



## EPISODE 7

# Zachary Andrews: Building Recovery through Real Relationships

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[Breaking the Silence Podcast by Reach 10](#) with hosts Creed Orme and Crishelle Simons

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*Creed and Crishelle talk to Zachary Andrews about his experience getting involved in pornography as a young teen, then deciding he wanted to change. For Zachary, building healthy connections with God first, then with people in his life, was the key to his progress. Hear his thoughts on relapse, relationships, and healthy sexuality. Working on recovery from pornography use can be an opportunity to learn positive principles that transform someone's life.*

Creed: 00:04 Welcome back listeners. Today we are breaking the silence with Zachary Andrews on tools that he has found that have helped him in his recovery from pornography. Welcome Zachary. We're so glad to have you. Please introduce yourself.

Zachary: 00:24 All right, well my name is Zachary. Andrews like they just said, I am 25 years old . . . yeah, 25! Right?

Creed: 00:33 A quarter century.

Zachary: 00:33 I just graduated. That made me feel even worse. But I just recently graduated from BYU. But me and my wife and my little girl are living in Henderson, Nevada right now. Nice. Yeah, we're in Henderson, Nevada, but we are at my parents' house right now. We don't have our own place. So you know, things are going good in life when you are living with your parents. Right. The general George Castanza here. Some people might get that reference, but that's okay. I graduated in psychology and right now I'm just looking for, for a job.

Crishelle: 01:17 That's a good place to be.

Zachary: 01:18 Yeah.

Crishelle: 01:18 A hard place to be, but . . . What has life been like since graduating college. Like, has it been like, do you know exactly what's going on in your life? Do you know what you want—?

Zachary: 01:34 That is the big question right now, right? What is going on in my life? I took it pretty hard. My last job, I, I wasn't able to secure a position and I was kind of riding on, you know, becoming that seminary teacher. But so that kind of put a lot of things in perspective. Like where do I need to be? What are my skillset? What, what, what do I want to do? What's going to be able to provide for my family? And it's been a long almost like a whole year. It feels like that I've been searching, praying a lot, thinking I'm working with my wife on where we need to be right now, what we can do. And my wife, Rachel, has been the greatest support at this kind of really difficult time in my life. I don't know if there's been a lot of times more difficult than right now. We might talk about some today when we're talking about pornography use, but but it's, it's been difficult in a lot of different ways. Let's go with that. So, but we're happy, we're healthy and there are potential opportunities opening up. I've got my recent, I recently got my substitute teaching license and

so hopefully I'll be substitute teaching for the school district in the meantime.

- Crishelle: 02:51 That was great. I really appreciate your honesty and your openness of being willing to talk about that. I think sometimes we want to portray our lives as like everything's put together and, and and that's not always the case. In fact, I think like similarly, I quit my job and my last day is this week, this upcoming week,
- Zachary: 03:12 No way!
- Crishelle: 03:13 And I find myself telling people that I'm still a Rec Therapist just because it feels a lot better, you know what I mean?
- Zachary: 03:18 It's better than "unemployed," right?
- Crishelle: 03:18 Definitely, well, and that's a potential, like, I'm looking into some rec therapy jobs and interviewing for a couple and, but like, it's not sure, but it's a lot easier for me to claim the norm or like what people want to hear rather than owning kind of the chaos that I feel in my own life. So I really respect your honesty and transparency with that.
- Zachary: 03:46 Thank you Crishelle. That actually really means a lot right now.
- Crishelle: 03:50 Yeah. And, and I also just like, we're so grateful that you're taking time to and pausing like everything going on in your life to talk with us and to share about your experience and to be open and honest with us. I think that is so valuable.
- Zachary: 04:08 Super excited, super nervous. But let's, let's do it!
- Crishelle: 04:13 You might have said this a little bit but I want you to just clarify a little bit. Can you tell us a little bit more about your family

and, just your position with your family? Like how long you and Rachel have been together. All the deets.

