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# **The 10 Steps That Lead To Adultery**

Copyright 1991 By Cordell Vail  
originally written 28 Feb 1991  
Revised 01 Feb 1998  
Revised 03 July 2008

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# OUTLINE

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## **Introduction:**

These steps do not always transpire in this exact order and they are not necessarily exactly true in every case. But in general they are the steps that people who are married go through as they become unfaithful to their companion. The time line between steps also varies in each situation. For some people these ten steps can take years to go through. For others they can go from one step to the other in a matter of days or weeks.

Another point of interest that is a great contributing factor in infidelity is the fact that in common, men are more stimulated by sight and women more by touch. That is why you never hear of a woman "window peeper". So the steps can come in a little different form for men than for women, especially the beginning few steps.

## STEP 1: PORNOGRAPHIC THOUGHTS

The human mind is not born corrupt. Little children are born pure and perfect. The thoughts of our mind for the largest part come from outside and cause things to be remembered or learned. If a child were never introduced to corruption and sin they would be much less sinful. That is why we are here on the earth, to be introduced to sin and learn to choose between good and evil. The initial corruption within our mind comes from outside exposure. It is a result of experience. Thoughts stay in our mind by our choice. As we experience life, we choose what we will retain and what we will reject in our thoughts and actions. Once the thoughts are retained, they can become self-perpetuating. If we have allowed our mind to be flooded with bad thoughts, we can not then say when we do something wrong, that the "THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT". Satan can not tempt us beyond our ability to resist.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

The first step to adultery comes as some form of corrupting the mind. I have chosen to call this step PORNOGRAPHY. We normally would think of pornography as a picture in a dirty magazine or an X rated movie. However in this day and age that definition is far too narrow. And it no longer is something that only effects men who are stimulated by sight more than touch. In our day and age pornography comes in many forms. There are many shades of gray that fall between pure black and pure white. Pornography will be defined in this paper as any form of suggestion to the mind of thoughts about inappropriate premarital or extra marital sexual relations from some external source. We are defining it as the suggestion to our mind that we engage in something our culture has defined as wrong or some even call it a sin. Some of the forms of pornography today can be found in inappropriate TV shows, bad movies, photographic pictures, suggestive books, music with bad lyrics, romantic novels, bad jokes, inappropriate actions by others, Internet chat discussions, Internet pornography, etc. Any and all of which can begin to put phonographic thoughts into our minds. As these thoughts of inappropriate sexual activities are introduced into our mind from outside, they begin to force us to make decisions about keeping or rejecting that kind of thoughts.

Just having the thought, picture, advertisement, impression or idea introduced into our mind is not a sin. IT is almost impossible to avoid it in our day and age. We see and hear it every where. Satan has the power to put a thought into our mind. There is no sin in having a thought put into our mind. The sin is dwelling on the thought after it is

introduced. That is step 2. The dwelling on the bad thoughts that are introduced into our minds. Step 1 is defining the forms by which these pornographic presentations are made to our minds.

All the water in the world, however hard it tried,  
Could never sink the smallest ship, unless it gets inside.  
All the evil in the world, the blackest kind of sin,  
Can never hurt you one least bit, unless you let it in.

Author Unknown

"Stay morally clean. This means that you keep a clean mind. Your thoughts will determine your actions, and so they must be controlled. It is difficult to control those thoughts if you submit yourself to temptation. So you will have to carefully select your reading material, the movies you see, and the other forms of entertainment in order to have good thoughts rather than unwholesome desires."

President Ezra Taft Benson  
LDS Conference Talk  
Ensign, May 1985 page 36

## **STEP 2: SELF VISUALIZATION OR FANTASIES**

The second step leading to adultery is actually taken when you decide to allow your mind to retain and dwell on or think about the pornographic thoughts that were introduced to it as defined above. That could be just an inappropriate thought about something that happened with someone in the past. It does not have to be a picture in a book. It could be a thought about a desire to do something inappropriate with someone outside your marriage at the present time. It is the introduction into your mind of an inappropriate physical contact with someone and then keeping that thought in your mind and allowing it to be pondered upon. That is the second step. Allowing the thought to remain in your mind once it is introduced by what ever means it may come. The second step is the main key to avoiding sexual sin. If we make up our mind once and for all that no matter what, we will not allow bad thoughts to stay in our mind when they are introduced, we will have built a fence that can not be breached. I once heard the saying:

