



VALLEY CHRISTIAN  
COUNSELING CENTER INC.

# The Freedom of **Grace** & **Healing**

April 2015

## A Secret That Needs To Be Shared

**What our culture sees as a harmless secret almost destroyed one man's life. Sharing his secret helped him find freedom.**

### April 2015 Inside This Issue:

Avoiding Mental Exhaustion	2
A Secret <i>(Cont.)</i>	2
Suicide	3
Easter Is For Second Chances	4

### Upcoming Events

**Mental Health  
Awareness Month**  
May, 2015

**Golfing For Grace  
& Hope**  
September 11, 2015

**I have a secret.**

Most people see me as likeable, caring, and friendly. I'm an honest, hardworking businessman. I've volunteered with the less fortunate, led Bible studies in my church, and donated to charity. I don't smoke, drink, or run with folks who do.

Overall I've got a pretty good reputation. I'm your basic all-around nice

I was exposed to pornography at an early age, and what started as an innocent curiosity soon turned into an exciting obsession. Exhilarating and yet embarrassing.

I knew it wasn't right, but I couldn't stop. And like alcohol or drugs, I gradually built up a tolerance. Soon just looking at images wasn't enough. In college I began looking into women's

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***"I wanted more and I was gradually moving closer to doing something very dangerous."***

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guy. You'd never know it, **but I also have an addiction to pornography.**

I lead a double life. **I'm not proud of it. But I'm also not alone. A growing number of men are getting ensnared in the same trap.**

Sexual images are everywhere, and now with the internet your wildest sexual fantasies are only a mouse click away. The multibillion dollar pornography industry makes more money per year than McDonald's and Coca-Cola combined. This is a big problem. It may even be your problem.

dorm windows, but even that didn't satisfy. **I wanted more and I was gradually moving closer to doing something very dangerous.**

It's not that I didn't want to stop. **I couldn't stop.** I knew it was wrong and I hated myself for what I had become. I tried everything I could think of, but I couldn't break the cycle of temptation leading to indulgence, followed by guilt and shame, followed by hopeless despair followed by more temptation, followed by more indulgence . . .

(continued on page 2)

## Three Tips For Avoiding Mental Exhaustion

When your mental gas tank is running on empty remember these three tips to help you refuel.

We have all experienced those days where your mind has reached its limit and focusing becomes exhausting. Here are three tips to help you avoid the mental exhaustion that so easily creeps into our lives.

### **Take Some Alone Time.**

Alone time is good for all of us; even if you are an extrovert who loves being around people. Having some time by yourself can help your

brain relax. Use this time to enjoy a fun activity. You can read, do a Sudoku, or have devotions.

**Enjoy a Rest.** God was on to something when He gave us a day of rest. He knows that our bodies and brains need a break. Once a week you should enjoy a day of relaxing and recharging. Any



activities that you plan should be ones that you enjoy. It may be hard to put work aside for a day, but you can do it. You might even find that you can get more done during your working days when you are fully recharged!

**Exercise.** After you have your day to relax then make sure you get up and get moving! Exercising will help keep your brain and your body healthy. It does not have to be

an intense workout. You can go for a walk, a bike ride, or play with the kids. Physical activity will help you feel energized and rejuvenated.

**Find time to relax, enjoy life and move around a little. It is easier said than done, I know, but you can do it!**

## A Secret That Needs To Be Shared (*Continued*)

Finally, by the grace of God, I came to my senses. **I realized I had a serious problem and that I had to get help. A friend suggested counseling.** I considered most counselors to be phonies and quacks, but I was also desperate. I swallowed hard and made a call to Valley Christian Counseling Center.

I've now been attending a men's sexual addiction group for over two years, and through lots of education and honest discussion **I've found a freedom and a sense of hope I never thought possible.**

Two years may sound like a long time, but addictions take a long time to develop, so it makes sense that they will not be conquered overnight. I've had to learn and unlearn a great deal. I still haven't achieved total victory, but I've come a very long way. The temptations themselves have weakened, and I feel like I

am finally getting some real control over my life.

**My private life is beginning to line up with my public reputation, and that feels very, very good.**

Maybe you dabble in pornography, but your problem isn't as bad as mine. Or maybe it's worse. But deep down, you know it is wrong and you feel ashamed.

If you can stop, do it now before you get ensnared. Don't kid yourself. You're playing with fire. If you can't stop, get some help. **No soldier ever won a military battle on his own, and the same is true of our private battles.**

Besides, this is one secret that's too dangerous to keep to yourself.

- *An Anonymous Testimony*





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## Easter Is For Second Chances

**But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." - Mark 16:6-7**

Do you need a second chance today? On the first Easter morning, Peter needed one. He had insisted that he would never deny Christ. But just as Jesus had predicted, Peter not only denied the Lord, but he denied Him three times. The last glimpse Peter had of Jesus before His crucifixion was in the glow of the fire in the high priest's courtyard, where he actually made eye contact with Jesus.

What kind of look do you think Jesus gave Peter when their eyes met? Do you think it was one of those I-told-you-so-looks? I don't think it was. I think it was a look of love. And I believe that is why Peter went away and wept bitterly. He had failed the Lord so miserably. He probably thought there was no hope for him.

But then a message went out from the empty tomb

that Jesus had risen, followed by these instructions, "Go, tell His disciples—and Peter. . . ." It was not, "Go tell the disciples, including Peter, James, and John. . . ." It was just Peter, because Peter needed a special word of encouragement.

Do you need encouragement today? Maybe you have fallen short. And like Peter, maybe you ended up with the wrong people in the wrong place at the wrong time, ultimately doing the wrong thing.

God gave Peter a second chance. And He will give you one, too — because Easter is for the person who needs a second chance.

*- A Devotional From Greg Laurie Daily*