Zachary: 04:26 I have been married Most—all the deets? No, haha. I've been married for almost four years now. This month will be our four year anniversary. We're excited about that. We met at BYU our freshman year towards the end of our freshman year. We dated quite a bit and I was like, I really like this girl. I hope that she kind of sticks around, but we both had our mission calls before we started dating. And so we're like, all right, peace out. She went to French Polynesia. I went to South Korea. Two years apart. Yeah, that was difficult, but not very much at the same time. We kind of knew why we were out there and whatnot, but then when we came back, we still really, really liked each other, loved each other even. And I proposed to her pretty soon after we got back from our missions. Some people give me grief for that, but when you know it's right, you know it's right. Right? And we were married six months later and we also have a little baby girl who's about a year and a half now and her name is Tris. And she is the cutest thing in the world.

Creed: [05:36](#) I can agree with that. She's darling.

Zachary: [05:40](#) And I will fight anybody who tries to disagree with that. Right there she is [pointing to picture]. And that's objectively speaking not as a parent.

Creed: [05:48](#) Right, right.

Zachary: [05:48](#) But yep, we're all now here. Rachel has been working a lot. She's a graphic designer and she's been working with my parents dance studio right now and she's been doing a lot of the social media and stuff like that. She's done a lot of social media for Reach 10 too! We love Rachel.

- Creed: [06:10](#) She's been such help over the years.
- Crishelle: [06:11](#) So, so good. So transitioning a little bit in your story, help us understand your experience with pornography. Like what has that journey been like for you and then help our listeners get to know that better.
- Zachary: [06:23](#) Absolutely. And if anybody out there listening has not heard Cassy's podcast story. My story seems a little bit similar to that and might hear a couple things, but I would always encourage somebody to go and listen to hers as well, for sure.
- Creed: [06:40](#) Episode four
- Zachary: [06:41](#) She's amazing, great friend of ours. But I also like her was exposed to pornography when I was the age of 11. Now it was kind of innocent. It definitely was innocent in the way that I was exposed, but it came out of a really tough time at that time too. My family had just recently moved to Henderson, Nevada. I was born and spent my childhood years in Arizona. That's where all of my extended family is. We'll be there for Christmas this year. But at that time we moved here, I was, you know, 10 years old turning 11. And it was really difficult for me cause we moved right before school started and I get into middle school my first year in middle school and I was the nerdy kid. I really was. I was straight up the nerdy kid textbook. Everything's like spiky hair glasses, you know, polo shirts, all the whole deal.
- Zachary: [07:40](#) Not that there's anything wrong with polo shirts!
- Crishelle: [07:41](#) pocket protector? I'm just kidding.
- Zachary: [07:44](#) No, not quite there, not high school nerdy, but needless to say, I was kind of a target for bullying at that time. And it might be tame for nowadays standards or whatever, but it was very real

for me at the time. And I would come home very distraught and very, you know, "why is this happening to me? Why did we have to move away from all of my friends now, right before school started, I don't have any friends." I would kind of hide up in my room a lot, read a lot of books and stuff like that. But I would just try to escape that life, I guess. And so right around that time a very popular social media platform, YouTube came out around that time I hadn't been exposed to much of it, but I had been exploring YouTube to kind of get my mind off of things. And I came across pornographic material. It was very, very tame by what most people will think. But it intrigued me. I really liked it, took my mind off of what was happening in my life. And so, slowly but surely, it became a habit in my life. I would turn to it whenever I had a bad day. And then it became like whenever I was just born or whenever I, you know, felt some sort of stress, like I was having a test coming up or something like that. Like it just became that escape. And slowly but surely, it also, you know, turned to more explicit forms of pornography as well. And all this time I was by myself. By myself through the struggle until a family member caught me with pornography. And I just want to preface this. I know what they did was, was well-meaning. And how they handled it was out of love. Like they were, they were trying, they were concerned for me and they'd seen how pornography had been in other people's lives. I didn't take it very well at the time and it was, it was kind of traumatic for me and they kind of pushed me into more isolation at the time. And slowly but surely I, and now it wasn't, you know, I could just use pornography. It was, I need to keep this a secret. I don't want to get in trouble anymore. I don't want to be punished for what I'm doing, but I need this in my life. And it became more and more of a habit to the point where I a couple of more years down the road was using pornography every day compulsively. It was everything that I thought about continually. And, you know, I couldn't really focus on anything else. It became my life. If I

wasn't using pornography, it was planning out when the next time I was going to use pornography was. And that was probably the darkest moment of my life. 'Cause I felt guilty. I did, I would feel guilty, but at the same time I needed it and I knew it was wrong. You know, my church told me it was wrong. People around me told me it was wrong, but I didn't really care. As much as I know that this is something that I want to help me get through those difficult emotions and feelings that I was experiencing. And so that's kind of where we got to the hardest time in my life. Let's go with that.

