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Women married to men with porn addictions find help on blog, forum

By Megan Marsden Christensen | Posted Jun 2nd, 2016 @ 9:39am

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SALT LAKE CITY — Women who are married to men recovering from a pornography addiction can find help at the Hope & Healing blog and forum.

Michelle Linford, administrator of the blog and forum, said she created the [Hope & Healing](#)

[blog and forum](#) in 2012 as a place for women in need to obtain information and connect with other women.

“I had a friend reach out to me who ... had walked this path, and I asked her if she would help create a forum,” she said. “So she got some of her friends who’d been through this, and they helped write some of the questions that they had when they first found out about their husband's addiction, and as I did research, I became like a resource manager in the forum. And it just grew from there.”

About 700 women have signed up for the forum since 2012. Linford said the forum is a place for women to come that is private, anonymous and free of charge. The blog is public and provides information about sex addiction and recovery.



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“The blog is there to share information and resources, but the forum is really what Hope and Healing is about,” Linford told KSL.com in an email. “Only women who have personal experience with a loved one in addiction (or someone struggling with unwanted sexual behaviors) are allowed to join. As admin and resource manager, I am here to help keep it all running.

“The forum is a place where women can first know they are not alone and are not crazy for feeling so devastated by the addiction. ... Women need healing support as much as addicts need help recovering,” she said.

Linford said she hasn’t been able to post a lot of content on the blog over the last few months, and some of the women in the forum wanted to bring some of their experience out to help other people.

After one of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ [Face to Face events](#), where someone asked what they should do if they are dating someone who has had a problem with

pornography, some of the women in the forum wanted to be able to bring their experience to the conversation, Linford said.

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A handful of women who wanted to carry on the conversation that was started at the Face to Face event started a series on the blog the first of April, she said. So far, there are nine blog posts in the series, which address “education on and recovery from pornography addiction and betrayal trauma,” according to the blog.

One of the women writing the series, who would like to remain anonymous, said she first discovered a problem with lust in her marriage just after her first baby was born.

“We discussed it. He said he was sorry and that he wouldn't do it again. We got some outside help and then he said that he was cured,” she said. “This was a pattern that we followed over and over again for 28 years.”

When she learned of the problem again a few years ago, she asked him to move out, which was one of the hardest things she has ever done, she said.

“We don't learn how to ask our husbands to move out in young women's or in relief society,” the blogger said. “Asking him to leave went against everything I believed in or had been taught about having a strong marriage but being married to an addict is a unique situation and doesn't follow normal ‘How to Have a Strong Marriage rules.’”

Her husband moved to a nearby city and joined his family for church, Sunday dinner and holidays, she said.



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“During this separation, I gave up on the idea that it was my job to save my husband and I started working on saving myself,” she said. “I went to a professional therapist, [LifeStar](#), I started attending a [12-step group](#), and I wrote up some [boundaries](#) to keep myself safe. It was a sacred recovery time for me where I was able to detach from the craziness of my situation.”

Her husband found that he had to choose between having a wife and family or having his lust experiences. He began working on his own recovery by journaling, going to a professional therapist, attending LifeStar and deciding to go to 12-step groups for as long as he lives, the blogger said.

About six months after the couple separated, he moved back home.

“Being in recovery from the effects of addiction has been a miraculous process for us both. I believe that many times people are attracted to addictions because they are seeking intimacy and the addiction feels like intimacy, at least temporarily,” she said. “Now that my husband

has given up the lust, there is nothing in the way of him having true intimacy with me. This is lasting and deep and it is what his heart was after all along.”

The blogger said she would advise anyone who has a loved one struggling with addiction to find some close friends or family members to confide in, write up some boundaries to keep themselves safe and find a certified sexual addiction therapist.

Anthony Hughes, Ph.D., owner of [Covenant Sex Therapy](#), would advise women who are married to men who currently struggle or have struggled with a pornography addiction to understand they are not accountable for their partner’s recovery, to address enabling or codependent behavior and to participate in their own trauma recovery if they need, he said.

The blogger said the Hope & Healing blog and forum was one of the first places she felt she could share her secret story and be safe and understood.

“At Hope and Healing we understand each other, we strengthen each other and share the latest and best resources with one another so that we can continue to build each other up,” the blogger said. “There are a group of us there now that have had solid recovery for a while, and so we've decided to share what we know by writing blog posts together with the hashtag #hopelds.”

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