



## EPISODE 9

# Do You Shy Away from Sensitive Subjects?

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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 share thoughts on why young adults really do want to talk more openly about tough issues like pornography and sexuality. At the same time, it's tough to get started. It's all about our basic needs as humans to feel valued and feel like we belong. Understanding each other is the root of connection. Listen in for motivation to get the conversation going in your circle. This is part 1 – listen to part 2 coming up!*

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**Creed:** Welcome back listeners. Today we are breaking the silence on talking about sexuality and pornography with our friends and family and just whomever. It's just Crishelle and I today, we don't have any experts or other people to have on the show today, but we wanted to just have this conversation about how and why would we want to talk about sexuality and pornography with friends, family members, people we are dating. Just why would we do that and how to do it right Crishelle?

**Crishelle:** Totally, totally. And today we're going to focus more on the family and friend relationships and dating will be another topic. That's something I'm super passionate about and have done a lot of discussions and groups and I don't know, you name it, I've talked about it with dating and pornography. But Creed, I'm so excited because you are super passionate about this topic and so we're gonna learn a lot from your wisdom. And I'll share, you know, like my little thoughts here and there.

Creed: Well, I'm definitely not an expert at all. I've made plenty of mistakes and I'm still learning. But yes, talking about sexuality and pornography among our friends and family is something I do really care about. So listeners, just so you know, we do have quite a few blog posts on our reach10.org website that talks about these things. So don't be afraid to—

Crishelle: We'll reference those and please utilize those. There's some really awesome gems of knowledge and suggestions of how to bring it up if you are wanting to talk about it, of like, when's the right time to start talking about this in a friendship? Like, how do I know that someone is safe to talk to about this? Like, there's a lot of information on that. And if you feel like you suck at this, I've been there. These were really helpful for me of how, how can I figure out how to be a safer person to approach about these kinds of things or to talk to about these kinds of things. Because I know that we all have tons of our own histories. We all have unique histories when it comes to sexuality and pornography and masturbation and fill in the blank. And so with that comes a lot of different emotions and reactions to this topic. And so learning more about it and having more knowledge about it can help you to navigate and figure out how you want to respond. I think "ignorance is bliss" is awesome until it gets, you know, slaps you in the face and you realize, man, I totally screwed that one up because I had no idea how my reaction or how I responded affected the other person. And for me it's been so helpful for me to understand and increase my knowledge and awareness and be like, "Oh, it actually does matter and that person has feelings too." And I'm so grateful for the perspective that has come as I have educated myself more. Also, I find that I have to forgive myself as I like learn and I'm like, man, I totally screwed up in the past, over and over and over again. And that's okay. So.

Creed: Right, it's having that growth mindset. We're all here on this earth to learn, at least that's what a lot of our listeners believe, is that we're here to progress and learn and...

Crishelle: And if you don't believe that, we hope that you do.

Creed: Yes, that's true. And that we need to experience life and it's okay if we make mistakes, but I think it's really cool, Crishelle that you and I both have kind of two sides of the coin here. You coming from the perspective of not having had a habit with pornography yourself, but you know, dealing or having interactions with people who have dating relationships and family and then my side of things, having a history with pornography and then also talking to people about it who also have histories about it. I've learned so many things too about how, how to improve about the way I talk about it. So

Crishelle: Totally can I just add a side note really quick? This is so funny, but I find that now that I'm talking about sexuality and healthy sexuality, I want to talk about it all the time and I like start a friendship and I'm like, "at what point can I bring this up?" And I'm like whispering because I feel like it's like I'm asking myself

that it's like is it time to like ask this person about like their views on sexuality and stuff. And it's so funny because I still feel a little bit awkward about it and I so bad want to talk about it because I know that it impacts us. And so I am so excited to talk about some of these principles that will help us understand like how to talk about this more and how to do so in a way that builds a healthy sexuality culture. Not just one mindset but rather spreads this.

Creed: Mhm, and you bring up why we would want to talk about sexuality and pornography. So, first off, like you said, Crishelle maybe we just want to, we just understand this impact on our lives. We've experienced it personally or have had experiences with sexuality and pornography personally. And we feel like it's something that needs to be discussed in the open and it's a way for us to connect. So that's one reason I really like to talk about sexuality in general with people is because, "why are we not talking about it? It's a part of all of our lives. We deal with it every day.