Crishelle: [11:41](#) Yeah. I, this is, I think one of the most powerful parts of this podcast and the more humbling parts for me is to be able to hear and like witness and even sacred. I would even use the word sacred, people's stories and some of the more vulnerable and difficult times of their lives. And that's how I feel right now, Zachary like this, thank you so much for sharing that.

Zachary: [12:07](#) Yeah, and I really appreciate that.

Crishelle: [12:09](#) Yeah. I just really, I hope our listeners feel that too and can disrespect and hold the space and can honor the space and your willingness to share that.

Zachary: [12:23](#) And I would just like to reiterate to all those people out there, 'cause I know I'm not alone in that experience of maybe having somebody, you know, find out that they were using pornography. And you know, having that be kind of a catalyst to more isolation. But I do want to reiterate, I know that I came from a place of love as difficult and kind of scary. It was for me at the time I was young and so things scared me. And those people around us that, you know, may react in adverse ways that we would want them to react. It generally comes from that place of love. And I just wanted to reiterate that you know, that's where that comes from.

Crishelle: [13:07](#) Yeah. Yeah. I think that's really interesting too because I think that that is fairly common. That that's how people found out about someone that they care about using photography. It wasn't maybe a like disclosure, it was more stumbled upon. And I think it's really difficult for both parties in that instance to react the way that they want to react. You know what I mean?

Zachary: [13:34](#) And they don't have time to like formulate that reaction properly sometimes.

Crishelle: [13:40](#) Totally. Totally. And so I think it's really interesting and I'm really looking forward to your perspective on like how you've been able to shift out of that, like desire to isolate and to like maybe be defensive and maybe like more hidden and how you've transitioned to recovery. Like what does your life look like now? Like how have you overcome some of those things that came up throughout your childhood? Help us, help us see that.

Zachary: [14:09](#) No, this is now the exciting part. You know, that's the kind of more sad part. But it does need precedence because you know, that did happen, but you know, that here is the happy part, the happy news. And this is where the message of connection really comes in. But my first connection wasn't .... Well, I'll just tell you, I guess the first time I really connected with somebody was with a higher power that I, —I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I believe in Jesus Christ. And it was that connection that I eventually made to Jesus Christ that really helped me kind of realize that this really isn't good for me. And that I could actually do something about it rather than just kind of live with it. So at the time when I was about 15, I was actually asked to be on the youth committee for my church. And at the time that I was on the youth committee they asked me to prepare a spiritual activity, something that, where people could feel the Holy ghost and come closer to Jesus Christ. And this



was during the time that I was really heavily involved with pornography. And you know, I was generally a good kid though. I mean, I did good things. But there was just this deep dark side to me. And so I kind of was taken a little bit by surprise for that task. And so when they give it to me, I, I kept trying over and over and over, how am I to do this? And I was not coming up with anything. And eventually kind of came to the realization that, "Oh, well, maybe, God doesn't love me. Maybe I'm not receiving any help right now because he doesn't care about me. Maybe because I have this dark side to me that I'm the sick freak, that I don't deserve to be able to receive revelation" or, you know, help other people come closer to God. And during that really dark time I had the most powerful experience where I was able to feel that God really did love me. That he really did care about me. And it came through reaching out through prayer, really wanting to know, "are you there? Do you love me? Do you care about me?" And I got that confirmation as strong as and as clear as I am talking to you right now. And that was a moment that made me go, "Hey, somebody does care about me. Somebody really does want me to do better." And from that point I was like, I'm going to get rid of this in my life. I kinda made a promise right there, like "you've kind of showed me who you are. I'm going to show you who I really can be." And that started the times, I mean, going from using pornography daily, multiple times a day to not at all is really frustrating, really frustrating. And I know a lot of people can understand that, that it's a bumpy road from that point on. But that was the very first time that I really kind of created a connection and found hope in that connection.