Better to build a fence at the top of the cliff  
than put an ambulance down in the valley

Author Unknown

The problem is, Satan is very good at breaching fences. He will not try to tear down the whole fence all at once. He will not try to get you to think of YOU participating in the final act. Not at first. Normally we don't fall by a blow out but rather by a series of little slow leaks. We will say that we will just let this one thought dwell for a minute then put it out. We say we will just fantasize a little now but not actually do anything. Have you

ever seen the illustration where you take a spool of thread and wrap one strand of thread around someone's thumbs. They can easily break it. Then two. Still they can easily break the thread. But eventually when enough strands of thread are wrapped around the thumbs, the person can no longer break the band. Thoughts are like thread. One thought introduced and kept is easy to cast out. But many thoughts introduced and kept soon create a habit almost unbreakable in our minds.

There are many famous sayings about habits, too many to mention here. Here are a few taken from the Richard Evans Quote Book (Publishers Press, first edition Copyright 1971 pages 219-220) that express well the intended thought:

Habits are at first cobwebs, then cables.  
A Spanish Proverb

We first make our habits, and then our habits make us.  
John Dryden

The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt  
until they are too strong to be broken.  
Samuel Johnson

We will say that we will just let the thoughts dwell in our mind for a minute, enjoy them just a little, and then cast them out. We say we will just fantasize a little but not ever actually do anything. These thoughts may have been introduced into our mind by contact with some other person. The thoughts may have been introduced by seeing a movie on TV. They may have come from talking to someone. It is not so important where the Step 1 thoughts came from. It is important whether you keep the thoughts in your mind for a minute or two or cast them out as soon as they are introduced.

Often this fantasizing comes from frustration or loneliness within our own marriage relationship. A desire to have something we feel we need physically but can not find. A desire to find fulfillment that does not seem to be in our marriage relationship. So we decide to look elsewhere and find it just in our minds. Or at least that is where it starts at first. We know we would not actually ever do anything physically in person, we just want to allow ourselves to think about it a little and just FEEL THE FEELINGS.

The problem with self visualization is that it is a well proven fact of psychology that when we have a fantasy in our mind, our physical body goes through all the exact same emotional experiences that we would go through as if we had been having the actual physical experience.

In the book Psycho-cybernetics by Maxwell Maltz (paper back Special edition New York 1966) we find the following example of this:

page 12

...the so-called "subconscious mind" is not a "mind" at all, but a mechanism - a goal-striving "servo-mechanism" consisting of the brain and nervous system, which is *used by* and *directed by* mind.

page 29

Your nervous system cannot tell the difference between an *imagined experience* and a "real" experience. Your nervous system reacts appropriately to what "you" *think or imagine* to be *true*.

Isn't that interesting that our subconscious mind can not distinguish between actual physical experience and fantasy. That ties in quite nicely with the Saviors teaching in the Bible where He said that when we have committed adultery (or sexual sin) in our mind, it is the same as if we had already committed the sin.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Matt 5:27-28

Another one of the problems of self visualization or fantasies about improper sexual activities is that they are self perpetuating. They become a habit. They cause us to want more and more. After a little while we feel that the feelings we are feeling are not enough. We need more and more of the feelings to reach the same level of satisfaction as before. It is like most other addictive habits. The same dose day after day does not bring the same level of satisfaction. Once Satan has breached the fence and has gotten us to just think a little bit about it, he has a foot hold. He has a small hole in our fence. Just a little hole, but a hole never the less. If he can get us to just see a little bad part of one movie, just look at one suggestive photograph, or just fantasize for a second or two about someone we would LIKE TO BE WITH, but that is all, it lets him in our mind. If he can get us to just say we would never really do it, but we just wonder what it would feel like. If he can just get us to try to feel the feeling that would come from it for a second but that is all, then we have had an emotional experience. We visualize it and then emotionally experience it. To our subconscious mind, this mental emotional experience is just the same as a physical emotional experience. It brings us satisfaction of our wants and desires. We can become very, very realistic in our minds with fantasies. We can feel safe only talking to someone on the phone but be having a very real experience in our minds. It can bring us a temporary feeling of satisfaction of wanting to be fulfilled. It can bring a form of satisfaction to our hidden wants and desires that we feel are not being met in our marriage relationship. It can feel good. It does feel good. If it did not bring good feelings, people would not do it. This is especially true if we continue to feed our minds with these pornographic feelings and condone our fantasies by justifying them as something we need and want.

