



Ten Commandments for
LIVING WITH A PORN ADDICTED PARTNER

RALPH EARLE

1. Thou Shalt not take it personally. This is not about you, because of you, or an action against you. It does however require you to look at yourself and what this situation is teaching you about your relationship with yourself and your own life lessons. Find out about the role of the Co-Addict or the Co-Dependent Partner. If you are a Co-Addict/Co-Dependent, get support and create your own Recovery Contract. Honor your own Recovery Contract and have your own Recovery supports. COSA is available to you.

2. Thou Shalt not make it your job to fix your spouse. It is not your job to heal your spouse of this addiction. Do not make it your job. Give your partner the dignity of his/her own process and demonstrate that you believe in his/her ability to heal this issue.

3. Thou Shalt not become a private investigator or become an officer in the Porn Police. It is not your responsibility to track your partner's every move, to check their phone, to look through the computer, etc. Support your partner in using a recovery support system, outside of your support, that includes a Sponsor, Sexual Addiction (SAA) (SA) (SCA) meetings, Twelve Step Group support, and a therapist for accountability and support.

4. Thou Shalt understand and embrace recovery as a process that is ongoing versus thinking there is a beginning and an end. Recovery requires being mindful and present in each moment, of each day, that continues all the days of your life. Recovery is a focused intention to be aware, to feel your feelings, to be responsible for your feelings, your behaviors and how they affect yourself and others. Ongoing recovery is a wonderful thing.

5. Thou Shalt embrace the support of your Higher Power. This is a great time to develop or renew your connection to Inner Spiritual supports in whatever form makes sense for you.

6. Thou Shalt be aware of the fact that your partner has all the inner and outer resources to effectively deal with the porn addiction. Let your partner know you believe in their ability to obtain and maintain sobriety, and their ability to reach out for support when needed.

7. Thou Shalt trust thyself to handle whatever challenges living with a porn addicted partner brings to you, knowing that you also have all the inner and outer resources to effectively deal with this situation. Believe in your own ability to handle the challenges this situation brings forward for you, and take advantage of supporting yourself and reaching out for support from others when needed.

8. Thou Shalt know that living with a Porn Addicted Partner can be your greatest teacher for the lessons of self-acceptance, acceptance of others, and accepting what is. Know that this can be an opportunity for you and your partner to deepen in your intention to accept each other exactly as you are in the present moment and to stay connected to each other no matter what life brings you. This challenge is an opportunity to develop healthy core foundations in your relationship that you may never have taken the time to build.

9. Thou Shalt not Shame or Blame your partner for having a Porn Addiction. Shame and Blame are toxic. Don't buy into the illusion that if your partner were not flawed in this way, everything would be just fine. The truth is, your partner and/or the porn addiction is most likely not the only source of problems in the relationship. Don't miss the opportunity for deep healing and true resolution of issues that are present for each of you individually and the two of you as a couple.

10. Thou Shalt Know that what you Focus on Expands. When you focus on what is working, you get more of what is working. When you focus on what is not working, you get more of what is not working. So decide what you want more of! Notice and prize yourself and your partner for successes. Notice and focus your attention on what is working and what is going well individually and as a couple. Prize and acknowledge yourself and your partner for your progress each day. Verbalize what you appreciate about your partner as you progress through the healing process. Let your partner know that you see how hard he/she is working and let him/her know how proud you are of the progress.



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RALPH EARLE, Ph.D., A.B.P.P. is a noted marriage and family therapist and psychologist, author, and lecturer. He holds a Masters of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School and a Ph.D. in Pastoral Psychology. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist as well as a Certified Sex Addiction Therapist. He is past national President of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He is an ordained minister and served on the Board of Directors of the Interfaith Sexual Trauma Institute of St. John's University, Minneapolis, MN. He has numerous media credits and is the author of several books including *Lonely All the Time: Recognizing, Understanding, and Overcoming Sex Addiction* and *Come Here, Go Away*. He is the co-author with his son, Dr. Marcus Earle, of *Sex Addiction: Case Studies and Management*. He is co-author of *Healing Conversations: Therapy and Spiritual Growth*, and his most recent book *The Pornography Trap: Setting Pastors and Laypersons Free from Sexual Addiction*. He is the Founder and President of Psychological Counseling Services, Ltd. (PCS), a group practice in Scottsdale, Arizona, that specializes in the PCS Intensive Outpatient Therapy Program model. His work at PCS is part of an exclusive treatment team that includes his son, Marcus Earle, Ph.D., as Clinic Director.