

Pornography Recovery as Part of a Matching Process

Addiction to pornography is one key question parents are responsible to ask and find out about before they approve a suggested match for their child. If porn has been a part of either candidate's life, the future partner has the right to know before there is a commitment of heart. She/he must be directed to the right education to interpret the realities of the person struggling with pornography—to neither minimize or exaggerate the problem. That way both can choose to fight the issue and work on it together. If a parent discovers their own child has been or is involved with porn, it is important to support their child to get the help they need before they consider a matching process, and honestly report it once they enter a process with another family.

The Blessed Marriage Project has prepared a website to support our families in this fight (though it is far from complete at this time). Please take advantage of this resource:

www.puremind.online

Points to consider for the porn user in the matching process:

1. Develop a thoroughly honest ongoing mentoring/counseling relationship with someone that involves mentor reporting.
2. Enrollment in a high quality recovery program, whether online or in person, and have evidence of active ongoing involvement in the program (doing homework, etc.).
3. Accountability software (like Covenant Eyes, or rTribe) with a mentor and others receiving the reports.
4. Actions that indicate he/she is developing healthier habits, like regularly going to a gym, or joining a club or getting involved in an activity that interests them, or even helping to be an accountability partner to someone else, to replace the habit.
5. Acknowledging the use of porn, starting a recovery program and commitment to the recovery process are important in order to begin and continue in a matching process. Real progress in recovery and honest communication between the candidates are important before the Commitment Ceremony and the Blessing Ceremony.

Points to consider for the would-be fiancé(e):

The reality is that a vast majority of young men in our movement (as well as a growing number of young women) have struggled with pornography and for most, it is an ongoing battle, which we are only recently learning how to win.

1. Educating oneself to adequately understand the nature of the habit, what impact it can be expected to have had on the user and may have on a marriage, and how the habit is overcome.
2. Involvement with a mentor and/or support group to better cope with the present and future challenges of this problem.

The key to moving forward in a healthy matching process with someone who is struggling or has struggled is that the user knows how to overcome the habit and he/she has been honest with several people so he/she knows how to fix it if and when he/she falls back into it in the future. Also, the future spouse knows of the problem, knows what to look for, is on the accountability team and has a support system if/when there is a relapse.

Points to consider for the parents with their young adult child in the matching process:

1. Parents need to ask their daughter or son if pornography is a deal breaker. Are they willing to get matched with someone who watches pornography?
2. Ask the right questions when considering a candidate. Go over the questions in Appendix 2 of the Family Matching Handbook with the parents of the other family.
3. Do not over react if something is discovered. Ask questions, educate yourself and prayerfully support all parties involved. Take the time you need to digest the situation.
4. Honestly communicate with your adult child and listen carefully to their response with respect and work together.
5. If your child is involved with porn, support them to overcome it. Educate yourself and be part of their recovery accountability team. Get your family the support you will need. Don't pretend it doesn't exist or that it will get better on its own.
6. If the person you are considering as a match for your child is involved with porn - do not over react and automatically reject them. We are all one family and we want to respect and support everyone to be healthy and happy. First, take time to pray and educate yourself, then have a serious talk with your child. They may have the heart to take this challenge on and they will need good education and your support to do that.