Creed: [17:56](#)

Hmm. I would, I would say that lots of people who, who find a turning point in their pornography has to have something like that where they connect. At least that was the case for me too, was connecting with my higher power first. Like I felt like the

spirit opened up my heart saying, you can't stop this. Well you need to stop this and you can't stop it on your own. So tell someone about it. I told my parents and the church leaders, but I think that's where we're, we're change can actually start beginning is when you, when your heart is open to truth, I guess where you realize, "Oh, this is not where I am. Right. I should be and I can better, there's more, there's more to life than me just doing this for the rest of my life." Right. So I'm glad you were able to have that turning point.

Zachary: [18:46](#)

Yeah. And I, and I love that you just said like accepting truth in your lives that it's, it is a truth that, you know, this is something that is a detriment to us. It damages us, damages other people, our relations and all of those sorts of things. And coming to that conclusion that I need to do something about it is, and I agree with you, is something that everybody who struggles with pornography eventually has to come to that. "Oh, you know, this is not something good for me."

Creed: [19:18](#)

Yeah. So tell us a little bit more about what happened after that. Did you, I mean, did you get, did you stop pornography ever since then? Or what's been the struggle like? What have, what tools do you use then that were good? Maybe ones that weren't so good, if that's the case. And what have you learned in your journey since then?

Zachary: [19:40](#)

Well, the thing that really, from that point on, it was still just kind of me and God at that time, that was the only connection that I really made. And as I was going through that, I would, you know, count my days. I'd be like, I'd go one day, two days, three days, you know, a week. Ah, I messed up and then I feel terrible and then continue on. I think the max I got during high school was probably like two months, unfortunately. But, you know, I was keeping track of those things. But along the way I was

realizing things like, "well, I need to have better relationships with people. I need to have better relationships with my family. I need to have better relationships with those around me, with my girlfriend, with, you know, you know, my best friend, the people that are around me." I helped work with you know, the people around me, even though I didn't tell them, Oh, I'm struggling with this, I used connections to them to help me along the way right then. And so even if we're not actually explicitly telling somebody, you can focus on the relationships that you have with that person and those people genuinely care about you. And I have people that genuinely cared about me. And when we can form a connection in any way, shape or form, that's like, "Hey, I care about you, and you know, I'm trying to do the best to look out for you and you're not comfortable sharing specific things." That's okay. That's totally fine. And hopefully you could work up to being more open and more vulnerable. But starting out, that's how it was for me. I was like, I'm not telling anybody about this. I did go to bishops. But even then, at the time, I didn't fully disclose everything to my Bishop because I didn't really have anybody else to, to kind of push me to do that. And I was just like, I'm just going to go in and say, "Hey this is what's happened." And they're like, "Hey, are you still into that?" And like, "no"... that's not true, but, you know, just making those connections in any way that you can, I guess was really helpful at the time. That's a really big tool that I used at the time.

Crishelle: [22:36](#)

I loved that and I love that you, like in hindsight, you're able to recognize like I was actually developing healthy sexuality and healthy sexuality is having a healthy connection with other people, with yourself and really understanding and working through your emotions and your struggles in healthy ways is so connected to our sexuality. I think also I've been, I've been doing a lot more reading and research and all this stuff even more than I have in the past. But I feel like something that keeps

coming up in some of the research I've been doing is that sometimes the shame that that we have about like pornography or even like discovering that we're sexual beings like, is made bigger when we're like, "Oh, like it's not okay that I'm feeling these feelings" when in the, like the fact that the matter is like homosexual being I was born a sexual being, like that's a God given. And, and especially as adolescents, that's like coming out and it's not healthy to put that in a box, lock that box in a safe and lock that safe at the bottom of the ocean. And it's also not healthy to act out on that in, in ways that are detrimental to your, to your wellbeing. Right. So like the extremes are not healthy. And finding some middle ground of like, Okay, Like figuring out who I am and connecting with others is, what we're shooting for.

