his discovery of orgasms and masturbation, and a kind person “that looked nothing like him”, all converged in that single year of school. This confluence of positive factors formed his “quiet world of fantasy”, and while actively PMO’ing he was “able to create the sexual and loving relationship he wanted” while also focusing on a “body style he admired” and in a distant way, “wished he was born into.” (All quoted text are his paraphrased words.)

He further explained that his awkwardness grew as he left grade school. Middle school came and went, and during his high school years his PMO construct gained in its value and meaning. He was spending hours on porn sites each day, and was finding it more

and more difficult to find satisfaction in the process. The more pressure he felt in his life, the more he would wander in the privacy of his thoughts, rekindling his PMO construct on a daily basis. And when the construct would get mundane and almost feel like a chore some days, he'd still find pleasure in reconfiguring the elements of his original construct in various fantasy plays; this would "keep things fresh enough to make it pleasurable again."

This teacher represented everything he wasn't physically, while also being incredibly kind and patient; both of these factors were a bright spot in John's difficult life. These factors would have a profound effect on *any* child whose self-image was one of, as John put it, "a fat reject." Then you add in a sexual overlay in a fantasy realm, and John was able to "be with" the woman of his dreams over and over and over again. Is it any wonder that tying sexual gratification to an icon that brought him emotionally away from everything he hated about himself would end up being meaningful? This is actually quite logical in the sense that if you believe in the supposed "power of porn" as John did, and that powerful icon also contains convenient imagery for your fantasies, then anyone with John's issues would probably come to the same conclusion that porn equals feeling better. "Feeling better" is a form of happiness after all - something John desperately needed and still does.

Forgetting Where You Started

Now in his mid-20's, the confusion about his habit grew. After high school, the guilt, self-hate, and narrative of being a "porn addict" began to overwrite and slowly erase the original meaning behind his PMO construct. Instead of thinking about the teacher and her body and all the other aspects of the original fantasy, he began focusing on the narrative of being "powerlessly tied" to specific porn imagery, and was mystified as to why he endlessly was "drawn to it." He felt he was supposed to be moving on as a grown man, and his habit was getting in the way. The more he read about supposed internet solutions to "porn addiction", the more hopeless he felt. That's when he became further mystified as to why he kept returning to something that ultimately was now quite "boring, unfulfilling, and (as he put it) shameful".

Here's the problem; *porn has no inherent power to fix John's self-image issues*, and never could. But he wasn't aware of that fact, and so in the beginning years of his PMO'ing he kept the illusion alive that his fantasy life was the answer to his unhappiness. This kind of distracting yourself from pain through fantasy isn't uncommon by any means, and with enough dedication to the imaginary world, one can avoid the truth of their existence for a certain period of time. This is especially the case during childhood and adolescence when fantasy plays a much larger role in our thought life because it's more acceptable to spend time in that state.

But ever so slowly, John's fetish objects faded in their supposed "solving of problems and happiness generating capacity". He was getting older and farther from the original events that created the framework of his original PMO construct. As the memories of his teacher faded, as well as all the ancillary fantasies, the PMO episodes became less and less appealing and quite unfulfilling. This forced John, with his faulty logic that PMO'ing was his answer to his problems, to desperately double down on his binging in the hopes of gaining the happiness and release of pain he once felt he'd received from the habit. Eventually the PMO'ing *itself* became the primary focus of these sexual sessions, and *the reasoning behind* PMO'ing was forgotten. This is where John was when he asked me for coaching; confused and lost, and without an answer as to why this construct existed or why he kept doing it.

Once we created the timeline of events and understood that his childhood mind had used fetish objects to create the fantasy about his teacher and her body, combined with orgasms and sexual exploration into various other porn genres, he was able to see why he was so caught up in it. It took many hours of coaching to remember the chain of events. But once he did, he also realized how his fetish objects did not actually solve his self-image issues, nor his genetic body-type, nor his social awkwardness. He was then able to see why it felt so futile, boring, and unfulfilling. This led to further realizing that in this devalued perspective, PMO'ing had very little intrinsic value at all.

With that truth now revealed, John was able to build, with an adult mindset, a pathway out of this imaginary fetish realm and into a new era for himself where he could *directly* address his self-image issues, find love, and move on with his life. He knew that he no longer needed his fetish because the objects and the fantasies couldn't and never did actually serve him. This was all a construct in his mind that he believed he needed to survive his emotionally distraught circumstances as a child. He was now ready to let those fantasies go and fix his issues by tackling them directly.

In essence, he debunked the myths of the powers of porn, and then directly challenged his old preferences with truth and understanding, and then faced his future with courage and a new enthusiasm. He was no longer distracted by myths and magic, and instead began living by logic, determination, and a desire to change his life and address his issues squarely. John is a success today as a result of his willingness to face the truth, let go of mythology, and live his new authentic life!

Chapter 6: Let Go of Your Guilt and Shame

(Before you continue with this chapter, go to the Master Text and make sure you have read Chapter 7, as we will be referring to The Positive Drive Principle or PDP. The rest of this book will not make sense without a thorough understanding of this powerful principle. Also read Chapters 13 & 15.)

In the Freedom Model you won't hear us use the words "bad", or "good" to describe your habit, nor will we say statements like "you should", or "you can't" or any other judgment based directives about your personal habits. We don't go down that road because we know our place as your coaches. Our primary job and goal as coaches and researchers is to provide you with objective truth in regards to changing your habits; it is not to make judgments about your lifestyle and habits. While we provide facts that will help you to solve your struggle, we won't tell you what your change should be. Your expressions of changing or improving your emotional status in regards to PMO'ing is your choice alone. We understand your autonomy, and we respect it.

We also know how difficult it can be for you to let go of your own judgments about your habit and about yourself, especially with respect to your habit. No matter the level of your current attachment to your guilt and shame, we are asking that you temporarily shelve them as best you can. We are asking just as we would if you were sitting directly across from us in a private coaching session or one of our workshops. As you read through the rest of this book and are working to solve your problem, try your best to place all of that negativity, self-hatred, and self-flogging, along with any moralism you carry about it, on a metaphorical shelf.

We Don't "Give Permission"

Now do not confuse this request to set aside your shame and guilt with, "*Hey now you can just let go of all decency and do whatever I please because The Freedom Model told me I can!*" To be absolutely clear, that is not what we are saying, nor are we in a position to give permission to anyone to do anything. We are making the assumption that you want to make a positive change in your PMO habit. With that assumption firmly in place, know that we are asking for you to let go of your guilt and shame for the time being so your progress isn't hampered by self-hatred, self-shaming, or self-pity. When coaching or doing live workshops on this topic, we always say, "*You can always pick up your shame and guilt later if you really want it back.*"

But Why Do I Need to Let Go of My Guilt?

You might be asking, *“Why should I let go of my guilt and shame? That’s what I use to regulate my behavior and stop me from PMO’ing!”* The answer is obvious - if that’s your method, it’s clearly not working very well, and frankly, it never will.

You’re reading this book, and it’s probably not because you’re feeling great about your progress regulating or stopping your PMO habit. You’re searching for answers and hitting brick walls. No matter how badly you want to stop, how much shame and guilt you heap on yourself, you keep PMO’ing, and the guilt and shame continues to grow doesn’t it? The first thing you need to do is move past the ineffective strategy of using guilt and shame to punish yourself into stopping. That doesn’t work, and it will never work. You’ll never be adequately motivated by fear or guilt, as they are both counter to the Positive Drive Principle (**Chapter 7** of the Master Text), so it makes sense to shelve the negativity, and move in a different, more positively motivated direction.

You might be focusing on your guilt and shame to distract yourself from PMO’ing. You might even implement some form of active self-hate or punishment, but even with this technique in place, your desire to feel better will always win out, and what is your go-to activity for feeling better? (Remember the PDP is always driving you!) Feeling guilty and shameful can only result in pain, regardless if you think it will stop you from PMO’ing temporarily. Even if you feel like small gains are made from feeling shameful and guilty, there is usually a net loss as you cycle between forced abstinence and active PMO’ing.

Given enough time in these abstinence spells, you’ll drift from the pain of self-hatred back towards your go-to feel good option: porn and masturbation. This is because you perceive PMO’ing as more beneficial than the guilt you’re using to shield you from it. What you see as your solution, that being feeling guilty and shameful, ends up making you feel so terrible that you see PMO as the better alternative and a quick and easy way to feel good, if even for a moment. It’s a simple matter of competing and contrasting options. Focusing on guilt and shame creates the perfect negative feedback loop that keeps you in the cycle of active PMO’ing. So your supposed solution becomes a catalyst for the problem! This clearly isn’t an effective solution to your PMO issue.

Where You Focus Matters

Guilt and shame, no matter how they are implemented, always end with you in greater pain - it’s the nature of these negative emotions. And what does a person who has a lot

of emotional pain do? They naturally seek relief from pain. Not only does guilt driving yourself actually drive the feelings of need for more PMO'ing, but while you're trying to guilt yourself into changing or stopping your habit, *your actual reasons for your chosen preference are ignored!* This is crucial for you to understand. Shame blocks progress of any kind.

Guilt and shame are extremely resource heavy emotions; there's just not much room to do anything else when they are in the forefront of your mind. Any objective look inside as to why you like your fetish/es, can't happen with feelings of guilt and shame in the way. As we discussed in the last chapter, the, "*why you like it*" is *everything when trying to solve the problem!* If you can't drill down as to why your current expression of your PDP is the fetish you've chosen for yourself, then how on earth will you ever challenge that deep preference or change it?

The Cycle and How to End it

Shame equals pain. There's no way around that. Pain will eventually be traded for something *less* painful (that's your natural, inherent, PDP in action). Because you have free will and can choose anything to feel better, any number of things might be attractive when you're feeling shameful.

In a given week you might express your PDP in various ways as you vacillate between different emotions, choices, activities and behaviors. But invariably, those with a deep preference for porn or other fetishes, tend to gravitate back to that particular preference more times than the individual without that distinct preference.

Once you understand that shaming yourself into deprivation-based abstinence isn't going to work, you'll begin to see that a more accurate analysis needs to take place. Instead of your traditional focus on guilt being a motivator for change, you'll need to pivot and ask yourself this simple question, "Am I ready to accept that I indulge and nurture my preference for PMO'ing because I see value and meaning in that activity?" And furthermore, you can also ask yourself, "Why do I like it so much?" Both of these questions cannot be answered and then challenged, if you are still implementing a guilt and shame based strategy for change.

Consider this, when I'm coaching a student we often discuss details of their habits such as what kinds of specific pornography they prefer, what fetishes interest them, what kinds of sex acts they like, etc. Figuring out the "why" often requires talking about these kinds of details openly and as accurately as possible. In that first session some students are so filled with such guilt and shame that they are unwilling to talk about their

fetish/es. But to solve the problem, they must be willing to look at their habit honestly and embrace it long enough to identify why they like it.

After identifying the benefits they perceive they are getting from it, they then move on to figuring out where those beliefs originated, and if the value they've placed in these objects is real and if engaging with them is truly fulfilling or not. These actions get to the heart of your current preference for PMO'ing and why their preference exists, and they set the stage for challenging the perceived benefits of PMO'ing. It will also allow you to let go of the addict identity and the "powers of porn" mythology. After all that, you will see that your preference is primarily based on porn industry marketing promises that will never come true and instead, leave you empty. This knowledge immediately lessens their value to you. Once you have devalued PMO, change becomes effortless because you won't want something that doesn't serve you in some way.