If we watch suggestive TV shows, see a movie that "JUST HAS ONE LITTLE BAD PART IN IT", listen to music with suggestive lyrics, watch Soap Operas where the main theme is immorality, or read a romantic novel it starts the pattern. If we do it day after day, it feeds our pornographic habit. This is true of women as much as it is of men. We become addicted to those feelings and sensations as real as if we were actually physically experiencing them in reality. Eventually these fantasies will lead our mind to demand more and more sensations until we become obsessed with a desire to actually physically experience our fantasies in person. That leads us to Step 3 and how we accomplish that purpose of our mind.

As a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Proverbs 23:7

I think that in this scripture and in the scripture found in Matt5:27-28 cited above that we can not interpret "MAN" as being a male person, but rather mankind including both men and women.

Our words will condemn us, yea, all our works will condemn us... and our thoughts will also condemn us; and in this awful state we shall not dare to look up to our God....

Book Of Mormon

Alma 12:14

## **STEP 3: FLIRTING**

Fantasies will eventually break down our resistance to the point that we will want to experiment just a little to see how it feels to do these things in reality. Not all the way. Just a little. We will eventually want to experiment a little to see if we can actually get someone else to react or participate in our fantasies. This is where there is a little separation in the definition of fornication and adultery. There is no sin in an unmarried person flirting and trying to get the attentions of the opposite sex. This is in fact very normal if the thought and intention is for the right purpose. But when a person is married, there is never a time when a person could flirt with a person of the opposite sex and have it be appropriate.

### **Avoid Even the Thought**

The final act of adultery is not the only sin. For any man or woman to begin to share affection or romantic interest with any other than the spouse is an almost certain approach to ultimate adultery. There must be no romantic interest, attention, dating, or flirtation of any kind with anyone so long as either of the participating people is still legally married, regardless of the status of that marriage. Indeed, even the thought of adultery is sinful, as Jesus emphasized:

Ye have heard that it "as said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matt. 5:27-28.)

Spencer W. Kimball, The Miracle of Forgiveness, p.70

If a person has decided that they will never let pornographic thoughts dwell in their mind and thus never engage in fantasies, it would be impossible to move from step 2 to step 3. You would never consider flirting with someone if you had not premeditated it in your mind before you did it. At least you would not do it a second time, if you did it and realized what you had done and then recognized that flirtation as a pornographic expression or desire (here again it is important to remember how we are defining pornographic as we have in step 1). If you have resolved to never be sexually impure in mind or body, you would have no reason to flirt with someone of the opposite sex. But many people are driven through steps two and three by frustration, loneliness and low self esteem, ego or other related emotional problems within their marriage. The main problem is RECOGNITION. Most people who engage in flirting do not see it as doing anything wrong. It is just a friendly expression of feelings that will not lead to anything else, so they think.

Flirting comes in many forms and always has the same objective. It is a means to gain the attentions of someone of the opposite sex for a romantic interest. It is a way to do something TO THEM or WITH THEM to see if it will draw a reaction from them. Normally if there is no reaction back the flirting stops. Often times this initial flirting is not even directed at any one individual. At least not at first. It is a looking for reactions. It is a way to make yourself feel good that at least someone notices you. It is just an experimentation to see if there really are other people out there that are interested in you. There are of course instances where the fantasizing thoughts have been about one specific person and the flirting does begin and stay just with them.

We all love to be loved. We all need and want attention. If we are not finding that satisfaction within our marriage, we sometimes turn to flirting to fill that need. Flirting is just a form of satisfying those needs in an inappropriate way outside our marriage. It is a safe way, so we think, to add a little reality to your fantasy without any commitment. It normally is closely related to building one's low self esteem and ego. It is a means for satisfaction of a frustration or an emotional need felt but not satisfied within your marriage. Flirting begins to fill this need without making any commitment or actual statement of fact to the other person you are flirting with. It just tells you if they have noticed or not. It is an attempt to start a two way communication of fantasy thoughts.