Zachary: [24:12](#)

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And I, I, I just wanted to say something to that, that, you know, I wish I would have understood that at the time. You know, I wish I would have understood that it's okay to have the feelings that I was having. You know, it's okay. You know, that eventually will play a role in my life. Like those feelings are totally natural God-given like you said. And, but you're not done. You don't have to bury that down in there. It's good. It's good to be attracted to them. And I just kind of wanted to say to that, that you, but that's the process of recovery is that we don't know everything right from the outset. So I was in recovery without even knowing it kind of a thing that, that wasn't a term...I was mainly focused on sobriety, I guess, what we would term sobriety or abstinence, that I just don't want to use pornography. And that's what, you know, sobriety or abstinence is just not using that substance is staying however long you can stay away from those things. And that's where programs like alcoholics anonymous and narcotics anonymous things like that. That's, you know, people will know right down to the minute and the last time that they use

something which is amazing. And I was lucky and fortunate to actually be able to work with people struggling with drug addiction and alcoholism. Right after my mission, I got to work for a rehab center. It was an inpatient, it was like a house. It was like a mansion. It was super cool. And people would come in and my job was to just kind of watch over them being a listening ear. And so I got to hear so many stories of people and their progress through this. And they always knew their time, you know, the time of day. And by that time that I was working, I actually so this is kind of skipping ahead. I actually had my longest stint of sobriety was three years. I had a really long time, so it was a little bit of time before my mission, the two years on my mission and then time after my mission and working in this rehab center, I remember one time a conversation that I had that kinda changed my whole perspective and I'd like to share that. We were in the car and this one girl in the back's like, "Hey, Zachary!" "What?" "Do you know the difference between sobriety and recovery?" Like sitting there like that was really random because it was not part of the conversation and I'd never really thought about it. And I was like, "no, you tell me." And she was like, "sobriety is the amount of time that you've been away from, you know, a specific substance, you know, amount of time that you've not partaking in that. And recovery is the quality of that time." And I was like, "well, that's cool." And at the time it just was like, Oh, that's cool, thanks. Like, you know, moving on. But it didn't really hit me until a couple of weeks later when I actually did relapse. And at that time I had a thousand plus days free from pornography and suddenly I was back to zero.

Zachary: [27:40](#)

And it really hurt me at the time. I was like, I had made so much progress, I'd stayed away for so long. Why couldn't I just continue on doing that? And, but then it hit me that I was sitting there and that what she had said came to my mind is the

quality of the time that was away. And I thought about, you know, does me making this mistake right now take away those three years that I had away from pornography? No, it doesn't like everything that I learned, everything that I had done during those three years counts at that time. And so maybe my clock is down to zero again. But that doesn't mean that I'm back to square one, that I, that I have to start all over. Mmm. I just pick myself up, dust myself off and keep moving. And I've come to learn more and more as I've been in recovery and, you know, working on myself and stuff is that a lot of people like to say recovery is not a destination. It's a journey. I don't even like that phrase. I prefer to think of recovery as a lifestyle. It's a way of living. It's, synonymous to me with repentance, continually changing yourself, your actions, your thoughts, your deeds, your heart towards an ideal. And that doesn't stop. It will never stop. There's no destination in recovery. I'm just going to continue to be a better person.

Crishelle: [29:26](#)

I love that.

Creed: [29:28](#)

Yeah, we need an amen to that one!

Crishelle: [29:30](#)

Yeah, there we go. We needed a couple of amens today, so that was perfect. Really what I really loved about that is I think you were able to identify, some thinking errors that are super common And they're not just common in addiction. And oftentimes we're like, Oh, he's just talking about addiction. Well, guess what? I have those same errors, thinking errors of people. Right? And these and one of those is black and white thinking like it's either all or nothing, right? Either I am sober and perfect or I'm going to hell right. Or, and that's like a little bit dramatic, and another thinking error too I think is rationalization and just some other ones that you identified that you're able to like, put aside and see clearly like no, in recovery it's about having an

open and willing heart. It's being able to see things instead of black and white thinking or seeing things as they really are. And we're really asking ourselves like, okay, but like what are my values and how can I act towards my values right now, like back to that shame dialogue that comes with black and white thinking, right? Which is so awesome. And again, like that's healthy sexuality is having this like openness and this willingness to be like, what are my values? Am I acting towards them? Do I have integrity in my life or do I not? And that is so valuable and so needed, not just for addicts but for everyone. Like, that's how I got through my betrayal trauma. That's how I continue to work through my betrayal trauma. That's how I have a healthy relationship hopefully all the time with my husband and sometimes like even if it's rough when I'm like so frustrated because you're not understanding me. I'm like, Oh my gosh, I'm totally back in black and white thinking. I need to just take a step back and remember that. Right. These are my values and we're asking. Yeah. Right. I love it.

