

Missionaries to Ministers, Inc.

Restoration Plan

The church is in need of a restoration plan to fully be the body of Christ for the sufferers of sexual addiction. An ultimatum to “shape up” is a mere band-aid and is not an effective way to help heal wounds. If wounds are healed properly, redemption in the body, soul, spirit, and church is possible. Won't you consider the following guidelines in helping those who have most likely betrayed you? In any of these roles of helping, you may feel stuck, hopeless, fearful, or angry. This is understandable. Here are some productive ways to guide the person who has initiated these emotions.

(The phrase “acting out” involves a range of behaviors from compulsive pornography use and masturbation to emotional affairs, physical affairs, sex for hire, and any other form of sexual deviancy.)

A message for each of you before the plan is explained.

1. To the Sr. Pastor who has an Associate Staff member who has acted out:

It can be daunting to consider having a staff member who you now know is an addict. You may fear this coming back to haunt you and you are held responsible. You may struggle with the questions that might now be posed to you...“are you an addict?” All of these fears and questions are understandable. We encourage you though to be “strong and courageous” in the battle to purify our churches. If you would allow and support your staff member to recover and receive healing, then your church can become a safe place for others to heal. If you don't, then we must warn you that you are a part of the problem in our culture. Nothing good grows in the dark, but in the light growth that is beyond your imagination can occur!

2. To the church board who has a Sr. Pastor who has acted out:

If you discover that your Sr. Pastor has acted out sexually, whether it be virtually, or physically, you are likely to be experiencing the effects of trauma. You may be struggling to sleep, not know who to talk to, and want to make quick and punishing decisions. These are normal reactions to finding out that you have been betrayed by someone you placed your trust in. We encourage you to assign these guidelines as a way to offer the help that is needed to bring about lasting change in your leaders life. It is possible and probable for a Sr. Pastor to be restored and become a more vibrant and healthy leader than he/she ever thought possible. Your decision to follow this plan will either help or hinder that growth from happening.

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3. *To the Associate who has a lay leader who has acted out:*

If you find out that a leader has acted out, you have an opportunity to walk alongside someone who needs help. You won't be the only one to help him or her, but you can be a trusted and safe guide for them. Be a "broken record" about what you will require of them. They may have excuse after excuse as to why they do not need as much to change. Remind them that restoration requires sacrifice, just ask Jesus!

4. *To the Pastor of a Lay Person who has acted out:*

As their pastor, you now have the tools to offer them hope. You may also consider what types of recovery programs are in your community to refer them to, or begin one of your own. "We are all recovering from something" is a normalizing and helpful adage to help the sexual addict to not feel alone in this battle.

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Restoration Plan for a Sex Addict

Get an assessment as to whether or not an addiction is present. Sexhelp.com has two initial inventories that can be taken privately and given the results immediately (ISST, SAST). The only thing needed is honesty. Sexual compulsivity is using sex to alleviate anxiety, whereas sexual addiction is when the following are present:

- Preoccupation – can't stop thinking about it
- Harm to others – people in your life would be affected if they knew
- Ashamed of behavior
- Sad – the fastest way to become depressed is to live in contradiction to ones values
- Sought help without success

If the person is in ministry (missionary, pastor, etc..), training for ministry, or a family member of a minister, Shane and/or Marty are available to provide individual and couples counseling. Call their assistant to schedule: (408) 890-6306.

If the individual is not in ministry, Marty could see them in her private practice. She does Skype and phone sessions if they live out of driving distance.

If you are interested in local therapists, Shane and Marty can help with looking for contacts. One place to start is at www.iitap.com. Click the link "Find a Therapist" and you will get a listing of local clinicians that have training in the process of sexual addiction recovery. You are always welcome to call a therapist and ask how they integrate faith and psychology. That question will help you to discern their belief system.

As a helper, you will be listening to their pain. That is a crucial role. Once they start the journey of recovery they may tell you all of the frustrating details that they do not have time, money, or energy for. Expect that. If they are trying to do things "their way" remind them that "their way" wasn't a healing process. If they want things to change, things have to change. The reality is that some are not ready. That's ok. Love them unconditionally and when they are ready, repeat the same steps.

If there has been physical acting out they will be asked by therapists to have STD tests done. You would be a great person to accompany them on that difficult step.

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This plan includes the plan of a spouse. If the addict is not willing to begin recovery, the spouse still “gets” to heal. They can follow the steps that apply to the partner.

1. **Couples Counselor** – meet with every other week to establish a new relationship that is built on trust and respect. A formal disclosure process in couples counseling will follow. At www.missionariestoministers.com you will find a tab for sexual addiction recovery. Print out the documents in each stage, but remember that they need to be done in order. Disclosure is not helpful when the addict and/or spouse are not ready. Do not try this alone.
2. **Individual counseling** with a trained professional in sexual addiction for both addict and spouse. This may be the couple’s counselor who sees them individually and together, but not necessarily. Both individuals in the coupleship need a safe place to share openly in order to heal. For the addict, a Relapse Prevention Plan will be created to suit their needs, and often trauma work such as EMDR is considered to heal old wounds.
3. **Individual Recovery Group** for each. Sexual addiction/compulsivity is driven by impairment in intimacy development. Meeting with others who have suffered and are recovering and thriving from the same issues allows for intimacy to be reformed in a person’s life. The spouse will need safe people as much as the acting out partner because the spouses experience is one of a relational trauma survivor, which looks like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). www.sa.org is a site where they can find a meeting in their community. If there are not local groups, try www.saa-recovery.org. Both groups often offer phone meetings and are FREE.
There are numerous church based sexual addiction recovery groups (Celebrate Recovery, SALT, Avenue). They are wonderful additions to the traditional 12 step recovery process.

For the spouse, www.sanon.org offers a 12 step group that facilitates the healing process. She will not want to go, but encourage her that no one WANTS to be in that group. That’s ok. It is a place where she will feel understood. If her husband is not willing to do recovery at this point, she can still follow the steps for herself. It can also be a helpful place to process the grief involved in a previous relationship that ended due to sexual addiction.

Some individuals balk at the formality and boundaries in 12 step meetings. Encourage them to “surrender” when they walk in the door and listen for something that might be helpful.

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4. **Sponsor** in SA/S-Anon Group: A Sponsor is a mentor that will guide the individual through the 12 steps or principles of their recovery process.
5. **Boundaries:** Computer filter (sponsor to be accountability person, not spouse), no individual time with those the addict is attracted to, cut-off relationship with affair partner completely, positional boundaries (removal from leadership position if there is resistance to this recovery plan).

If you have to add an “or else” to these requirements, please have the requirements be about these recovery items. Telling an addict “You need to work harder or else” is not going to produce lasting fruit. Telling him/her they must invest in recovery in the above pattern is a way to allow their productivity to increase for the long haul. It can feel as though you are allowing them to sign up for graduate school or that you are supporting them through a cancer diagnosis and treatment. Both are commitments to the person and their growth and healing. Recovery from sexual brokenness takes just as long (The recovery process takes 3-5 years to internalize.) yet can bring about a shift in the person and their world like nothing else. God will redeem if the right help is offered. Won’t you be a part of this redemptive work?