This success starts by setting guilt and shame aside and no longer using it as your primary change strategy. Once you replace it with a self-forgiving and non-judgmental approach, you will be amazed how quickly you will arrive at new conclusions about this preference you currently see as massively important.

For now, set aside your shame and guilt and entertain the idea that you can successfully change your habit to either non-problematic levels or abstinence, (whatever you choose for yourself). Open your mind to self-forgiveness, because your problem is misinformation, faulty beliefs, and ignorance of the truth, not an addiction or a disorder or a matter of weakness. You're doing what you want, when you want it, based on ideas you've been fed for years and maybe even decades.

Morality

Morality: a particular system of values and principles of conduct, especially one held by a specified person or society.

Here's the problem with morality, the codes of conduct for each of the thousands of societies and cultures worldwide are built upon beliefs and ideas that serve those particular people, in their geographic regions, and within their religious and political ideologies, some of which may run as far back as thousands of years. Simply put, each culture and society has its own version of morality. Consequently, the adopting of one code over the other in regards to sex, sexual conduct, and the ideas of right and wrong in regards to fetishes and sex as a whole would be impossible to sort and then promote or debate in these pages.

As such, we will not be discussing “right” and “wrong” with respect to sex. We will not discuss whether sex should be reserved for procreation in a committed relationship, or if it can be used for fun and pleasure; whether porn is bad or good, whether lust is a sin or not, whether masturbation is good or wrong, whether watching or engaging in fetishes while in a committed relationship is cheating, whether God or your deity is involved in your intimate world or not, etc.; NONE of this will be addressed in this book. While these beliefs may be a part of your PMO construct, we are asking you to temporarily set your moral and religious beliefs aside while you work to solve your problem. These codes of conduct and moral beliefs have not stopped you from building and engaging in your preference, and instead may have contributed to it through the amplification of guilt and shame that can come with such moral codes.

The Freedom Model will sidestep this moral angle for the practical reality that it is not relevant to solving your problem. Additionally, The Freedom Model carries no universal blanket code of conduct with one important exception: if you are knowingly hurting people in any fashion with your participation in your fetish, or believe you are hurting people in any fashion with your fetish, you may want to stop that behavior. Or, if you are doing something illegal in regards to your PMO’ing, you must be willing to accept the consequences of those actions if you are to remain engaged in that activity. In short, our position is for you to own your habit and take responsibility for it.

Child Pornography, Pedophilia, and Rape

While the nature of The Freedom Model ethos is to avoid judgment in discussions with our students about fetishes and sex, there is one moral line The Freedom Model coaching staff can’t and won’t cross - and that is that no one should victimize children (or adults) while in the act or in the support of their chosen fetish.

If, for example, child pornography, pedophilia, or rape is in your wheelhouse of preferred choices, we know our coaches cannot be emotionally unbiased in those cases, and so our effectiveness there will be in question. Our biases in this area are the result of having developed the Freedom Model here in Western culture where these kinds of sexual behaviors are unacceptable and seen as crimes. Of course, we know that the vast majority of people with PMO habits do not engage in watching child pornography, pedophilia, or rape, and can therefore be helped directly by our coaches.

With all this said, if your preference falls into one or more of these categories, we do want to help you to solve your problem. Thus, we recommend that you use all of our other learning options: our books, workbooks, online video workshops, online program, and podcast episodes. Our various online resources will help people in this category to

change their preference to a less destructive option, and thus no longer hurt the children who are the genuine victims of the darker side of the sex and porn industries. So while we know and understand the emotional limits of our coaching staff, our books and pre-recorded courses can be used to fully move past these kinds of issues.

Shelve Your Morality as You Analyze

In summary, if you are ready to change your preference for PMO'ing, then you will need to temporarily shelve your moral views and the shame that typically goes hand in hand with it *as you analyze* your PMO habit. Whether PMO'ing is right or wrong *matters little in determining why you like it*. Guiltting yourself can only act as a distraction to the truth behind your preferences for PMO'ing.

The fact is, you value the meaning you've placed in your habit, and to be distracted by moral codes and what you "should be doing" will do little to change what you are actually choosing to do. Your moral codes have done little to stop you or move you to acceptable moderate levels of PMO'ing or abstaining thus far, so to focus your attention there will continue to do little to solve your issue now or in the future. We must begin by lifting the shaming practices out of the way in order to fully expose the true reasons behind your preoccupation with fetish objects - your "why". Your eyes and mind must be wide open, honest, and clear as you dig deep and challenge your long-held beliefs about the value you see in your PMO habit. This is the only way you can finally see the why behind your habit and change it.

Chapter 7: Pleasure

(Read Chapters 20 and 11 in the Master Text)

Pleasure is subjective, and if you read **Chapter 20** in the Master Text, this fact becomes evident. However, things get muddy when it comes to sex, specifically around the topic of orgasms. The confusion is based on the actual physical sensations created in orgasm versus the thoughts that get someone to the point of that climax, and these are two very different things.

In several places in this text, I've stated that I agree that the vast majority of human beings find orgasms to be pleasurable. Sure there are people who are strict contrarians who counter the liking of the pleasurable sensations of climax, or others who have physical anomalies that make orgasm either impossible, less enjoyable, or unpleasant. But barring these small minorities, and for the practicality of what we are trying to achieve in this book, I think we can all agree that most people like to orgasm. With all that said, we must ask the question again - *is the pleasure we get from orgasm subjective?*

Like Everything, It's in the Nuances

To say that each individual's physical feeling of climax is theirs and theirs alone is no small point. To the degree that each individual has a unique body, yes, it is subjective because orgasms are a physical event tied to that particular individual's unique body and autonomous mind. For example, with words I may be able to describe my orgasms, and you might agree with everything I'm saying at face value. However, each of the stages of each orgasm that I might have, and of those I remember, are all unique for the simple fact that I'm unique and autonomous and more importantly, so are you. So you can't possibly actually know what I'm feeling and vice versa. Then, once you add in the circumstances at the time of those orgasms along with the mindset at the time, subjectivity becomes a much larger part of the equation. Next add in the role of personal fantasy, mood, your agenda, your partner or lack of one, who might be in the next room listening, and so on, and it becomes a truly subjective experience for each person. The fact that you are alive, are autonomous, have free will, have your own experiences in life, and see things only through your own lens, makes your orgasms completely and wholly unique to you.

At their base I think we can say that orgasms feel good physically to virtually everyone, but that's the only generalization we can make. What *makes them* good, or bad, or anything in between, *is* the subjectivity we are talking about here. Logically the more we fine tune the general idea that orgasms feel good and are different for each individual,

the closer we get to the subjective truth of each person's actual *reasoning behind their climax*, and the experience of that event.

Let's dig further still; each individual has thoughts and value judgments, and they provide meaning to their experiences, have their own perspectives and have ever-evolving situations that play into how and why they orgasm, and so on. After adding in all that precedes the physical climax, you can begin seeing that orgasms themselves are quite a small point in a long string of thoughts, motives, expectancies, relationships (or lack thereof), the meaning of those relationships, the value of pornography or other fetish objects, and the list goes on and on! Remember, this is all going on in the confines of the individual's mind.

If we spent the time to write a book based on the fact that orgasms feel good, that would be a very short book indeed. Yet, when I talk with people struggling with a dramatic, painful, and life destroying PMO habit, they almost always say they are "addicted to orgasms" as if orgasms just happen out of thin air or are the only part of the overall fetish experience that they enjoy. That's either a lie or in many cases, is a lack of self-awareness. Either way, these discussions devolve into debates trying to prove that their bio-driven compulsion to climax happens without thought, emotion, or expectancies, or any other reasoning behind it. They often assert there is nothing else at play beyond a biological drive for orgasms. This debate is a huge waste of time.

However, the bio-centered viewpoint of PMO'ing is so pervasive that people actually believe they are a slave to physical "pleasure" (as if pleasure is a thing that happens *to* them) and that the physical climax is the whole of that discussion; it's the beginning, middle and the end. It's almost as if the interpretation of how the orgasm comes about doesn't exist at all. This partial view means that you (your mind) doesn't exist in the equation! In essence you get reduced to a reactionary, addictable slave; one without any capability to carry out the necessary thoughts and actions to have an orgasm.

Reject the Reductionist View!

You can't fix a harmful preoccupation with orgasms and fetishes if you don't recognize the existence of the very mind you use to build these habits along with all the other factors that go into each PMO episode! Own your mind, own the thoughts and ideas that build each PMO episode, and then you can own the solution to them as well. Remember, your mind is the creator of subjectivity here and is the creator of your valued habit as well. Make no mistake, you're going to need it to reverse that trend too.

Chapter 8: Irresistible Nudity and The Irresistible Orgasm

(Before you read this chapter, reread Chapter 7 if needed and Chapter 20, in the Master Text)

The concept of irresistibility sits directly behind the idea of powerlessness or out-of-control PMO'ing. If we say that something is irresistible, we are saying that it is empirically and objectively so attractive that we are compelled beyond our sound reasoning powers to be endlessly and hopelessly attracted to it. This of course is not reality. There are many things in life that we are told are irresistible, and yet we see through the marketing. But if the "irresistible" moniker is repeated over and over again, you can unknowingly adopt the idea that the use of the object is an actual compulsion. We see this with the myth that porn and other fetish objects compel people to PMO beyond their free will. Once you take on that belief, you fully adopt the "out-of-control sex or porn addict" identity.

The first of these common irresistibility myths is that *nudity is irresistible* and compels PMO'ing. Let's debunk this lie now.

The Beautiful Human Body

I remember the first time I saw a naked woman. I was eight years old, hanging out with a group of my friends from down the street, and one of the older brothers had stolen a Playboy magazine (there was no internet in 1978) from his father's cache. I remember looking through the pages with my friends and being excited, but also being a bit shocked at how intuitively natural the woman's body looked to me. If ever there was a time where an unknown thing, thus far only seen in my imagination, had matched what my mind had already conjured up, this was the closest I'd ever come to such a definite connection. I was struck with how beautiful and stunning the experience of seeing her body was, but also how intuitive that image was to me.

I had a similar experience the first time I had sex. The build up, the anxiety of how I would actually perform the act itself, and the social pressure to "do it right, and do it good", was a real conundrum for me. What was supposed to be a bright spot in adolescence turned out to be akin to climbing a high desert mountain in stifling heat: I felt more anxiety the closer I got to actually accomplishing the feat. Between having the awful experience of being molested at the age of 5, and then having the pleasant experience of looking at that Playboy bunny 3 years later, my confusion about how I felt about nudity was growing.

Luckily when the opportunity for my first voluntary intimate sexual experience with a real person finally presented itself (at 16 yrs. old), I was lucky enough to have a girlfriend that loved me, and I her, and like the Playboy magazine experience years before, the act was somewhat natural, intuitive, and generally good for both of us. The decade that followed was a continuous evolution of my sexual, professional, social, and personal self that was littered with both good and bad experiences. But it all came full circle with a great career, a wonderful marriage, and 3 beautiful kids by my mid-thirties.

You might be wondering why I'm telling you all this in a chapter on nudity and orgasms. The answer is because the desire to see and experience the nude body is a miraculous experience that should be celebrated. It is celebrated throughout the world in art, religion, and in our personal lives. Nudity is so important that its allowance, or banishment in public is written into laws, tribal constitutions, and even injected into different depictions of religious deities and the Bible, among many other religious and cultural texts. It's a constant theme of the fashion world as well as familial customs and social norms (where and when to be naked). The point is, *YES*, nudity is on our minds, and for some, it's on their minds a lot.