Flirting is obviously not always a two way communication. It is just a physical testing of the water by one person to see if the other person is interested in some degree of exchange. Hardly anyone would ever consider the flirting they do as a SOLICITATION. It is just a game people play. If the other person does flirt back, then you can advance to step four with them. If the person you are flirting with ignores you, you either go back to step 2 alone, if the flirting is directed at one specific individual, or you keep trying until they give in. If the flirting was not directed at any one specific person who was the subject of your fantasies in step 2 then if the flirting is not returned, you likely will just go on to someone else who is more receptive and will flirt back.

However if the person does flirt back then the process of step 3 continues. Normally flirting that is returned begins to go on and is not just a one time thing. Flirting that is

responded to is then normally accompanied by continued fantasies about that specific person who flirted back. If the person flirted with flirts back, then the fantasies of the mind will become focused on that one individual and will eventually drive you to step four. This flirting does not have to be done in person. It can be done over the phone. It can be done in letters. It can be done in an E-mail. But it obviously can also be done in person as a look across the room or the way you say something to a person. It can be as innocent as a touch on the arm. But by what ever means it is accomplished, it sends a message to the other person that you want to play, and you are willing to some degree if they are. That is the message that is sent by flirting. Sure we assume that it will not go anywhere more than just friendly exchange of feelings. But never the less, it is a message sent. The real problem in sending that message to someone else is that you have no control over their mind and fantasies and may well start a reaction in them that will come back to you in a form much stronger than you had anticipated. For them it well may be a solicitation. If it is, you may get more than you bargained for from your flirting.

## **STEP 4: FAMILIARIZATION WITH AN INDIVIDUAL PERSON**

Step four is actually just an extension of step three. It is flirting in a two way communication rather than a one way communication. It is increased flirting with a specific individual because they have responded back. It is flirting and being flirted with now. Not really making any commitments, just an expression of mutual interest between the two parties involved. Just creating good feelings in each other but not intending to go any further than that. Normally a person at this stage would still be saying to themselves that they would not ever really do anything bad or wrong, but just want to have a little fun and feel the good feelings that come from the flirting. They just want to see if the other person really would return the expressions of affection in the form of flirting. There may even be more than one individual at the same time that is the target of the flirting and the reactions to the flirting if you have not been fantasizing about any one person. It may be a scouting for a partner to join you in your fantasy. Flirting is like racing your engine a little but not really intending to go driving anywhere. This step is normally very closely tied to the fulfillment of ego, self worth and the satisfaction of the frustrations from your current marriage relationship where you do not feel fulfilled in these areas.

Satan is no fool. He knows that people will allow themselves to just play with a little fire when they have no intention of actually touching it. Just look. Window shopping is a very dangerous tactic that he uses on people, asking them, "what can it hurt to just look, you are not going to buy anything?" People often will do many things in their mind that they would never intend to do literally or physically in person, at least at first. They just want to see if they can get someone to flirt back and make them feel good. Feel noticed. Feel needed. So innocent in most cases. And even when it is more than once, they still only intend to flirt. Nothing else. But as with any addiction this fulfillment of the frustration and need in your life can set off a barrage of mental fantasies that can become very real. Especially if the flirting came as a result of fantasies in the first place. If you begin to have fantasies with a specific individual and then your flirting lets you know that they are

interested too, the fantasies then normally become very real in your mind after that. Planning specific encounters. Premeditating things that you will do or say next time to flirt again. The mental fence will go from having a little hole in it to being breached very wide in your mind. You still keep the fence very tightly closed physically, but in your mind the thoughts that then are allowed begin to grow and breach the mental fence very wide. You have actually targeted some specific individual at this point, and they have responded back. They have returned your flirting. That makes you at least believe that they are interested in you. And the flirting then begins on a regular basis. Exchange of feelings. Racing the engine. But not intending to go driving anywhere.

## **STEP 5: VOCALLY PROCLAIMING MUTUAL INTEREST**

Initial flirting and the return of flirting are not necessarily vocal. It can be. But it is very non committal if it is. Just teasing. Insinuations. But eventually flirting and the return of flirting will lead the participating parties to finally, vocally proclaim their mutual interest in each other. It can start with such simple expressions as, "you are a neat person", or "I like talking to you". This may come as hinting at first and careful wording, but eventually they will let each other know verbally that there is a mutual interest. That starts a commitment process we might call bonding. They communicate the fact that they like each other and like the feeling that comes when being in each others company. The main point in this step is that now that it has been expressed verbally, it is not a one way communication any longer. Now there is knowledge that the other person is interested in at least sharing these mutual good feelings. And most importantly, more than hinting with flirting, they have said so verbally. They have said it out loud in a way that the other person heard it and understood it They have made a commitment. They have allowed the bonding process to begin. They have said, I like this and I want it to go on further. I will continue to participate with you in this sharing of feelings.

