

# Pornography

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Physical intimacy is a sacred part of Heavenly Father's plan of happiness. It's normal and healthy to have sexual thoughts and feelings. When these thoughts and feelings are expressed appropriately in a loving marriage, a couple's union becomes "a totality and a union ordained and defined by God<sup>1</sup>." Pornography is a powerful and destructive tool that can weaken and harm this union and create feelings of despair, betrayal, and trauma<sup>2</sup>. The adversary tries to thwart the Lord's plan of happiness by suggesting that physical intimacy is only for personal gratification and its use causes the Spirit of the Lord to withdraw from us (see [D&C 63:16](#)).

**Pornography is any depiction, in pictures or writing, that is intended to inappropriately arouse sexual feelings.** It may be found in written material (including romance novels), photographs, movies, electronic images, video games, social media posts, phone apps, erotic telephone conversations, music, or any other medium.

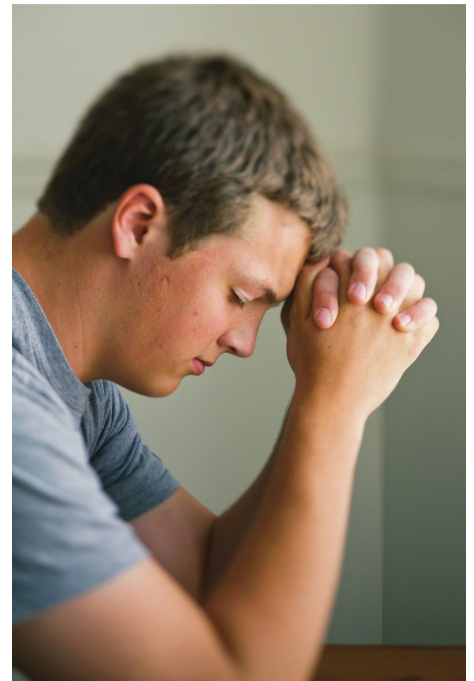
Potential effects of pornography include isolation, secrecy, and deceit that damage relationships and leave one vulnerable to poor self-esteem, anxiety, and depression; unrealistic expectations and misinformation about sexual intimacy; conditioning us to see people as objects to be used and abused; and the development of obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors<sup>3</sup>.

## Studies show

- Pornography use/exposure effects ALL ages AND genders
- Married people who use pornography may be<sup>4</sup>:
  - Less satisfied with their marriage
  - More likely to believe that their marriage is in trouble
  - More likely to discuss ending the marriage
  - Less likely to think their relationship makes them happy
- Adolescents who use pornography may be<sup>5</sup>:
  - More likely to have disturbed family relationships
  - More likely to have lower commitment to their family
  - Less frequently communicating with their parents

## Help is available

- [Help for Me](#)
- [Help for Spouses and Loved Ones](#)
- [Help for Parents](#)
- [Addiction Recovery Program: A Guide to Addiction Recovery and Healing](#)
- [Addiction Recovery Program meetings](#)
- [Safeguards for Using Technology](#)
- [Other Resources](#)
- [Filters](#)
- Even the strongest filters cannot protect you 100 percent of the time. The best filter you have is your own will and desire to make righteous choices. Elder David F. Evans stated: "The only really effective filter for lifelong technology use is the individual heart and mind of the individual person." President Boyd K. Packer taught, "No member of this Church—and that means each of you—will ever make a serious mistake without first being warned by the promptings of the Holy Ghost" ([New Era, Apr. 2012](#)).



- Turn on your device only after your intention is clear. Before turning on your mobile device or computer determine what you will be doing. Experience has shown that people are more likely to encounter inappropriate content on the internet when they are casually surfing the web without a specific purpose in mind.
- Limit the use of technology when you are feeling bored, lonely, angry, anxious, stressed, or tired, or when you feel any other emotion that makes you vulnerable or susceptible.

## ***The Atonement is Infinte***

In mortality, we experience weaknesses and trials. However, Heavenly Father has blessed us with the agency to act and overcome these challenges, allowing us to learn and grow. As we exercise faith in our Savior and His Atonement, weak things can be made strong. He will love, guide, strengthen, and heal us. We are not alone in our struggles. The Lord is ready and willing to help us. He has paid the price for our opportunity to learn and grow from our mistakes. Because He has overcome all things, He is our hope and the source of our strength. The Atonement helps the person struggling by providing the opportunity to repent. It also helps the person(s) affected by providing comfort, teaching forgiveness, helping the individual(s) regain trust and grasping hope.



We start by recognizing our absolute need for help and in humility getting down on our knees, pleading for help to change, to overcome and become more like our Heavenly Father. He meets us at whatever level of progression or degradation we are at and by His Spirit infuses us with greater desire and determination to do better. His enabling grace is there to assist us all along the way. We don't have to reach a point of being "good enough" to receive it, indeed it is His grace that enables us to be good, "for good cometh of none save it be of me" ([Ether 4:12](#)). He then prompts our minds with thoughts of what we need to do differently. Exercising faith in Him means we must be committed enough to act. Little by little our capacity to be different expands because His power in us is growing. We maintain and increase these desires by being involved daily in meaningful scripture study and prayer for increased power to resist temptation and by our actively seeking to overcome weakness and develop more of the godly qualities. As we properly, and with increasing understanding, worship in the temple, we learn how to gain greater power through Their enabling grace, because that is the central message of temple ordinances. The change of heart and mind continues to occur to greater and greater degrees until our fallen natures become increasingly purified and sanctified—made more holy—resulting in our desires, thoughts, words and actions reflecting a more Christlike nature because, indeed, by Their power in us, we are becoming, in a small way, like Them. Not by our own power but by Theirs. This is what it means to endure to the end.

Elder Christofferson said, "repentance means striving to change. It would mock the Savior's suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross for us to expect that He should transform us into angelic beings with no real effort on our part. Rather, we seek His grace to complement and reward our most diligent efforts (see [2 Nephi 25:23](#)). Perhaps as much as praying for mercy, we should pray for time and opportunity to work and strive and overcome. Surely the Lord smiles upon one who desires to come to judgment worthily, who resolutely labors day by day to replace weakness with strength. Real repentance, real change may require repeated attempts, but there is something refining and holy in such striving. Divine forgiveness and healing flow quite naturally to such a soul, for indeed 'virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light; [and] mercy hath compassion on mercy and claimeth her own' ([D&C 88:40](#))" ([Ensign, Nov. 2011, 39](#)).