Zachary: [31:33](#) Thanks for sharing that. . yeah, go ahead.

Creed: [31:36](#) I was just going to say I love this discussion 'cause I completely agree that it is a lifestyle. It's never going to end. Just all aspects of life. I mean a lot of times the dialogue, it makes it sound like, I mean pornography is and can be very damaging and such, but everybody has, their things, right? Like it's almost as if I was rude one time, I can think, "Oh man. I've had 13 days since I've been rude" or something. And like he's lost all that I had between that is just like gone now. Like, or it doesn't matter. I mean I can definitely relate to that feeling of when I had huge sobriety for a long time. And then I, fell back into pornography or viewed something again and it felt so like, ugh, like wait, but then I remembered all the things that I've been learning. I'm like, okay, I don't want to do this again, but I still have a good life.

I'm still a good person. Like this is still good. This is, we're still on the right trajectory, right, everybody has to do that.

Zachary: [32:46](#)

Yeah. And I, I'm just going along with that something that someone opened my eyes to. He just said, well, pornography, you know, learning to connect, you know, recovering from pornography use and all these things, this is an opportunity. This is not something negative. This can be something that we can turn into a positive. The things that we learn here, like you were saying, it stretches way beyond pornography use. Like I use these principles in everything that I do. It's just not just with healthy sexuality. I'm learning how to do that with my own physical health and my own mental health and you know, trying to continually better myself and always, relies on these principles. Taking advantage of everything as an opportunity, a learning experience, something to move forward with.

Creed: [33:54](#)

Something that you touched upon also in your story that I really liked or what you were explaining was that it's not all about just stopping a certain behavior. It's about filling your life with other behaviors that fill that vacuum because you use pornography as a coping mechanism for emotional things. If you got rid of your coping mechanism, what are you going to do? You know, like you, you would fall back into bad behaviors or back into pornography or just come up with some new coping mechanism that might not be healthy. So it sounded like you kind of naturally started to focus on your relationships and actually connecting without knowing that you were recovering yourself. But I think that's something important to realize is it's not just about stopping pornography, it's about filling your life with healthy sexuality, with good activities, good behaviors, good relationships so that your life can be full and you can deal with these emotions that are real but just in a healthier way.



Zachary: [34:54](#) Absolutely. And I think, yeah, I think one of the questions that a lot of people have is like, well, what, what do I do then? Like how do I even get to that point? Like where, what are the kind of tools or the things that, you know, I need to use? Where do I even start with that thing? And I feel like the biggest thing to do to be able to start that is to kind of take an inventory of one's life. Anybody that's ever been in the alcoholics anonymous or narcotics or any Addiction Recovery Program knows that that's step four. Taking that inventory of your life, looking back at everything that's happened and said, why did this happen and what am I going to do about it? And that's like the stepping stone towards moving into recovery is taking that inventory and really evaluating setting goals. Like, okay, this used to be something for me. How can I cope with that? Like you were saying like, this no longer, I don't want this to be my coping mechanism. What can I put in place there during these times when I'm bored or during the times when I am anxious and you know, I use pornography mostly in the bathroom. Like what could I do or change in my life that, you know, through retrospection you know, how could I do that stuff?

Crishelle: [36:15](#) What are some tools that have helped you to shift those behaviors and to have healthy, I like to think of it as like self regulation or healthy soothing. Right. and yeah, what are some things that have helped you transition?

Zachary: [36:31](#) Well, the biggest tool is and it's kind of more of a generic thing. It is that connection with other people. And so my wife Rachel is the biggest support in my entire life. I do not know where I would be without her. I would not be where I am today in recovery or even just as a person without her. And that has to do with, I mean, you know, during the time that we were dating, so she didn't know that I had struggled with pornography. But I knew I needed to talk to her.

Creed: [37:12](#) We'll definitely share that story. We planned to have a session with both you and Rachel and talk more.