This fifth step normally begins to lead to spending time together to share these feelings. Often this will be in secret meetings, or just spending time together talking, even in public, when others do not suspect why they are talking or spending time together. This continued verbal communication is the deepening of the bonding process. It is the stage where you actually begin to miss each other and look forward to your meetings, talks and sharing of feelings. Again these meetings may not be in person. It may be by phone, letter or E-mail. But it is a verbal exchange of feelings. You begin to receive more and more emotional satisfaction to your fantasized desires. you begin to spend more and more time together exchanging feelings rather than only doing it in your mind in fantasies. Each meeting deepens the commitment and bonding process. You receive more and more emotional satisfaction to your fantasized desires. You begin to spend more and more time together and look for times or ways that you can be together or share these feelings by what ever means you are doing it.

Often couples engaged in this step think that they are being very secretive and are not aware that it is very obvious to other people what is going on. It is like they become blind

to the appearance of how often they are seen together or how often they talk about that person to other people. When you start seeing two people who are constantly looking for occasions to be together and are constantly paying attention to each other and talking or communicating, it is not hard for other people to guess what is going on. But they normally think that they are very clever and are hiding it from every one. Some times of course people are very successful in hiding it. But that is not normally the case. At this point your emotions about the other person are very difficult to hide from other people.

The show of their countenance doth witness against them, and doth declare their sin to be even as Sodom, and they cannot hide it. Wo unto their souls, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves!

The Book of Mormon  
2 Nephi 13:9

This continued verbal communication makes you become very bold and you will become more and more attached to each other emotionally. You will actually begin to feel you need each other and begin to care less and less what other people might think if they did know. You start to share more and more intimate things about each other and with each other. You begin looking for ways to increase familiarity. You start a little at a time but gradually start to talk about intimate things about your self and sometimes even start sharing the problems of your marriage, expressing your feelings of frustration and lack of fulfillment. This is a sure invitation to the other person to try to fill those frustrations and feelings of not being fulfilled. Just verbally at first of course.

## **STEP 6: CASUAL PHYSICAL TOUCHING**

Step five and six are not very easily separated and often are mixed or a part of the same step. Step six is more than verbal communication. It is actually physically touching each other. This touching could have started clear back in the flirting stage of the relationship. This normally starts out very innocently. Little things like standing or sitting next to each other with arms or legs just bumping for a second. Then a second time. And finally bumped or touched and not moved away. It is the purposeful touch of the hand on the arm or face. It is actually an experiment to see if the other person will give their permission to be touched with out rejection. As little as it may be at first, when the other person allows it, it is giving permission. When they return it, it is an invitation for more. It is the building of the bonding process beyond verbal communication. It can come in as many forms as their experiences, but the verbal contact has now led to the desire for physical contact. And once the touching starts, it is encouraged by repeated touching without rejection. It is giving your consent to have a physical experience together without going too far. It is permission to go a little further without verbally asking to do it. It may start as innocently as touching on the hand as you say something. Or a hug of comfort when you are leaving. Each instance is different. But it is all a testing of the water to see if the other person is interested in going a little further beyond verbal or written communication and allowing some limited touching or hugging just to express further feelings. There is no intention normally of doing more that just expressing an emotional

feeling physically. Giving comfort physically as well as emotionally or mentally, by touching rather than by speaking or writing.

## **STEP 7: PROLONGED PHYSICAL CONTACT FOR INTIMACY**

Step seven is of course just an extension of step six. Once a person can see that it is OK to touch, the desire for more intimate physical satisfaction soon begins to take place. This is especially true if fantasizing continues and is accelerated. To actually hold hands or hug to say I want to hold you rather than to say good bye is not the same. Casual touching the arm to see how a person reacts is not the same as taking someone's hand and squeezing it. And to squeeze someone's hand is not the same as to hold someone's hand. Holding or hugging for the purpose of sharing intimate feelings is a step past just touching to see how someone reacts. It is no longer testing to see if you will be rejected. The intent of holding hands, back rubs, hugging and other prolonged physical contact is for the expression of physical intimacy on a prolonged basis. It also leads to initial sexual arousal. It may be in a very slight manner at first. But it is there. It is to tell the other person that you want to give and take romantic passion in some form. And by the fact that there is no rejection of the prolonged touching, it shows acceptance or again - commitment and building of the bonding process.