Crishelle: I'm a sexual being. Exactly. Like I think about it. Like, let's talk about it.

New Speaker: So with our roommates, our dating partners, spouses obviously, hopefully you're talking about it with your spouse, but even with just a, from, especially from a single point of view, why not? Why aren't we discussing it with our family members? Our siblings, our friends. So that's what we are trying to do with this episode basically is how to bring stuff up. So to start off like at least when I was trying to break away from pornography, the reason why I wanted to talk about it was to get help with pornography because it was never actually really discussed in my family or among my friends. If it was discussed, I thought it was something bad that we weren't allowed to talk. I wasn't allowed to discuss with my or talk about with my friends if they mentioned just the word sex was bad, first of all, but anything, that had to do with sexuality, what was bad or at least that's how I grew up.

Crishelle: Well and I feel like it's kind of taken one of two ways. Either it's like never talked about or it's like crudely talked about or like it's joked about all the time in a way that's like crass and crude and like not what I wanted. And so I didn't know how to talk about it. So the solution was let's not talk about it because it felt so uncomfortable and so awkward and still sometimes does like either we're making dirty jokes or it's not talked about.

Creed: It's just silence.

Crishelle: Yeah. Yeah.

Creed: So I wanted to break that silence, at least for my myself because I was struggling from about 11 years old, 10-11 to about 16-17 when I finally talked to my parents about it. So that was one of the reasons why I wanted to break the silence in my life regarding this topic was first to get help with pornography.

Later, it's become a way to establish connection and intimacy because pornography, my pornography habits then, which aren't a part of my life now have still at least affected me and affect the lives of my friends. I mean, I talk to my friends a lot now about their pornography struggles and it's just an open discussion. So first it was let's start with that.

Crishelle: I just to add to that creed, and kinda on the other side of the table, for me as I was discovering about my dad's use as well as his further sex addiction and all of that like, I was feeling so alone and I felt so alone. I didn't think that anyone understood what I felt like because no one was talking about it because none of us know how to talk about it. Right? And so because of that, I felt so isolated and I didn't know even how to talk about it. And then when I started talking about it, I like dumped on people, bless everyone's heart in my life at that time. Like I just dumped on people because I was wanting to like "I have to tell you!" And then I would tell them everything and it was like too much. And I feel like I damaged some of my relationships because I was just like, I don't know what to do with all this. So I'm like, here's all of this. And I was just trying to like unload everything that I was going through on them and that wasn't working either. And I hope that now I'm like in a healthier place where I can like share and connect with people. And I find that, yeah, like I've kind of come to more of like a middle ground of like, yeah, let's talk about sex and let's talk about the principles. And then people are like, wait, how do you know all of this? And then I'm able to be like, this is what I've gone through rather than like unload and then being like scarred for life.

Creed: A couple of deer in the headlights.

Crishelle: Yeah. Yeah, totally. Yeah. And so...

Creed: I think it goes back to, I mean we recently just had an episode with Dr Laura Padilla-Walker about how parents talk to their kids about sexuality. I think it's similar with how we talk about with friends and family. Like it's just a topic and conversation that we all need to be having just like everything else is. And even though it has to do with sexuality, which can be a little bit more tricky, I think allowing that space and openness to listen to people and talk and despite there being maybe any disagreements about things, it's still a conversation that needs to be had. Same thing with like LGBT topics, political things... I mean, obviously you need some boundaries with like family and friends. Like maybe you can't handle certain types of discussions, but at least being open to listening and to giving your input

Crishelle: And understanding one another. And I think that that understanding is like the root of connection. When we understand someone, even someone who has different views or different experiences than us, we can then feel connected to them.

Creed: Can we talk about that? Connection real quick? Just a definition that Brene Brown talks about for connection is she says, I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard and valued, when they can give and receive without judgment. And when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.

Crishelle: There's one that, amen. Brene Brown. Nailed it again, I think that's so profound and holistic view of connection. So beautiful. I also love the like breaking down the word intimacy, right? Intimacy can sometimes feel like an intimate, intimidating, not intimate, intimidating, but intimidating word and maybe not something that you have like with a lot of people, but really intimacy, if you break down that word, it's like "into me see", like I'm allowing someone to see me. I'm allowing someone to connect with me at a deeper level and really understand my heart, my feelings, my emotions, my mind, like who I am as a person. And that's what intimacy is.