Zachary: [37:15](#) For sure. And I definitely want her here for that. But with that story comes the idea that I learned that I can't do it by myself. I really can't. But I also it was never meant to be just by myself or I mean like all the trials and the things in our lives, we don't have to do it by ourselves. In fact, like I was just thinking of this the other day, like even superheroes need to form teams sometimes, right? When there's big problems that come out, you know, the superheroes, they formed the Avengers and they come out and they fight together. Like you know, we're not meant to take on these things by ourselves and we don't have to. And so that's like the biggest tool is using other people and not in as an object, but as real people, real relationships and you know, really connecting with them on a deeper level. And, you know, I sit down with her and we talk about things, how I'm doing. Especially during this really difficult time where I don't have a job and I, you know, I'm kind of in a state of depression where I'm constantly bombarded by negative thoughts and that affects me and my wanting to use pornography, but her continual ability to help hold me accountable and to help set goals for me. And sometimes I don't want to do those things. So she's there to lovingly say, Hey, like this will help you. I know it will. And now as I'm saying that, there are things in my head, I'm like, okay, yes, I need to do those things, or even right now it'd be that she's been helping me to do. And so that's like the biggest tool out there is you need somebody in your life to help hold you accountable. And not in a bad way, but to be there with you to help you see things clearly.

Crishelle: [39:19](#) And I think for some people that can be their spouse and like that's not your spouse. Maybe they don't have the capacity to do that or you don't have a spouse. A sponsor that's the role of

a sponsor is to see things clearly and to help you and be like a, a mentor and a guide as you're trying to figure that out. And so I hope that people, no matter what your circumstances are, there are so many people who want to help. There are so many resources and there are so many . . . Like, you don't have to be a product of your circumstances. You don't have to like, "Oh, but my life doesn't sound exactly like Zachary's or Creed's." Right. But rather like, okay, that connection piece, that's what I want and need. Like where can I find and, and who can I connect with? And if you don't know, Reach 10, and we have tons of resources for you. That's why we designed this organization. It's just for that so that people can connect and you can come and, and, and find the resources that you do need to have that connection 'cause you're right on.

Zachary: [40:35](#)

Definitely. And the people here are the ones, you know, that is why we started this organization and stuff like that. And I do feel like I should mention too though, that sometimes we face negative connection. I don't know how to term that right. That's probably not the right term for that. But sometimes those connections might fail. I guess I've faced one or two of those in my life. The majority of people that I have reached out to, 99%, have always been positive towards me. But there is sometimes that 1% where you're like, "Oh goodness," I had an experience where a friend of mine in high school kind of, you know, asked me, Hey, and this was at a difficult time in their lives. And they just said like, "Hey, have you ever viewed pornography?" And it was kind of like it was a random question. I didn't have time to prepare for that. And I said, "no, no, no, no, I'm, you know, I'm not into that. No, no, no." And they were like, "Oh good. 'Cause I don't think I could handle that." And immediately that just struck me like, Oh well I could never reach out to this person. That kind of thing like, that door just kind of closed and it was sad because I in hindsight, I probably would have liked some

support at that time. But it wasn't going to be there. And so there may be those that are listening that might have experienced that. But I can personally tell you that there are people there that will be that good support. And if you've had that experience, don't worry. There are more people out there and it's not even that you can't mend that relationship with that person. But keep trying, keep reaching out to people. And that's why we say reach 10 because one of those people might not take that so well.

Creed: [42:37](#) Right. I think just some examples are we can try to form a connection and get on our team someone of a higher power. So lots for lots of us that can be God, but then reaching out or to family, friends, church leaders, picking certain people that we feel like we can trust with this information and see if they can be someone that can, you know, respond with empathy or compassion and help us along on that journey. 'Cause I am very close to certain that someone who struggles with a pornography habit cannot break away from it without some help from somebody else. You can't do it alone. That's, that's just my opinion. I guess. I feel like you have to reach out to someone, a few people who can be on your team to help you through that.

Crishelle: [43:31](#) I would go as far as to say you can't change anything in your life without other people.

Zachary: [43:37](#) I'm learning that more and more now days.