The second point, and the reason I tell my short personal story above, is that each of our experiences with it, and our interpretations of it, are completely subjective and based on a multitude of personal factors and experiences. My life has certainly been a mixed bag of good and bad, and that frames how I think about things. There is no doubt that this is true of you and of everyone else in the world.

Your ideas about observing nudity as being *a cause* for your PMO habit is a personal perception that you've created yourself or collected from others during your lifetime. This perception, however, doesn't reflect objective truth or reality. Irresistibility in and of itself as a concept in regards to nudity implies that you are not responsible for your preoccupation with it or for your inability to stop looking at it.

In the realm of your mind, nothing is truly irresistible - there are just things and ideas that you find attractive and preferable based on how you decide to see them and engage with them. If nudity *caused* PMO'ing, then in every third world, tropical country where nudity is the norm, uncontrolled staring, public masturbation, and possibly even rape would occur as a direct result of seeing nude people all around you. The same would occur in nudist beaches and colonies all across the globe. But that doesn't happen. People choose their reactions to nude imagery and nudity in general within social norms. Clearly no one is ever powerless or out of control simply by seeing nudity, thus it's not irresistible.

An Exercise to Challenge this Belief

To prove the validity of what I just said, here's an exercise for you to do: look at images of nudity that DO NOT conform to your idea of what's beautiful or preferred. Maybe it is pictures of naked people starving in concentration camps. Or, in our workshop I use the famous picture of the naked young Vietnamese girl screaming in terror running towards the cameraman with her burning, bombed house behind her. Yes, she's naked, but the image will do little good for the vast majority of people who look at it. Irresistible is not a word you will use staring at such a depiction of nudity.

Yes, these are extreme examples, but if you were to look at all the genres of porn on the internet, you will find many that are not in line with your preference - yet all the people in the pics or videos are quite naked.

All of what I've stated above shows the truth about nudity:

- Most people like to look at it.
- It's everywhere.
- The value you see in it is based solely on your personal preferences and whatever fantasy you imbue it with in your mind.
- Lastly, because our mind builds the meaning into the nudity objects (pics, videos, etc.), they are a completely subjective experience and are not inherently irresistible - unless of course you believe they are. Because in the end, what you believe, becomes your own subjective version of the truth.
- There are many images and videos that contain nudity that will not be to your liking, and thus are not irresistible.

What About Orgasms?

We often get asked the following question when discussing irresistibility, "Are you actually trying to convince me that there are people who don't find orgasms pleasurable?" This is a strange question because no one at The Freedom Model has ever said such a thing. I'm sure in the history of mankind, there's been one or more people who don't like or value the orgasm climax experience, but I've not personally met them. I have, however, known asexual people who found little desire for orgasms or any sexual lifestyle for that matter. But they expressed indifference rather than some sort of dislike or rejection of the orgasm.

This line of questioning takes us away from the real point of this discussion, and that is - *are orgasms irresistible?* And is the physical sensation so powerful that people are

forced or compelled to PMO in search of that climax *because they are inherently irresistible?*

There's no doubt that, by far, the desire for physical climax is the number one general motive for PMO'ing. And at first glance, because the orgasm is part of our bodily experience, it becomes somewhat of a confusing issue. On the one hand we keep talking about your metaphysical mind running the desire for PMO'ing, and then we have the infamous orgasm as a seeming body-centered glitch in that theory. So does the body drive a person to PMO?

Think about the following scenario: if a person finds someone or something extremely attractive while they are in public, they do not immediately stop and masturbate uncontrollably. They choose otherwise. There is no irresistible force that compels public PMO'ing. (In the extremely rare cases where public displays of masturbation do occur, there are usually other mental illnesses at play, and this is beyond the capacity of the solutions contained in this book. In these cases, a professional mental health expert should be consulted.)

Orgasms are not the result of passive experience either, (they don't just happen) but rather, well thought out fantasies coupled with focus, either manually or mentally or both, on the genitals or other body parts we deem erogenous are the catalysts for physical climax. A lot needs to happen to orgasm successfully, and it all starts with an idea in your mind; a choice we make.

Is orgasm a part of the PMO construct? Sure. It can be. But are you compelled by other forces beyond your own thoughts to orgasm? No. Orgasm needs your mind to run fantasies in conjunction with manipulation of the genitals to frame and complete the experience. Without your creation of mindful meaning and value, orgasms simply cannot happen.

Is nudity a part of many people's PMO construct? Yes, of course. But just like orgasms, nudity isn't irresistible or more powerful than your free will. Nudity is either an object (imagery, videos, etc.) or an observation of an actual nude person or people - nothing more, nothing less - until you imbue it with value in your mind's eye. In short, you need to create value and meaning in these things to find them pleasurable. Without your mind, nudity, and orgasms are meaningless, much less inherently irresistible.

Chapter 9: The Pain - Pleasure Connection

(Read Chapters 6 & 13 in the Master Text)

Some people can create value in things that to most people might seem counterintuitive. Building sexual excitement in being humiliated and/or in pain are just two common examples. Some of the PMO constructs we help people sort out during our coaching sessions are habits surrounding their preferences and preoccupation with the various fetishes of humiliation, cuckolding, mock rape, sadism, masochism, domination and submission, and the like. These fetishes are built around some version of humiliation and pain which can be physical and/or emotional; the administering of it, or the taking of the submissive role in the act. Because these fetishes can involve the darker side of life, the fact that sexual exhilaration can bubble up from such imagery and live acts can seem embarrassing, shameful, confusing, and some people even describe them as flat out evil.

In this book we'll leave the morality of these fetishes out of the discussion for reasons we discussed earlier. We won't be debating the right or wrong angle of these preferences here. We also will not go into detail on categorizing each of these sexual habit categories, as there is plenty of literature on what these fetishes are, and if you have the preference for one, you already understand what it is and the mechanics of it. Most of the people we coach on this topic don't engage in these fetishes as live acts, but rather prefer to look at, and masturbate to, the porn genre's representations in videos and pics. They often say, "it's better as a fantasy than a reality". So this is where we will focus our attention. (However, all of what we say here will apply to those who perform these fetishes live as well.) Also, for the purposes of this chapter we will toss all of these specific subgenres into one basket term - pain fetish/es.

A Story - Gaining Social Acceptance Through Pain

When I was 6 years old, we moved to a new town and school. A year later, my parents divorced leaving me and my siblings to live with just our father in the new house. As a 7 year old, my mother leaving our home was a big emotional hit. I was a very sensitive child and quite small for my age, and as a result, I didn't fit in very well. It didn't take long for the kids in my neighborhood to see my insecurities and focus on them and bully me mercilessly. I was desperately lonely in the big house in the woods. My father was completely neglectful and uninterested in me or my siblings or what we were going through, and life in school was a painful exercise in social awkwardness. I felt alone, vulnerable, suicidal, scared, and extremely depressed.

Each day that I got on the bus to go to school I was picked on mercilessly. When dropped off after school, I'd run into my house to be alone, or I would go into the forest

around my home to escape. I learned to hide in this way to avoid being abused. Those were my only choices, *and I felt horribly trapped*.

Over the next couple of years, my intense desire to belong, not feel completely alone, and to have friends, outweighed the heavy cost I would need to pay to have them. I discovered that when the bullies were mocking and hurting me, that if I joined in by implicitly agreeing and making fun of myself with them, I was accepted into their small circle. By all outward accounts it looked like I was the desperate fool, and in a certain sense, I was. I became their plaything, the voluntary butt of their jokes. I knew I couldn't fight them as I was too small and weak at the time. So instead of physically fighting back on their bullying, I joined in their ridicule of me. I was not only accepting of it, but I was also amplifying their image of me as their pick-on. So you might ask, why do the downtrodden often partake in humiliating themselves in this way? We've all seen it play out in social circles everywhere, but why?

When you are in a situation like I was in at that time, realistic options for healthy friendships don't seem to exist. This situation creates a feeling of not only loneliness and self-hate, but of being trapped alone in that space of self-hate. So the question became, do I fight to stave off the abuse and rise in the social ladder that way, or do I somehow manipulate *something I could control* in exchange for them to allow me to be with them? And so, I willingly took on the role of the fool and joined in their ridicule of me. In doing so, I had a tiny piece of something I could control and wield as my ticket into the tribe.

What I realized when I forced myself to endure the pain of acting the fool, was that in a small way I'd taken their tools of ridicule out of their hands, and made them mine. Although this new way of coping was still horribly hurtful, and I hated myself for it, it was the tiny slice of control I needed to feel a sense of power. And that feeling of power trumped the self-hate and ridicule providing me with a tiny net win.

By joining in on the abuse, at least I had a sense that I was running the narrative. By making fun of myself, *I changed my own internal world where I had some control*, and as a side benefit, I also gained what I needed, admittance to the group. While this put me on the low place in the power hierarchy, as I grew up physically and emotionally, and learned how to fight, I eventually found myself at or near the top of this clan on my lonely country road.

None of this was done consciously by me at the time. It was an intuitive act of desperation, as so many things are when you're young and your life is in a horribly unfulfilling place. When your existence is empty and you're in deep pain, any sense of control or acceptance will tend to wipe away the costs you have to pay to gain that validation. I was willing to accept the role of the pick-on, and amplify it *on my terms* -

because it was better than the role of being unseen, lonely, and *having no say in that role*. This is one case where climbing the social ladder had the outward appearance of taking on and creating more pain, when the reality was quite the opposite for me internally. Having control of my situation was more valuable to me than the image it was projecting externally as the desperate hanger-on.

Here's the good news; I eventually figured out what I was doing and why. I then refocused my efforts on building myself into a tougher, happier, more confident person and ironically, I no longer needed that lower-level validation. This new internally focused attitude opened doors to new options previously unforeseen by me. I was receiving higher-level validation *from myself first*, and that attracted it from the other people around me. This then led me to form relationships with people that had no desire to hurt me, because I demanded it based on my higher self-worth. I put my PDP into action, and I changed my life. It all started with not hiding in my house, and starting my journey in the world through the difficult process described above.

When people are abused, neglected, hurt, beaten, made fun of, ignored, raped, etc., they take on a perspective in life that reflects these harsh traumatic realities. And frankly, it doesn't even have to be severe abuse or neglect to see the world through an abused lens. Often people come to understand their self-worth through their most negative experiences. In my case, by 7 years old, I'd been taught that I was worth being ignored and abused.

My subsequent years were defined by climbing out of the "unseen person" self-image, to the "low-man on the social ladder" position and self-image. This was initiated by using the difficult process described above. I had married my pain to a strategy of gaining a slightly higher social position and a sliver of acceptance. While this didn't exactly end up with a huge social jump upwards, I did find the improvements I was seeking at the time. That was my means of social rising, and while one might say it was unhealthy, it was the beginning of me crawling out of my suicidal youth to a position of some base level validation we might call "negative attention". As bad as it was, this paltry level of socialization quite literally kept me from killing myself at the time.

I did eventually figure out that I was worth much more than being the kicked dog in my social circles. But my starting point was a tough place to begin my upward social ascension, and my path out of the loneliness trap required these radical and rather sad steps to find better options. I'd learned to embrace all my pain, and then use it in a way to get what I wanted - validation; to be seen and accepted.