Once you engage in this step, there can no longer be any doubting in your mind that there is a mutual bond growing between you. You are receiving confirmation of it by the prolonged physical contact. Fear of rejection is traded for encouragement of expression. If the other person allows and encourages prolonged physical contact, that confirms their consent and gradually leads to using this physical contact for expression of and receiving fulfillment of your desires for physical romantic intimacy.

## **STEP 8: KISSING**

Kissing normally begins like the other steps, as a gradual experimentation. Kissing on the cheek to see if it will be rejected. Just a quick kiss to say thanks or I like you. A little kiss to just say good bye. A kiss when you meet and depart but nothing else is where it normally starts. But casual kissing will eventually lead from experimentation and fear of rejection for going too far, to passionate kissing for fulfillment of desires for physical intimacy. Kissing with the intent of passion is giving purposeful permission to the other person to allow and receive sexual stimulation and fulfillment. Kissing on the lips will eventually lead to further desires to touch and share further intimacy more openly.

## **STEP 9: PETTING**

Petting is normally defined as touching another person sexually. It can be expressed in many ways. Heavy petting is normally defined as one person touching the sexual parts of the other persons naked body in a sexually stimulating way. Many people who are

engaged in this activity actually claim that they did know that is what it meant. They say that they did not think it was wrong because they did not do the final act. Any person with a moral conscience knows from the teachings of our culture that **ANY SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH A PERSON OUTSIDE MARRIAGE IS A WRONG!**

Eventually couples that engage in passionate kissing will be driven to further expression of their physical desires. French kissing is a form of petting. It is more than just kissing. People who begin to express themselves physically by touching each other in a way that is only appropriate within the bounds of marriage are petting. This is giving the other person full and unrestrained permission to express physical intimacy and create sexual arousal with out rejecting the feelings intended. To purposefully arouse the other person sexually in any way, be it verbally, in writing, or by touch is petting. It is the beginning steps of sending a signal that eventually you will be willing remove any further restraints. Many couple become so involved in petting that they even cause each other to have an orgasmic release from the sexual stimulation derived yet still feel that they have done nothing wrong because they are not going all the way.

As with the other steps, all forms of petting begin with the thought. It is almost always premeditated before it is actually done. It is always done in the mind first. Especially after it has been done once and then the desires to do it again and again are built up in the mind in the form of fantasies. It is almost always done a little at first, just a touch at first and that is all. But it progresses just as the other steps. If continually engaged in, it goes from " that is all you will do and no more", to "more and more". The sexual arousal that comes from petting normally very quickly removes all the rest of the fence. It may take a while, but if engaged in over a period of time, it will go further and further, until there is finally no power to resist the final act.

## **STEP 10: THE FINAL ACT IS NOT THE ONLY SIN**

Many people engaged in petting have thought that as long as they do not have actual sexual intercourse, they have not committed adultery. It is important to understand that there is little separation between steps eight, nine, and ten. The actual act of intercourse is of course technically termed "ADULTERY". But people who are not married who engage in passionate kissing and or petting for the purpose of sexual fulfillment and satisfaction, but who do not actually have intercourse cannot say that they have not committed adultery. The sin of adultery is certainly contained in any form of passion or physical intimate expression of sexual arousal that leads to the final fulfillment of those sexual desires even if it is not accomplished by intercourse. And if those feelings are being expressed outside of marriage, they are adulterous expressions of passion.

Who can say at which step adultery actually began? Who can say when the act of adultery actually took place? How can it better be defined than by the Savior Himself when He said that when you have done it in your mind, you have committed adultery already in your heart. The only possible difference would seem to be in the degree of repentance needed for how far you have gone. How hard it will be for you to quit.

The best course is to decide that you will stay away from even the first step - rejecting pornographic thoughts of any kind. Rejecting illicit sexual suggestions from your mind at every entry. If you never move to step two, "fantasizing", it would be impossible for you to commit adultery even in your mind.

The key to not committing adultery is to decide that you will not commit adultery or do anything like it. That is the key, "ANYTHING LIKE IT". We must make that decision firmly in our mind and then stick with that decision totally. If you play with fire, even a little bit, you will eventually get burned. There are no exceptions. There is no degree of experimentation that is not a part of the final act of committing adultery.