Creed: That's what connection is. Yeah.

Crishelle: And that's, so like, that's where connection happens is as we, as we're heard, as we're seen, we feel valued and we feel like we belong. And that's one of our basic needs as humans. Yeah. That's at the bottom of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is feeling like you belong and that's because if we feel like we belong, then we can then progress and add value to society and all those things. But if we don't feel like we belong, then we're lost and we don't have a place. And I feel like that belonging is under attack in our world today. We feel isolated. We feel like we don't fit in. We feel like no one understands us and Satan needs to be punched in the face, and if you don't believe in Satan, then all the rudeness in the world needs to be punched in the face because that's not true. We all belong. And how we belong is why we start connecting.

Creed: Right, and talking about things that are important to us.

Crishelle:

We can't feel that intimacy or connection or that secure base in which to engage with the world if we don't have those belongingness and attachment relationships that can help us feel safe and feel heard. Right.

Crishelle: Totally. So why should we talk about sexuality and pornography? Creed, I know, you know, some cool statistics. So drop some knowledge on us.

Creed: Cool. Well, we haven't shared too many statistics at all yet. In this podcast in general. So just to throw out there how prevalent pornography is. We, if you're listening to this podcast, you probably understand the prevalence, but just some statistics is that 87% of young adult men, so about, you know, close to nine out of every 10 have used pornography or are using and then—

Crishelle: And that's in the last 12 months, right? Right. That's where that statistic comes in. Thank you. I think it's helpful to know.

Creed: Yeah. The last 12 months and then similar for young adult women, 33% within last 12 months. So one in three for women, close to nine out of 10 for men. It's a part of our lives today given the hyper-sexualized nature of society. And while we understand that being a sexual being is healthy and wonderful, what we're trying to get to is sexual wholeness. And what a lot of hyper-sexualized media focuses on is only one dimension of sexuality and sexual wholeness, and healthy sexuality is more than just sexual pleasure. It's about emotional intimacy. It's about spiritual intimacy, right? And it's about sharing these powerful and amazing emotions and behaviors with someone we are committed to because it builds life together. It procreates, it creates children, you know, so it's, that's what we're trying to get at here is sexual wholeness, but that is the prevalence of pornography.

Crishelle: And just a side note, we will link all of these studies in our blog that has, our show notes, however you want to think of that on the website so that you can go and see those studies for yourself and see where they came from and all of that.

Creed: Yeah, we, we understand, Crishelle and I have been, what was your major again?

Crishelle: Recreation therapy.

Creed: We've seen studies and we know that sometimes people just throw out statistics there. That might not be true, but this is a true statistic and we'll put it in the show notes.

Crishelle: Right, it came from an actual study. I think that's super helpful. Sometimes I hear statistics and I'm like "made up" so.

Creed: Or like is that a good study? So it's important to do your own research about what are, I mean I, we invite you to look into these studies as well.

Crishelle: Totally. Another study that you mentioned that I, I wanted to bring up in this study found that 79% of teens and young adults who want to stop using pornography say that they'd have no one in their life helping them. I think that is mind blowing. And that's what's so alarming and that's why we wanted to have this discussion of like, people want help. And I was there like I wasn't wanting to stop pornography use, but I was trying to figure out and navigate the emotions that I had about someone else's pornography use that so drastically affected me. I didn't talk to anyone. I hadn't talked to anyone until I was on until I think, I don't think it happened until I was 20 years old. So it was eight years of silence, eight years of silence in my life. Crazy. That's crazy. It might even been

nine years. Like it was just unreal that I went that long without like sharing the pain that I was feeling. Even with my siblings. I didn't even talk to my siblings about it, which is also mind blowing because they were going through the same thing. The same thing.

Creed:

It's crazy. We talk with our siblings about sports or other hard things. Even like, how it's hard, dating life is hard or things like that. Right? But, but it's why is it so interestingly difficult to talk about sexuality? It just has to go back to our culture of silence that needs to end. We need to break that silence within our, within all cultures.