You might be asking, what does this all have to do with PMO'ing and pain fetishes?

How Pain Can Get Converted to Pleasure

What is depression? It is the mental and emotional interpretation that a situation or your overall circumstances are futile and out of your direct control to change. If those circumstances are not able to be changed, people often get depressed and feel trapped. The same happens with anxiety. The overall interpretation that creates anxious thoughts is a little different than the manifestation of depression, but it's similar.

If you're anxious, that's the interpretation that a present or future scenario will end badly for you. It's an acute worry. Depression, trauma, stress, and anxiety, all emanate from one general mental perspective - the belief that you have a *lack of control* in the outcome of your existence or circumstances.

Humans don't like uncertainty, and in cases where you are lost in that uncertainty, you will grasp at nearly anything to reverse this feeling, even if it means embracing your pain, feelings of futility, feelings of being trapped, *and then mixing in a base pleasure to color it anew and gain some sense of control in it*. This process of placing something of positive value into a difficult scenario can make pain into a relative sense of pleasure.

By jumping in with the tribe that was bullying me and adding in a process whereby I could secure a sense of control for myself, I was able to convert the intense humiliation of being bullied into an asset of being "accepted" and "seen". This humiliation then could be seen as *relatively* pleasurable (or 'better than before').

Another Story - Building a Preference

I was coaching a young man (we will call him Tom) and we were covering the topic of his preferred fetishes. He explained how it all started when he was just 8 years old. At that time he hadn't even seen pornography yet. Tom explained to me how he saw a picture of a clothed woman who was tied up and he became instantly aroused. This reaction bothered him, in that, there was no good explanation for this response. He said, "How weird right? I mean I got hard looking at someone who didn't seem to be very happy and was struggling while tied up. What the fuck was wrong with me?" I explained that this wasn't all that uncommon with the men I've coached. While each fetish might have its peculiarities, this particular sexual fantasy of someone being tied up or struggling creating arousal wasn't all that uncommon, and that there are logical reasons for this.

He went on to explain that he eventually encountered internet porn a few years later, and for the following 16 years nearly all his preferred fetishes included either a woman or a man being trapped by ropes or in a chastity cage, or it was a cuckold situation where a dominant man is having rough sex with his imaginary wife, etc. In all the cases

of what he prefers, someone in the fantasy feels trapped, humiliated, hurt, and under the “spell,” as he put it, “of the desires of someone else”.

After discussing his preferences in detail, I dug deeper into Tom’s youth by asking many questions and found that in his Hindu upbringing, he was a desperately lonely young man, and had a father that was quite physically abusive if he didn’t perform in the top 5% academically. His entire youth was a militaristic focus on “performance for the love of my parents” as he put it. And then he said it...

“I felt endlessly trapped and scared.”

I then inquired, “When did you discover masturbation?” He stated, “Around 11.”

My next question, “When did you hit puberty?” He said “Around 11 as well.”

I responded, “Do you think it really all that illogical that a lonely young boy, desperately in need of validation, acceptance, and love, might identify with the imagery of someone trapped and frightened considering how you felt at the time? Do you think it’s possible that at the same time that you are discovering the wonderful sensations of your physical sexual parts (typically ages 5 to 12), that you would also simultaneously marry those positive physical sensations with the images relating to your inner struggles and self-identity that you found arousing? These photos and videos were a validation of your personal inner world difficulties, and thus they act as a sort of ‘friend’ to you. And because these images and videos aren’t real people, you get to pick and choose within the privacy of your mind who and why and how you will dominate them, or be submissive to them. You get to choose the fantasy based on what your needs are on that particular day. Plus, being that none of these people are objectively real, you know they can’t truly hurt you. This fact creates a powerful specialness to the experience, as it’s *all* on your terms; you have absolute control, even if you are playing the submissive role! And furthermore, once you married that safe sexual encounter with yourself - your masturbation - with the images that represent you being trapped, don’t you think this fetish can unknowingly become a powerful part of your thought and private life that might even outclass real relationships that may require risk of hurt feelings and the like? Is it possible that this might all hold some value to you?

Think about it this way; when you marry the images and videos of struggle, with your physical sensations of pleasure, you get to rewrite your trapped world into a new narrative - one of *pleasurable* pain; it’s no longer just lonely and painful. You get to experience your trapped self in the characters and then rewrite that world as your own pleasurable conversion experience. You get to gain control and win, by rewriting your past with your fantasy fetish and ultimately with a victorious climax.

Whether you are the trapped person in the fantasy narrative, the abused cuckold, or the dominant abuser, is all dependent on what you are trying to get out of that narrative. But ultimately your decisions on how the fantasy plays out all stems from a desire to work through past difficulties or simply the feeling of power and dominance that you lacked in your real world life. And by doing this sexually, you are able to couple pleasure into that painful experience, and the two become one - pain then becomes pleasure.”

Obviously there was a lot more to this conversation, as I could not have asked the questions listed above or explained it in this way had we not dove deep into his ideas of how and why he had built this pleasurable pain fetish. But suffice it to say, that many, and I mean many, pain fetishes come out of the desire to be noticed, loved, validated, and to reconcile the pain the individual felt in the past. Whatever the role, whether the person is the one who doles out the pain through dominant power, or they take on the role of the humiliated or abused, both have a main aim, to reconcile and “fix” the feelings of being trapped and at the mercy of circumstances beyond their control, or not being loved, or getting revenge, etc.

It is not any different than the example I gave above. By all outward appearances, my choice to “be abused” seems insane. But when we begin looking into our actions in life, whatever they are, from the perspective that we are always expressing our Positive Drive Principle in all the things we do consciously and subconsciously, we begin to figure out why we learned to find some pleasure in painful experiences. If we don’t know how to get away from remaining in situations of pain, then coupling that unfortunate trapped experience with something pleasurable makes logical sense. It becomes a recipe of relative happiness and a sense of freedom.

Letting Go of Pain Fetishes

This then brings us to the topic of letting go of these pain fetishes. In order to do this some questions need to be asked first. Do you want to let go of yours? If you answer, “Yes, I *need* to let go of my pain fetishes.” or “Yes, I *should* let go of my pain fetishes.” then you’ll need to reassess the situation. People don’t make changes in their lives when they *need to* or *should change*; they make the changes when they *want* to make them.

If you legitimately *want* to change, then progress to that end is not only possible, but it becomes probable. If you are feeling pressured with the should’s and the need to’s that’s a clear indicator that you still value your pleasurable pain narrative, and that it currently serves some function in making you relatively happy. In this case you will need to ask yourself if you believe the possibility exists that you might be happier letting go of the past pain, the desire for revenge, or the need for power, or whatever other ideas are driving the preference for your pain fetish. If you believe that possibility exists and that

you might want to change, then the next step is to identify what issues you are trying to color with your sexual fantasies.

Once you've identified the needs you're trying to fulfill by attaching sexual pleasure to them, then the next step is to address the needs you have as singular issues. In essence, pull the attached sexuality out of the painful scenario *and solve the need as the stand-alone issue it is*. This may require some coaching, as these issues are wholly individual and unique to the person. If you were a lonely, abused kid then address that. If you are a narcissistic abuser who has revenge in their heart, then address that, etc.

With that said, once you've solved the complex issues of being humiliated, needing power, wanting revenge, hating yourself, allowing physical or emotional abuse, doling out abuse, building confidence and greater self-worth, etc., the desire to attach sexual pleasure to those issues diminishes significantly. The sexuality and the goals of your fantasies will be something different and new, and most likely, more fulfilling as a whole. This isn't theory, this is the reality of millions in the world who allow themselves the privilege of facing their internal strife, and moving on to less fantasy *and more living*. Because ultimately, what I hear people say in my coaching sessions more times than not, is this, "I want to stop (or moderate) my PMO'ing so I can have better relationships with real people."

Chapter 10: Let Go of The Addict Self-Image

(Most of this chapter is already covered in the Master Text Chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11. If you haven't already read them, do so now. Also read Appendix A and B.)

Our mission here at The Freedom Model is to bring rational, fact-based analysis back into your quest for solutions to your PMO habit, and to debunk and then leave the biases, myths and erroneous beliefs behind. That can't happen if you are basing your solution to the issues on the falsehood that you are the fictional character our society calls "the addict".

Irrational Beliefs vs. Rational Facts

We all like to think of ourselves as rational beings, and of course most people have the capability to be rational about many things. However, if you are given information through the various channels of public discourse and "research" about a particular topic or problem, and that information is dead wrong, or is even partially flawed, you will naturally develop solutions to those problems that become a misguided and painful goose chase. In essence you will use false beliefs, rather than facts, to attempt to solve your real issues. This can only hurt you. We see many engaged in this painful goose chase with all the various popular bio-centered and moralistic methods to solve their porn issues.

One such dramatic example of inaccurate beliefs running you amok, is that there is such a thing as a "sex addict" or a "porn addict" and that you are one of these out-of-control victims. This inaccurate self-image assumes that you are afflicted with a bio-centered disorder that makes it impossible to stop yourself from PMO'ing without some radical shift in lifestyle, some miracle to reverse your now bio-hacked brain chemistry, and an endless therapeutic lifestyle deemed "recovery". With this imaginary addict identity formed, reinforced, and intact in your thought life, you take on the self-image of being a victim of not only "porn's power", but also the supposed irresistibility of orgasm and nudity we covered earlier.

Furthermore, if you come from a strict moral or religious code that rallies against lust, masturbation, pornography, or any apparatus of the sex industry, the addict identity provides a ready-made excuse that explains away your preference for PMO'ing. The powers that be in these organizations will say, "Well, he's a sex addict. He can't help it." Or, "Those porn addicts are that way forever, it's an addiction you know." As a religious person, it can be easy to adopt this excuse to mitigate your guilt and continue the behavior. The addict role incentivizes deeper use of your preferred fetish object/s.

Society says, you have a thinking mind that navigates life in all kinds of productive and wonderful ways, but that in this one area, that of lust, porn, and sex, you can't stop yourself from overindulging problematically. Just like the drug user's mislabel as a drug addict, the sex addict label comes with all manner of baggage and misinformed trappings. But the label does serve a social function; it allows those observing the individual with the problem to avoid the discussion about what's behind the sexual and deviant preferences and practices that are happening.

Issues with porn and deviant (meaning it's simply out of the norm) sexual behavior is generally uncomfortable for people to talk about in most settings. The addict identity and labeling allows for a fast shift in conversation away from the reality that the individual likes their heavy use of their fetish and its objects. This is especially true if the person with the habit is engaged in dangerous or illegal sexual deviance such as the world of child pornography, rape, and the like. Because these behaviors are abhorrent to most in society, very few without those issues can fathom the reality that these are preferences and choices and not some physical brain issue or disorder causing the problem. Also, anyone who is willing to indulge in fetishes with such harsh ramifications such as long prison sentences and the like for their behavior, find it plausible that they aren't choosing this habit anymore than the equally misunderstood heavy drug user who overdoses and dies after endless sprees.

The false "addict" moniker seems legit in both cases, as the costs are so high and painful. The implication is that because the consequences of PMO'ing in this manner are massive and dramatic, that their actions must be involuntary and caused by something other than their internal dialogue. This argument doesn't hold water when scrutinized, but it's easy to throw everyone whose behavior we don't agree with, into the powerless camp rather than look deeper and find out the true reasoning behind their habits and preferences.