Crishelle: [43:39](#) Right, right, right. And that's why we have relationships. They help us to grow and change and become better because otherwise I'd just stay sassy and not as friendly. Like I'm able to see things in my life that I want to change. Right. So that is so accurate. I also just want to throw out there and, and Zachary, I loved your example of that girl or girl. I just, assume it was a girl. That person in high school that responded that way. I know

I've responded that way before. I've been that person and it was because I was in a lot of pain and I was really struggling and I didn't know how to find safety. And so I hope too that if you are that person and you're like, man, dang it, like I was not the safe person for someone. To maybe look at like how, what was missing in my life in order for me to be safe enough to really connect with someone and what do I need to have in order to have real connection? 'Cause I'm assuming that that person, based on my experience, when I've responded in the past like that, like I was looking for safety and connection and I was looking for the same thing that you were actually looking for. Right? And it's so important that, like, because of my fear and because of my shame and because of like my misunderstanding of healthy sexuality, like that stuff that stopped me from connecting with people. I hope that whatever side of the street you're on, that, that we realize that we're all on the same team. And that we all come back to, okay, what is healthy sexuality? And what's a healthy connection? What does that look like? And really strive for that.

Zachary: [45:40](#) I love that. Oh, amen. Amen on that one. I love that. Thank you for sharing.

Crishelle: [45:48](#) Yeah. Well we want to wrap up, but given your experience in that, what is your view on healthy sexuality now? Like how would you summarize or explain what healthy sexuality is?

Zachary: [46:01](#) Healthy sexuality and I actually got to sit down very recently and I was like, I need to just define what this is for me, what this does for me. And I feel like my idea of it might be a little bit more radical than most people think, but hear me out, let's go at this. I believe based on my own belief in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I believe that there are certain ideals out there that there is a perfect form in the form of Jesus Christ

that he exemplifies everything perfectly and that stands to reason that he must be able to exemplify healthy sexuality perfectly. And so I sat down and was like, just kind of went with the, "what would Jesus do?" Kind of a thing. Like how would he define healthy sexuality then? And I actually made a T chart where I had unhealthy sexuality and healthy sexuality and it kind of went back and forth and it really helped. Somebody had mentioned that, I don't even know who, and they said, just do a t-chart and you'll figure it out. And you know, unhealthy sexuality at its base level is based on lust. The idea that you know, it's all about me, me, me, me. I can use other people as objects. Which is what I did for the longest time. I used people and thoughts of people as objects that these aren't real people. But then on the other hand, healthy sexuality to me is based on love that it's turning outwards towards other people. And so that healthy sexuality is how I treat other people. My appropriate relationship is with other people.

Zachary: [47:59](#)

And that includes my healthy sexuality, my relationship with my wife. And the way that I treat her, do I use her as an object? Or do I see her as, you know, a beloved daughter of God and you know, my partner, the person that I can turn to the most and rely on the most? Nobody can be perfect, but my view on recovery and healthy sexuality is that we may not be perfect, but we can certainly try to be, like work towards that perfection. In the way that I'm continually improve, that I'm not going to be perfect. I'm not going to be, but I can always constantly try to be. And so that always puts perspective on the way that I treat other people, the way that I see other people. And so healthy sexuality to me is how I view and interact with other people in my life. And what's the best way, what's the appropriate way, what's the best way and what's the most loving way that I can do that with other people?

Crishelle: [50:26](#) Oh, so beautiful.

Creed: [50:27](#) It's awesome. Yeah.

Crishelle: [50:28](#) Thank you so much, Zachary, for taking your time. But most importantly, by opening up and sharing authentically and vulnerably about your experience and the things that you've learned through this whole process.

Creed: [50:44](#) Yeah. Thank you again for sharing. Teaching us again, the meaning of connection and forming relationships with people, what healthy sexuality is. And teaching us again that we can't be perfect people but we can be perfect at striving again and again and again to become perfect.

Zachary: [51:03](#) I love the way you put that.

Creed: [51:05](#) We never need to hold ourselves back and be so ashamed of our mistakes that we can't progress. We can view them as "Kay—mistake. Let's keep moving forward." I think that's all we can do. So thank you for sharing your thoughts on all of that, your light, and your life. So thank you very much for being here.

Zachary: [51:27](#) Well, thank you so much for having me. I love this opportunity that I can't wait to come back with my better half who will have much better things to say. Yeah, I'm looking forward to that.

Creed: [51:41](#) We're looking forward to it too.