In every instance that I have seen, the person who was in trouble had never decided that they would not even experiment with it. In fact just the opposite; they always said in their mind they would just do a little, but that is all. The problem is, there was never a line that could not be crossed over. They never really intended to do it all the way in the beginning. They just wanted to get over by the edge of the ledge and feel the feelings of emotions of it a little and try to find fulfillment with out sin. No one normally ever goes over to what would be considered acts of sin in one step. They just want to toy with it a little then rush back to safety. The trouble is, most people in that situation do not realize the sin starts in step two, and it comes by a series of slow leaks. It comes by one thread at a time being warped around the thumbs. There never seems to be a moment when they say, that is enough. I will stop now. I am getting to where I can not come back. Satan is no fool. He does this in little daily steps over a long, long period of time so there is never a day when we can say, this is getting too bad.

Have you ever seen mud that got white gloved? Of course not. When we put a white glove in the mud, even in the slightest way, it is the glove that gets muddy not the mud that gets white gloved. You can not touch sin and not get tarnished.

And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things...

The Book Of Mormon  
Alma 5:57

A helpful resolve for all of us who are being tempted to express our feelings of frustration and loneliness in this way would be to memorize this poem:

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As to be hated needs but to be seen;  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Alexander Pope

I wonder if King David ever realized who the real Goliath in his life was? She was not nine feet tall, but she had the power to cause him to destroy himself. Maybe he would have been better off if Goliath had killed him that day there on the battle field. Who can say? But as we go forth in our lives, it is the intent of this paper to help each person reading it to see and recognize a potential Goliath in their lives that truly could destroy them spiritually and maybe even eternally.

Temptation is like wrapping string around your thumbs. At first, just one wrap it is easy to break. Wrap ten wraps and you can still break it but it is very hard to do. Wrap 1000 wraps and it is pretty much impossible to break unless you find a way to cut the string.

The most difficult part of all is quitting. Especially when we have engaged in any parts of the steps for a long period of time. Why is it hard to stop. Because the pleasures and excitement enjoyed from the actions becomes the TRUE DESIRES OF OUR HEART. Sometimes the true desires of our hearts are hidden even from us. We get to the point that we want to not want to but we just can not stop. Because even though we want to stop because of the consequences, we actually want to continue to enjoy the pleasures more than we fear the consequences.

How do we change the desires of our hearts? That is a very difficult problem for most people. It is a part of addiction. We actually become sexaholics. We resolve to stop. We want to stop. We try every way we can to stop. But we have triggers in us. And when we receive certain stimulations, such as further contact, hormones are released from our brain that change our thinking. While those hormones are flowing within us we lose our resolve. We want our true desire of our heart more than we want the rewards of being free from the habit. So then the steel walls of resistance that we have put up are like a paper wall before a freight train. We can not stop. We do it anyway. While the hormones are in our system we want that more than we want to stop.

Some times the only way we can change those desires of our heart is when something so terrible happens that it creates "A MIGHTY CHANGE IN OUR HEART". We get found out and end up being faced with divorce or humiliation or loss of our job. Something so terrible that the consequences are so hurtful that we give up those desires of our hearts to avoid further pain. Many times that is the only way we can stop. Other may need counseling. Addiction of any kind is very difficult to overcome. Many people who have been addicted to drugs and also addicted to pornography and immorality say that overcoming the habit of pornography or immorality was much more difficult than overcoming the habit of drugs.

What is the next step. Only you can know that. Hopefully it will not take a traumatic experience so terrible that it will force you to stop. It may take something so drastic as moving away where you have no further contact with the person. Some times talking with a close friend can help where you let them help you. It may take confessing to your spouse or spiritual leader and facing the consequences of that. Something has to change and you have to make that change come about in your own life. The first step is wanting to quit. Wanting to change the desires of your heart. If you are a religious person you

may need to spent may weeks and maybe even months fasting and praying to gain self control again. But what ever you do.... DO SOMETHING TO STOP BEFORE IT DESTROYS YOUR LIFE. And if you don't stop, I promise you it will eventually destroy you and everything you stand for an d love.

My you find the strength and the means to stop, the help you need to change and the power to never do it again. That is my desire for you.

Cordell Vail

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