While it is quite difficult to hear about these extreme fetishes, and our minds drift to the plausibility that something is deeply wrong with these folks, in the final analysis they, too, are choosing their habits like the rest of us. With this said, we aren't dismissing the pain, damage and horror some of these preferences cause. But regardless of these horrible realities and the high costs of these preferences, the first step towards understanding the problem and then finding effective solutions, must begin with the rejection of the addict label, and replacing it with the fact that this person chooses their habits and fetishes and controls them with precision.

Remember, even the most violent and extreme of sexual deviants doesn't act in out-of-control ways. They conduct their acts in secrecy, and with well thought-out planning, many times reoffending over and over and evading authorities for years, and

some for a lifetime. These aren't acts of random, out-of-control people. These are acts that require tremendous thought, planning, and precision. People with these kinds of extreme fetish habits are always doing exactly what they want to do..

So no matter the level of social consequence of your habit, and where it lies on the bell curve of socially accepted fetish behavior, it is based on a preference you've built. You are not an addict, you are not powerless, and most importantly you can change if you truly want to change.

Whether you *want* to change, and are willing to do what it takes to change remains to be seen. If you feel you "should" change, or you "have to" change, these motives will fall flat eventually because you haven't challenged the meaning and value you've produced in your fetish objects. But, if you replace *should* and *have to* with *I WANT* to change, then the process of understanding, deconstructing and moving on from the issue becomes a liberating and enjoyable process. And best yet, it will be effective and doesn't have to take a long time to accomplish!

Chapter 11: Using PMO as a Distraction

(Read Chapter 18 in the Master Text)

I mentioned earlier in the text that not everyone who has a PMO habit is attempting to address past struggles or deep emotional issues from the past. Their “why” is different from people like John whose PMO binge construct was quite complicated and was created as an attempt to resolve past struggles. With that said, an individual with a simpler PMO construct may be just as mystified as John was as to why they are doing what they’re doing. Using PMO as a distraction can be one of these rather confounding habits.

The Value of Distraction

Having coached thousands of people, one thing you realize along that journey are the patterns of common reasons behind people’s habits whether that be with substance use, gambling, or in the PMO or sex addiction realm. Finding or creating a distraction from life’s challenges is probably the most common reason for PMO’ing. While there may be other reasons for indulging in PMO, engaging in a fetish to avoid thinking about life’s struggles, responsibilities, or challenges is very common. All people like an “escape” from time to time whether real or imagined.

Most of this book is dedicated to debunking misinformed beliefs and outright myths surrounding people’s PMO constructs so they can move past their habit for good. But in the case of using fetish objects as a distraction, there’s nothing to debunk. Distractions, in general, work to a certain degree to push off or ignore some of life’s more difficult daily challenges. Now whether the distractions are actually useful or productive is a different matter altogether and one we will explore in this chapter.

It's also important to realize that while a person might believe they are distracting themselves by focusing on their preferred fetish objects as well as the act of masturbation, the reality is, the fetish object isn't the thing distracting them - *you are distracting you*. You *allow* yourself to turn your focus away from your problems, and so once again you can see the fetish object has no inherent power to distract. Also, no one thing has better distractive value than another. There is only the subjective focus on what you personally decide to do. And should you choose to use that object or idea as a way to distract yourself, you will succeed in moving your focus to that object or idea. Know that you are always in control of the narrative behind the value you see in objects.

The Brain - The Single Processor

Here is how distraction actually works: the human brain is a single-thought processor, and consequently, if you are thinking and focusing your attention on pornography and fantasies related to that, along with masturbating, there's no mental room for anything else. The best way to imagine this is the image of an hourglass with the sand flowing through the skinny part. The top wide portion is your mind with its limitless, free-will capacity, and the skinny part of the hourglass that meters out a small stream of consciousness is the single thought processing unit called the human brain. Another good analogy is a funnel. The brain limits our mind-based thoughts in this way so the expressions of our thoughts aren't massively chaotic, mixed and random in the real world applications. Let's face it, your body can't split in two and multitask, so the brain is designed around this physical reality.

There is much research on this topic, and here is a podcast that discusses the research: *Scientific American Podcast: The Myth of Multitasking*. ([Hopkins, 2015](#))

Here's another way to explain this: imagine that thoughts run on a string moving along from left to right as time passes. As one conscious thought takes up space on that horizontal string, there's only room for that one thought. As you create a new, more important or interesting thought in your mind, it then displaces the thought that currently is on the string. As thoughts come and go, they each replace the previous one, and so on. Sometimes you go from one thought, to a new thought, and back again. This replacing process of thoughts through time happens extremely fast and seamlessly. Because the mind does not ever shut off, the brain is constantly engaged in processing the directions and thoughts provided to it from the mind, and from the environment through the senses, in this linear, one-thought-at-a-time fashion.

Porn Can Be Your Chosen Thought

People choose their distractions. The smoker who takes a "smoke break". The child who hates school and looks out the window to daydream. The woman who is in a loveless, abusive marriage and finds someone else who cares more and is more attentive. And of course, the person who uses fetish objects to avoid situations, responsibilities, or who simply wants a break in their busy stressful day.

With all this said, much like the argument I hear that orgasm is the goal of the person with a massive PMO habit, I also hear students blame their crushing PMO problems on wanting a distraction. This is nearly always an oversimplified explanation for their habit. They'll say, "I just use (add your fetish objects here) as a distraction." Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying the distraction reason isn't valid. If your life isn't where you want it to be, using a fetish as a distraction can be a powerful reason to

indulge habitually. But usually there are other factors driving the why behind your habit. I recommend reading this entire book to explore all possible reasons so no stone goes unturned in your specific construct. But for the sake of this chapter, even if you have other reasons behind your PMO construct, know that using it as a distraction in life is a valid use. And that reason might also be keeping you stuck, not exploring the world and your place in it.

Just because most humans use distractions from time to time, should not be confused with the fact that some distractions come with high costs and consequences. I've coached people where distraction is actually their main motive behind their habits and fetishes, and they have lost years due to their fear of moving on. So I don't want to diminish the painful price that an intense focus on the immediate "benefits" of distraction can cause.

In these cases it is vital to know *what you are distracting yourself from*. Most distractions are relatively harmless and quite easy to understand. The little girl who puts her earbuds in and listens to loud music while her parents fight in the living room, is a good example. The distraction of the music washing out the violence around her makes imminent sense, and frankly, it's useful and logical.

Self Analysis Matters

Unlike this girl whose reasoning behind her distraction is obvious and is a net gain for her, many people who use porn or other fetish objects as a distraction frequently and in problematic ways have no idea what they are distracting themselves from. This part gets ignored. In this case it's not enough to make unanalyzed blanket statements like, "I use porn for a distraction" and call it good. If you are running from something, and you discover through some effort and self-analysis that you no longer need to run from that thing, you've effectively removed all of the motivation to continue to use those distractions. Here's an example; maybe you PMO to put off and avoid the risks of failure or the risks of success in a new business endeavor. You then become aware of this motive, and make efforts to conquer some of those fears. With those fears faced and overcome, the need for PMO'ing specifically as a distraction will simply melt away. Self-analysis matters! Know what you're running from and then challenge those conclusions about yourself!

Let Go of the "Power of Porn" Myth

What is just as important is you might actually believe that the porn and PMO'ing contains some magic that "takes you away" from life troubles. I don't mean to say that you think of them like props in a magic show, or some supernatural manifestation, but rather, that masturbating while watching porn is more powerful than other distractions

you might use in your daily life. As soon as you build up your fetish objects and habit in this overblown way, you are, without realizing it, reinforcing the “power of porn and PMO’ing” myth once again. Instead of realizing *you* are the one *distracting yourself* with a chosen prop, you’ve given the lifeless prop the operative power. You busy yourself with building up the power of fetish objects myth and continue to build inappropriately high value in the props and your PMO habit. This is a net loss because you can’t gain clarity to solve the issue if you’re basing your actions on lies, especially ones you are telling yourself.

Pick Powerfully Positive Distractions

You could just as easily distract yourself from your difficulties (whatever they are) with much more empowering distractions that provide a net win. I’m not suggesting you *mindlessly* replace your fetish object with a new, randomly chosen, “better” one. Rather, I’m suggesting to *mindfully* explore all options and decide which can provide the best returns. Investing in fetish objects uses up time and other emotional resources because the objects themselves don’t solve issues at hand, so there’s no real net gain after the PMO session is complete.

When you look into alternative activities to distract yourself, you can choose those that have a net gain at the end. Those are activities that have some value that lasts beyond the distraction itself. All PMO perceived benefits end within the PMO’ing process itself. Because PMO’ing is time resource heavy with all benefits ending at orgasm, it ends up as a net loss. This is why choosing porn or other fetish object preoccupation as distractions leaves you almost always feeling unfulfilled.

In Summary

- Take some time and challenge your ideas about how much credit you give porn and other fetish objects.
- Know that you are running the distraction show.
- Analyze why you feel the need to distract and challenge that belief.
- Address and solve the issues you are attempting to distract yourself from.
- If distractions are something you want, pick those that have longer lasting net wins and benefits.

Hopkins, K. (2015, September 7). The myth of multitasking [Audio podcast]. *Scientific American*.
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/podcast/episode/the-myth-of-multitasking-09-07-15/>

Chapter 12: You're Not Weak, So Stop Counting the Days

(Read Chapters 7, 11, 14 and 15 and Appendix E from the Master Text before you read this chapter.)

Let's start with some facts:

- You're not weak.
- You don't PMO because you "have an addiction".
- You haven't built your habit based on powers that are external to you (such as porn, escorts, or other fetish objects).
- It is not true that you have only a limited amount of willpower inside of you that gets depleted, leading you back to PMO'ing.
 - These ideas, and many more, bubble out of the "need for willpower" to "overcome addiction" religion. Let's challenge this religion and move you away from ideas that are keeping you trapped.

Resistance is Doomed to Fail

When I am coaching someone with any habit, I get the same question, "How much willpower do I need?" Or, "I just don't have enough willpower. I'm so weak when it comes to porn", etc. The belief that you need willpower, or that moving past your issue with fetish objects is a matter of strength (or weakness), is a clear indication of your confusion. Within the need for willpower argument is the core myth that resisting temptation is the answer rather than understanding, devaluing, and then changing the habit effortlessly (with no resistance at all).

The act of resisting something indicates you value it, a *lot*. Read that twice.

When you feel a need to resist PMO'ing, and you wish you had some greater well of emotional strength to help you in your attempt to resist it, you're setting yourself up for failure. Here's why: the reason behind your return to heavy PMO'ing isn't a lack of will, it's the fact that you've ignored that you still highly value PMO'ing for personal reasons. Furthermore, you might be deeply confused as to why you like it so much. Of course you still feel there's a positive experience to be had, or no resistance for it would be necessary. For example, you don't need willpower to stop eating foods you dislike or even foods you like but don't feel you need, nor do you need a community of like-minded people to support you to not eat them. All you need to know is that you dislike them or don't need them for any reason. The key here is not resistance, nor support, but rather, analyzing what's behind your perceived need and desire, and then challenging that perception, debunking it, devaluing the experience, and moving on.

Once you've debunked the overblown or inaccurate ideas behind your desire for PMO'ing - which is what *this entire book and workshop* is all about - it then becomes no different than any other activity or thing you see as having little value. It becomes effortless to stop or moderate. There's no need to resist anything because there is no power in the objects anymore nor in your belief in them or in your perceived need for them. It's your current ideas that porn has power to addict you; that nudity is irresistible or that orgasms are irresistible; that you can't resist the allure of porn (or whatever other fetishes you might feel "addicted to"); that you are weak; and that you need these fetishes to be happy for a little while, that keeps the supposed need for willpower argument alive. Once you let go of the need for resisting, you are able to see that it all comes down to seeing *what you value in the fetish and then challenging that*.

Willpower is a Social Construct - The Recovery Society

The need for willpower myth is nothing new. You can find it in religious texts and social documents that go back thousands of years. However, it wasn't until 1939, when the text *Alcoholics Anonymous* was first published, that the theory that humans are weak-willed and powerless over alcohol (an object) was heavily promoted across the globe that the need for willpower or a power-greater-than-oneself became a detailed, documented, but flawed, construct. For the first decade after publishing that book, this formal version of "human weakness" was seen as ridiculous by most people at the time.

When the book was first released, it was a flop. But as time passed, and with a massive two decades long public promotion campaign, Bill Wilson's treatment for the "disease of alcoholism" (another myth) began to find acceptance. The 12-step method as laid out in that text morphed into the formalized treatment industry we see today which is now a \$45 billion dollar industry annually in the US alone. In this powerlessness revolution, the 12 steps were the first major movement that galvanized the ideas promoting mankind's imagined weaknesses along with imbuing powers into lifeless objects mythology that then became an accepted norm within Western and now Eastern and Middle Eastern societies.

Along with this new narrative of the susceptible, weak man, came the inevitable "need for support" and the "need for community" myths. One idea - that of being flawed with an inherent weakness - promoted the other, that you are powerless and therefore you need to be propped up by others in a like-minded community. This is the basis for many of the proposed "solutions" for PMO habits worldwide now as well. But know this, it's all fabricated lore that is not rooted in facts or credible research. You are endowed from birth with free will, autonomy, and the Positive Drive Principle; all 3 are attributes of your psyche that naturally empower you over your human struggles. This reality is the

opposite of the ideas behind the weakness of man perspective. (For more on these human attributes, read **Chapters 7 and 11** in the Master Text.)

These weakness narratives and approaches keep people trapped in addiction-disease-recovery-centered negative feedback loops that need not exist. First, it's crucial to understand that you are not weak. Rather, you are ignorant of your own reasons for PMO'ing (your why) while also being distracted from that fact by your unnecessary concentration on the weakness myth itself! As you keep your mind focused on the red herring "need for willpower", you're missing out on analyzing the why behind your preference for heavy PMO'ing. By keeping you diverted in meaningless need for willpower narratives and equally meaningless need for the proper support cycles, you ignore the power of your own mind and your infinite free will to analyze and seek the truth behind your own self-created preference. *Don't get diverted like this! Instead, start asking yourself what your personal, private reasons for PMO'ing are!*

Stop Counting the Days

If you find yourself counting the days from your last PMO session thinking that there is some biological magic that happens in your time away from PMO'ing, you'll be sorely disappointed when you choose to PMO again. Like the need for willpower, counting days is just another diversion away from seeking truth about *your why* for PMO'ing. There are nonsense theories all over the web that your habit is biological, and also that after a certain, undetermined period of abstinence you cross over an imaginary hump where the "urge" to PMO just disappears. This is another unfounded brain-first theory with no credible research to back it up.

First, as we covered in previous chapters, a PMO habit isn't biologically caused, so trying to "wait out" some biological cause is a complete waste of time and energy. Second, "urges" aren't brain or body-centered either. Urges originate in your thoughts about benefits you see in an activity or object. Like the oft misconstrued idea of "cravings", urges are something you do in your mind, not something that happens to you. Once again, urges or cravings are both based on perceived benefits of why you like to PMO. Address your perceived need by identifying your perceived needs, then challenging them, and then moving past the habit because you no longer see those benefits as vital or necessary. The problem you are dealing with and the solution to it *are both mind-based*, and you have complete control over your beliefs, fantasies, and what you decide to mentally challenge and therefore clarify and change.

The Need for Support and Community is Also a Myth

Because you aren't inherently weak, you have no need for being propped up by others with the same or similar struggles. Research shows that concentrating or ruminating on

problems causes more of them. Rumination, which involves repetitively thinking about distressing situations, is linked to increased levels of depression and anxiety. This repetitive negative thinking not only prolongs negative mood states but can also hinder problem-solving and increase stress, thereby exacerbating the issues one is ruminating about (Selby, 2010; Eckland & Berenbaum, 2021). It also keeps them relevant in people's lives for longer periods than those who decide to move on from those same issues without therapies that promote unending rumination.

I spent 20 years in and out of 12 step cults, rehabs, and various therapies for my serious issues with substances and toxic relationships. I found no resolution to my issues in the endless 12 step and "support" recovery meetings and protocol. After more than a decade of reliving my past over and over again, I made the decision to leave all that behind and start anew. It was from that moment that my life changed and my struggles were sorted out relatively quickly.

Don't get caught in the perpetual recovery world where talking about your problems over and over keeps you tethered to your past. The answers to your troubles are in gaining the true view of your personal preference, and that's completely an inside job. None of this analysis and reframing of your thoughts and beliefs is dependent on strength, but rather, understanding your why, and then challenging those perceptions and that construct.

But Isn't Coaching the Same Thing?

Some might argue that we, the coaches here at the Freedom Model, are doing the same thing as the recovery society. Aren't we "treating" or "propping up and supporting" those who are lost in their PMO constructs?

No, and here is the difference: effective coaching through our Cognitive Behavioral Education (CBE) method is a process of asking the right questions, provoking thoughtful discussion, and reviewing truthful facts and research with the student. The goal is for the student to *come to their own conclusions* about their habit and about themselves. It is not in reliving the past over and over again. There is just you, your mind, and your beliefs. If your beliefs are counter to the truth, you will struggle. So, clearing away shame, asking the right questions, eliminating addiction lore and falsities, and then asking if your reasoning behind your PMO habit is still necessary or not, will be far more effective than thinking there's some well of will going dry and that you need others to supply external strength where yours has been drained.

The coach's job is simply to ask the hard questions, clarify what the research says, and allow you the autonomy to discover what you need to discover. If there is a sense of support within coaching it's this: you are supported by being provided an education in

the facts. But ultimately, because we know you are the answer to your problems, we have no dog in your fight. We understand your autonomous mind, so there's nothing to support. There is you, your beliefs, and your perception that you "need" to PMO. All of these ideas can be challenged and changed.

Stop Counting and Start Analyzing

If you find yourself counting your days of abstinence, and you're continuing to struggle with urges, this just means you still have some work to do. You obviously still find PMO'ing attractive and that it has some utility to you. This is good to know. Read the rest of this text; not just some of the chapters, *but all of them*. The chapters are all designed with one goal - for you to understand *why* you like PMO'ing, and then challenge that set of ideas with new information and new ideas at this new present time in your life. It will also help you to move past your entire PMO habit and then engage in a new future where you can stop counting and feeling deprived, and instead, become free to start living again!

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Chapter 13: Should I Moderate or Abstain?

(Read the Preface, Chapters 2, 3, 7, 15, and Appendix A & E in the Master Text)

In the Master Text **Preface**, the very first line is, “*All people, even those who have a serious drug or alcohol problem, can choose to use moderately, and contrary to popular belief, they can do so successfully.*” We chose this as the opening line in the book, first, because it’s true and empowering, and second, because how you react to the idea of moderated use is the litmus test for the amount of fear-based mythology you have in your mind. When I coach someone and they say, “I can’t moderate!” or “I have to abstain, I don’t even want to entertain moderation!” or some variation of that, I instantly know this person is highly misinformed and is reinforcing a fear-based thought trap. If your immediate reaction to moderate PMO’ing is skepticism or fear, know that you are being led by sex industry marketing lore and addiction disease mythology. It’s time to clear the deck of such self-limiting ideas!

Abstinence Can be Wonderful Too

I don’t want the contents of this chapter to be confused with a viewpoint that abstinence is a poor choice or one we rally against. Nor do I want it confused with the viewpoint that we are a moderation advocate of any kind. What we are an advocate for is simply the truth; and the truth is, anyone can moderate their PMO habit to non-problematic levels *if that’s what they truly want*. That last caveat is important.

If you are forcing yourself to abstain because you are afraid that if you attempt to moderate your habit that you will inevitably fall into an explosion of heavy binge-style PMO’ing, then reading this chapter (and the rest of this book) is vital for moving past this fear-based, misinformed mindset.

Abstaining Because of Moral Codes

If you are forcing abstinence with little success, and you are attempting this goal primarily because you have a religious moral code of strict abstinence, then you will need to challenge the perceived benefits of your preferred fetish objects, and also analyze *why* you PMO, just as we suggest for those without such religious moral codes. Your view of morality doesn’t change the method to come to new conclusions, so don’t think that just because this isn’t a religious text that you won’t be able to obtain your goal to abstain. Your desire for reforming your habit based on your religious or moral grounds does not require different methods to solve your problem. Your moral codes may add an additional reason for putting the standard methods for change into action. You, *like anyone else attempting to abstain or moderate*, must understand “the why” behind your preference and choices, and then decide whether your fetish fulfills those

needs and desires, and then adjust accordingly. The fact that your moral codes will be fulfilled in doing so is a bonus.

To understand the why of your preference, read this entire book (I can't say this enough), watch the workshop (multiple times if needed), and if you are still struggling to understand your why behind PMO'ing, contact us at [1-888-424-2626](tel:1-888-424-2626) to get some coaching sessions. We can help you build and solve the puzzle together and create a successful plan to moderate or abstain.

The Following is IMPORTANT:

Before you go on, take the time to read all of the Master Text recommended chapters listed at the beginning of this chapter. *Do this now, before you continue reading. This will address most of what you need to know about this specific topic. As you read, just replace the substance use language for your own PMO language. It directly relates.* Once read, continue reading below.

Some Facts to Consider:

- Masturbating is normal - it is not a deviant behavior (meaning it doesn't fall outside the norm). In some social circles, it may not be seen that way, and because of that judgment, it tends to be a private affair. But nonetheless, nearly everyone masturbates. According to research published in 2017 in the United States, less than 10% of men and approximately 21% of women reported that they had never masturbated. This means that more than 90% of men and nearly 80% of women masturbate ([Herbenick et al., 2017](#)).
- Watching pornography is normal - it is not a deviant behavior (meaning it doesn't fall outside the norm) and most who watch it don't see their activity as a problem or an addiction. In the same study that is mentioned above, 70% of men and 60% of women reported they watch pornography ([Herbenick et al., 2017](#)). A 2019 study found similar results where more than 70% of men and approximately 40% of the women surveyed said they watch pornography ([Grubbs et al., 2019](#)).
- The high rate of those who masturbate and watch pornography and don't see it as a problem or an addiction (the vast majority) tells us that there is not an inherent diabolical power of addictiveness contained within the fetish objects themselves, whether that be pics, videos, toys, escorts, or the like. This of course doesn't mean that some people don't engage in areas of the sex industry that aren't harmful, illegal, or don't have extremely high costs (legal, marital, or otherwise). It does mean, however, that most people are not engaged in the industry in this extreme fashion, and that those who generally engage see it as a moderate activity, not as an addiction. In the Grubbs study mentioned above, just

11% of men and 3% of women reported that they felt addicted to pornography ([Grubbs et al., 2019](#)).

- People outgrow problematic PMO issues and contrary to the fear mongers, many moderate successfully as their new norm.
- The ideas perpetuated across the web that brain chemistry is altered by fetish practices and that these become maladapted processes that hijack your behavior and addict the porn observer are false. Brain chemistry changes occur with any habit, thought, or activity ([Taubert et al., 2010](#)). PMO'ing (porn, masturbation, orgasm) is no different. Neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to change and adapt, means that any repeated activity—whether it's a habit like exercising or watching pornography—can alter neural pathways. However, these changes are not unique to pornography or fetish practices and do not inherently lead to addiction. The idea that these behaviors "hijack" the brain is misleading; similar brain chemistry changes can be observed with any regular activity that engages the brain's reward systems.

To successfully moderate the use of fetish objects (or abstain), you will need to:

1. Debunk the brain-centered view of PMO'ing (and the alleged powers of porn, sex, and orgasm.)
2. Understand “the why” behind your deep reverence for PMO'ing. Seek to clearly understand why you like it so much. For example, do you believe it solves emotional problems, such as trauma, anxiety, stress, or depression? Do you see it as a useful distraction, or as a vehicle to avoid responsibilities, or an excuse to avoid the risks associated with intimate relationships, or as a tool to remain in a fixed and “safe” mindset, etc?
3. Challenge the beliefs in your why, and then ask yourself if you still feel the need to PMO as your solution to these life challenges. Become open to the idea that there are more effective and productive ways to address these normal life struggles.
4. In completing 1 through 3 above, you'll massively de-value the object as a “solution”. You will debunk the view that it is an “addiction”, and you will reframe it to its rightful place, as an object and activity you have given value and meaning for reasons that at one time made sense, *but are no longer needed*.

This entire book as well as the Master Text, the Workshop, and Coaching Sessions might be needed for you to unravel your personal PMO construct. In other cases, it might be just this text, or a cursory look at the workshop video, etc. The depth of labor you will need to understand and move past these constructs depends on how deeply immersed you are in the mythology and how much value you've placed in it. If you've spent years surfing the web for solutions and are completely mystified as to why you

love PMO so much, you may need all the resources at the Freedom Model for a full deconstruction. The point is this, if you are skeptical or fearful about moderating, you will need to read (or listen to the audiobook) all of the suggested chapters in the Master Text, as well as watch the workshop videos, plus this book, at a minimum.

Remember, this chapter is not trying to convince you to moderate. Rather, it's designed to introduce the idea that when the myths, lore, and fear are removed, and you understand the futility of your reasoning for PMO'ing, moderate PMO'ing becomes just as viable as abstaining. And when you arrive at that realization, you will have complete freedom to move forward with the option that you prefer, and you can do so without feeling deprived, fearful, or guilty.

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Taubert, M., Draganski, B., Anwander, A., Müller, K., Horstmann, A., Villringer, A., & Ragert, P. (2010, September 1). *Dynamic properties of human brain structure: Learning-related changes in cortical areas and associated fiber connections*. Journal of Neuroscience. <https://www.jneurosci.org/content/30/35/11670.short>

Chapter 14: Control, Taboos & The Battle for Independence

In the substance use realm we often see people drink or drug “at” the people around them. This act of defiance is a way to exert some independence and control over the demands of others who might disagree with their habit of drinking or drugging. In **Chapter 4** in the Master Text we cover this in the **Battle for Independence** section (you might want to read that now).

We see similar things occur in cases of bulimia and anorexia. This hyper focus on the body (and food) becomes a way of gaining a sense of control when a person feels an absence of control in other key areas of life. The less these people feel they have a say in their current or future existence, the greater they will focus on their habits. This can be true for PMO issues as well. Some PMO habits are formed from a need for control, and these people attempt to fulfill that need in their fantasy life as well. In essence they create the world they want, and thus control that world, even if it’s imaginary.

Each person’s expression of their natural autonomy is key to a healthy self-image, personal motivation, and their overall positive evolution. For example, if someone feels they are incapable of attracting a partner, the desire for PMO’ing and the construction of fantasies surrounding “getting a girlfriend” might find its way into the overall fetish and climax narrative. In this way, they gain a feeling of getting what they feel they need but they believe is unattainable in any other way. When coaching people with this specific issue, I’ll ask many questions around why they feel it’s impossible to have a, b, or c. I’ll also pose the all-important question, “Do you think it is even *remotely possible* that you could attain a, b, or c? The answer to that last question tells me the level of commitment they have created towards their control-based fetishes and their emotional attachment to them.

Cornerstones of Pain and How to Reverse Them

Depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideations all emanate from a perception or feeling of futility. Believing that you do not have the power or opportunity to attain what you want or feel you need to make you happier in your life, and that you are at the mercy of others or are trapped in some way, can be devastating. While this is often a misperception, depending on circumstances, it can seem quite real and insurmountable.

The first answer to reversing the control-based motive for PMO’ing is knowing that feelings of futility are not inevitable or forever. They are feelings based on beliefs. *And beliefs can and do change!* Know that you can challenge the idea of futility in any area of your life. When the belief of futility is challenged and you begin to actively change your circumstances, PMO’ing to feel some control is no longer needed and is easily stopped. This doesn’t always mean that the PMO habit completely leaves you. Many

PMO constructs are multifaceted, the need for control being only one of many reasons behind such habits. Many of the other reasons behind an individual's PMO construct are covered elsewhere throughout this book.

Let's now take a look at another facet of some people's PMO construct and habit; the taboo nature of PMO, and why that can be attractive.

Taboo's Attractiveness

Cultural beliefs and standards matter. Moral codes are often a factor in how people behave and the choices they make. Personal codes of conduct that fall outside the morality perimeter also play into how and why people enjoy their fetish objects. One side of all these various reasons for PMO'ing is the idea that engaging in porn and other fetish objects is taboo. PMO, on its own, can be seen as so "delicious" and amazing that we are willing to compromise certain standards, making it taboo. It's the classic case of something is "so bad" that it's seen as irresistible. You shouldn't want to do it, but you do, because, well, "it's taboo".

Something that is taboo can also be used as an anti-social expression of your autonomy. This is why I placed the quality of taboo in this chapter alongside the topic of control. Like the individual that uses porn to have some sense of control in their life, if they also have a need to protest against the emotional tyranny of others, or if they are a contrarian by nature, having a taboo habit falls right into that wheelhouse. It's "wrong," so they like it even more!

This book makes the assumption that you are seeking ways to modify, lower, adjust, or abstain from your current PMO habit. With this in mind, it's important to know with absolute certainty that you can gain control in your life in ways that do not include or require PMO'ing. While this might sound dismissive of your PMO issue, it's not. I am aware that many people feel genuinely handicapped and lost in their habits, and that their fetish object preoccupation has become their go-to activity for relief.

It is also important to know that using fetish objects as expressions of control and as acts of the taboo are quite limiting when actually applied in your daily life. All PMO derived gains are limited because they have no inherent value past the moment of orgasm. So there is no net win. Focusing more of your time and effort on activities outside the fetish and fantasy realm will naturally move your life forward a lot faster and with much greater net wins than PMO'ing ever could. Letting go of the value you see in porn's taboo veneer, and placing your intentions elsewhere provides the net win of preserving time, the most precious resource that you can never get back.

If you seek activities that have greater net gains, and test the results of moving your attention and actions there, you might be surprised by the amount of actual control you find, along with feeling good about the wins that come from these new choices. It's the absolute truth that when you close one door, you make space and time for another to open to a much better future. In The Freedom Model, you always gauge your choices by looking at the benefits, as this motivates the change you are trying to make. Focus on benefits and move forward!

Chapter 15: You're Not a Monster

(Read Appendices C, D and E in the Master Text)

There's an extremely dangerous myth that gets promoted all over the internet and various media outlets and that is that consistent PMO habits will inevitably and uncontrollably lead you to "darker" forms of pornography, and if you don't abstain now, you will likely end up a sexual deviant and/or pedophile monster.

Some people with heavy PMO habits tend to get bored with one genre of pornography, and will then move on to other genres. However, contrary to popular belief, they do not typically descend into dark or illegal genres, but rather the vast majority cycle *through a range* of legal genres with a few or several they prefer more than others. And most will stick to that range, even when observing them becomes mundane and unfulfilling.

If you have explored or have built a preference for illegal and "dark" genres, that is not a result of haphazardly descending into it because of some compelling power of the pornography pulling you in, nor is it that your brain has been hijacked; rather, it's actually what you chose because you wanted it, and then you continue to enjoy it for personal reasons. Remember, your outward behavior and actions belie your internal truths. The idea that people naturally progress to ever darker forms of pornography simply because they frequently watch porn is not what's happening in these situations. Let's break down what's really going on here.

People Get Bored

People can (and usually do) get bored with anything they do repetitively. Engaging with fetish objects is no different. If you were to measure boredom of a certain fetish in the observer's brain tissue through a brain scan image, the brain changes that occur as they actively engage are often inappropriately described as "addiction" by the brain-centrist crowd. Where we agree on this matter is that your brain is always changing, so it's no surprise that someone who regularly masturbates to a certain porn genre would have corresponding brain changes or adaptations. However, where our perspectives diverge is when the brain-centrists say that the supposed powers of porn hijack your brain tissue, which then hijacks your mind and forces you to search out and watch darker, more deviant, and illicit genres of pornography. This theory makes 4 assumptions that are completely false:

1. Porn (or any fetish object/s) contains power to compel human behavior.
 - a. It (they) does not. See Chapters 1 through 3 of this book to learn why this is a myth.

2. The observable brain changes and adaptations that occur in the PMO'er's brain tissue are abnormal.
 - a. The brain naturally changes and adapts to all learned and practiced behaviors. The more motivated and practiced the habit, the greater the brain adaptations.
3. The resultant brain changes make demands on the observer to find darker or more radical forms of porn to get the same, or greater, effect during masturbation and engagement.
 - a. Your brain doesn't think, feel, have motive, give direction or know anything. Rather, it is the *recipient* of your knowledge, your likes and dislikes, and your preferences that you provide it from your mind. So no matter the level or the manifestations of brain adaptation, your mind controls your personal narratives and actions, and furthermore your mind supersedes previous brain adaptations when motivated to do so. The brain-centrists conflate their confused view of "brain changes" (and your choice to dive into new porn genres) with your decision to react to simple boredom by exploring new porn genres. The brain-centrists want you to believe there is a biological cause of your deep dive into new porn or other fetish arenas. They also want you to believe that your desire for new material will always go in one direction, and that is, to more and more radical genres that end with you becoming an addicted monster. If you believe this, you feel addicted, broken, shameful, and biologically dominated. This pattern of belief is a self-fulfilling prophecy, and the more it's promoted and believed, the more it manifests in the mind of the observer. Diving into "darker" pornography isn't inherent to the process of fetish object preoccupation, nor is it inevitable. In reality, most people live out their PMO habit in contrast to this narrative by moderating or cycling back through average and legal genres, and do so for the life of their respective habits.
 - b. The accumulation of factors 1 through 3 builds a tolerance which leads to withdrawal symptoms when stopping PMO, in the same manner as happens with heavy substance users who become "addicted"; and this drives the inevitable descent into darkness, and abstinence - even forced abstinence - is the only solution.
 - c. This is filled with a massive number of myths we've covered throughout the Master Text and here. But, in short, *brain changes do not drive behavior*. We cannot stress this enough! Rather, these changes are a physical recording of your practiced behaviors; which are the result of your mental and emotional preferences that you developed as a normal part of living. Because brain-centrists focus only on the brain, and discount

the mind entirely, their view of PMO habits can only be interpreted in the narrow scope of biology, and therefore they come to conclusions based on that small window of physical-centered data. This incomplete picture forces a view that is focused on the typical “addiction is something you see in the body” rather than the view that problematic habits are preferences you build mindfully and emotionally based on perceived needs, value judgements, and personal meaning.

- d. It is well established that virtually everyone behaves “within limits”, meaning they don’t go beyond what is generally acceptable behavior within the family, society, and/or culture in which they live. This demonstrates that the “brain changes force a withdrawal reaction that demands a deeper habit” theory is simply false. The fact that some people’s preferences change between different genres only proves the inherent power of free will and autonomy. This reality overshadows the narrow bio-centered theories being promoted by the supposed addiction experts and internet brain-centrist crowd. Don’t fall for their narrow, limiting, and misleading opinions!

The Myth of Porn-Induced Withdrawal

Withdrawal happens when external toxins are introduced into the body consistently and then the body is forced to adapt to these foreign poisons and/or substances. This is called developing a tolerance. Once the tolerance to said poison is created in the body, cessation of that toxin throws the body into an opposite and sometimes violent reaction that has verifiable physical symptoms, some of which are quite painful and, in some cases, they can be even fatal. That is withdrawal.

But here is where things get weird in the porn-induced-withdrawal theory: In a PMO habit, *no such physical toxin is present*. So how do the brain-centrists get around this obvious flaw in their porn-induced-withdrawal theory? They do what anyone in their position would do to push a false narrative. They bring in moralism to take the place of the missing pieces.

Since there is no external physical toxin entering the brain in the PMO habit scenario (as there is with an alcohol or drug habit, for example) the brain-centrists had to factor in a replacement so their theory could make sense. So they exchanged the missing toxin factor in their withdrawal equation with, of all things, moral judgments. It’s a terribly weak choice, but it works to throw the skeptic off the trail of the truth.

Using Harsh Judgments to Make Their Case

Porn-induced-withdrawal theorists propose that easy access to, and frequent observation of pornography and other fetish objects, is outside the scope of what our brains were designed to process. The theory goes on to say that the brain then addresses this overload of “wrong” stimuli by forcing itself to maladapt biologically. “It’s just like heroin addiction,” they say.

Except it’s not. It’s actually nothing like it.

To make the leap that observation of porn or other fetish objects creates a maladaptive brain dysfunction that “looks just like an addict’s brain”, they must create an argument that supports such a radical notion. The problem with this theory is, the adaptation in the brain they are observing isn’t a dysfunction at all; it’s what happens with any brain that adjusts naturally to a habit that is well practiced and highly preferred. It’s an example of normal brain functioning with any highly practiced, repetitive behavior. But to support their “brain dysfunction” theory and make it a real thing, they have to start by saying that heavy and problematic porn observation is “*bad*” and “*wrong*”. Without the activity being seen as bad or morally wrong, or something “no normal person would do”, there would be no reason to jump to the next conclusion, which is that something in the brain has obviously broken which *makes* “sex addicts” slaves to porn. The implication is that no one would choose to watch porn in this way or in this frequency, so it must be out of their control.

None of this is scientific, it’s just the same old worn out moralism being used to justify whatever these so-called experts want to see. Their scientific-sounding idea is actually just garden variety moralism and judgment driving the false narrative of addiction.

If you were to subtract out the judgment that masturbating while watching porn, and doing it a lot, *is bad* - and instead saw it as normal behavior, and then focused on why the person feels the need to preoccupy themselves with this habitual ritual, you’d find the “brain changes force withdrawal and compel PMO’ing” argument entirely useless. Without judging the PMO habit as bad, or wrong, or “toxic”, the “porn-induced-withdrawal forces PMO’ing” theory goes instantly to pieces, and here’s why: by removing the moral argument that heavy PMO’ing is bad, the argument that people are out of control and broken goes away too. The supposed brain-changes they point to become no different than when the brain adapts for *any* highly practiced habit.

It’s also important to note that whether the habit has an actual quality of being bad (or virtuous for that matter) cannot be seen in a brain scan. That’s all a judgment call by the brain-centrists and their moral agenda. So there’s no way to know whether watching porn in this way is bad, wrong, evil; or virtuous, wonderful, or joyous. All we can see in a

brain scan is that *you like the behavior enough to make the brain react in various ways*. None of the proposed biological changes signify a dysfunction here, nor is the preference “wrong” or “bad” in this regard. Just remove all moral judgements of good, bad, evil, etc., from the analysis, and PMO’ing becomes a habit like any other habit! It isn’t an addiction, nor is it a biologically driven behavior, nor is it driven or created by easy access to porn, nor by the porn imagery, but rather, it’s a preference people build for personal and emotional reasons - just like every habit you’ve ever built!

Furthermore, if we take a step back, and again, take out all the moralism and judgment in the analysis of your PMO habit, the whole process of going from one porn genre to another in search of more fulfillment doesn’t look like an uncontrollable addiction anymore, but rather, it looks just like a person who is bored with one thing and moves on to the next. The fact that the brain-centrists have decided from their ivory moral tower that the physical brain data (from scans, etc.) is saying that behavior is “wrong and maladaptive” and is an “addiction” is a case of seeing what they want to see based on the moral codes they are using to justify the title maladaptive and dysfunctional.

We certainly agree that there are people who get bored with one genre and move on to another, and another, and so on, in much the same way that people get bored with one drug and move to other drugs. We also agree that brain changes (called neuroplasticity) happen as a result of learning, but as soon as you convert garden variety boredom into brain-centered addiction lore, moralism, and labeling, you are creating a diagnosis where one doesn’t exist.

And contrary to the brain-centrist theories of “compelled” porn-genre-progression, there’s a majority of PMO’ers that never switch genres, but rather, stick to the genre they’ve always preferred and engage with it even when seeing it as both boring and wholly unfulfilling. And let’s not forget that there are a whole mass of PMO’ers (the majority) who simply stop having a problem, reduce their use, and move on with their lives with no struggle whatsoever - and they make this switch *while their brains are most changed!* (See **Appendix B** in the Master Text for more on this.)

In cases where the person does seek out new, “more exciting genres”, none of this progression from exciting to boring and vice versa is wrong, bad, or evidence of an addiction, nor is it abnormal. With that said, if a person’s preference is for illegal, violent, or tragic types of sex industry services, then that person has to be willing to accept the risks and costs for their preferences or change them.

Even those kinds of preferences are not driven by brain chemistry, and instead are driven by the emotional “why” behind their chosen fetishes. Regardless of morals, types of fetish preferences, what genres of porn you like or dislike, or how much genre-hopping you do, it all comes right down to your “why of the habit” and not those

supposed physical drivers, brain changes, neuroplastic adaptations, nor any other factors that sit outside your conscious mind.

There is no such thing as porn withdrawal or masturbation withdrawal. There is masturbation fatigue, of course. If you masturbate to orgasm several times per day, it stands to reason that you will have fatigue requiring a period of rest and regeneration. This isn't withdrawal, as withdrawal is a function of building tolerance to a toxin. Conflating these terms takes people way off track to analyzing what's behind their preferences, which in the final analysis is all that matters! *WHY DO YOU LIKE IT?*

Stop cruising the internet in some endless search for a solution that's based in your physical body, brain, and biology. You have a thinking apparatus called the mind for a reason. Use it. Read all of this book. Read or listen to all of the Master Text. Watch the entire video workshop, multiple times if needed. Then, if you're still confused, call us at **1-888-424-2626** to set up some coaching. We will walk you through all of this information, and adapt the lessons to your specific situation. We will guide you to figuring out "your why": why you like the genres you prefer, why you feel the need to PMO, why you feel you can't stop. And then we will provide researched based information to help you move past all of that; and we will do that without moralism or judgment of any kind. It's time to move on and live!

Chapter 16: Turn Around and Refocus on the Real Thing!

(Read Chapter Chap 12, 13, 16, 22 & 23 in the Master Text.)

Have you ever had a long argument with someone and there doesn't seem to be a good resolution. You end up going over and over the same miserable emotional ground, only to be more frustrated and angry as the argument progresses? As the conflict continues and escalates, it keeps getting worse, and you realize that the only thing to do is stop, go for a walk, go to bed, or just let some time pass to let everyone cool down? Have you ever noticed that once you let go, leave, and then come back later to address the same issue, you feel different? Oftentimes, you are less defensive, more open to discussion, and have a more forgiving attitude. Have you also noticed that the other person seems to listen better as well?

What's interesting about these kinds of arguments is that the situations and circumstances being discussed don't change because they have already occurred in the past. Whatever happened that led to the argument will always be there. So the question is, what changes when some emotional space is made and the parties come back together to resolve the argument? The answer is, a change of perspective. Each person, with a bit of space given, is no longer feeling cornered and defensive which allows them to see solutions that previously didn't exist. This is what moving past a PMO habit looks like. Allow me to explain.

When you are immersed in problem solving your PMO habit, and unraveling "your why" behind your habit, it can get a bit exhausting and frustrating. As you are exploring your PMO construct, gaining an understanding of it, and then devaluing the experience, you might feel overwhelmed. It can be a lot of work to be constantly mindful in an effort to gain the understanding of why you do what you do. It might feel a lot like that argument with no resolution. But let me explain how you can give yourself the space to get that better perspective.

As you are reading this text, watching the workshop and possibly having coaching sessions, it's important to let go a bit. What I mean by that is to go out, be social, forget about all of this from time to time. Try to engage with people - *get away from the computer and your phone*. Ignore the escort apps, the porn sites, and decompress by physically leaving the typical environment where you engage in your fetish preoccupation, and leave these lessons as well.

Now please understand, I'm not suggesting you stop your analysis, nor am I suggesting a geographic cure or mindless replacement attempts as a means to ignore your PMO construct and wish it away. That is doomed to fail. What I'm suggesting is to analyze, understand, and deconstruct your PMO habits through all the Freedom Model resources

and your mindful attention to it, WHILE ALSO taking some time to go out and explore the lighter side of life.

Moving on requires an effort to explore your world and create or broaden your social life. This is the only real path to a healthy sex life, socialization, and less isolation and loneliness. Exercise, social engagements, and attempts at expanding your lifestyle outside the fetish object realm can occur *while you are deconstructing your PMO habit mindfully*. These do not have to be mutually exclusive things. By focusing on real life, and the art of deconstruction of the old habit, you'll develop the most efficient path to a new, more personally satisfying existence. None of this needs to be neat and tidy either, rebuilding your life while deconstructing the old one can be messy and fun and difficult and exciting all at the same time! *Engage in it! Live it!* Enjoy becoming a new person that's free to think as you wish, and free to build a new lifestyle.

We wish you the best as you move forward, a free, empowered, happier person!

To have a private discussion to see if coaching is right for you, call us at [1-888-424-2626](tel:1-888-424-2626), or you can enroll in our Solution to PMO and Sex Addiction Coaching Package here:

The Solution to PMO & Sex Addiction Coaching Package here:
<https://www.thefreedommodel.org/coaching/>.