



## EPISODE 18

# Why Talk About Pornography with Someone You're Dating

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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 3 reasons why it's important to talk about pornography with your romantic partner. It starts a pattern of open and honest communication in your relationship, you find out if your values are compatible, and you come to understand your significant other's experiences and emotional context. Why does someone may have the emotions they have? Some people have a ton of shame surrounding their pornography use. And on the other side, those who have been affected by friends or family who have struggled with pornography might have trauma of their own. Recognizing and being respectful of people's emotions is so important. Every time you talk it gets easier!*

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Crishelle:

Hey everyone, we are so excited to have you join us today on Breaking the Silence. Today we are breaking the silence on why it's important to talk about pornography in a dating relationship and Creed and I are going to just be having a conversation about this and sharing some of our experiences as well as hopefully mostly just principles that will help you understand why it's important. A couple of other things to note, as we share this, like, just, just pay attention to how you're feeling. You know, like if you have feelings that come up about it, just, just examine those feelings and try them on, see how they feel and, just, you know, consider if this fits for you and we hope that this can be an effective and helpful conversation for you in all of your relationships, but especially those ones that make you feel all excited and twitterpated. Because those relationships, our dating and our significant other relationships, are the relationships that impact us the most and that matter the most. Okay, so today we're going to break down this why into three different principles. The first one is establishing open and honest communication from the very beginning of your relationship all the way throughout. The second reason why is part of dating, and this is such a fun part of dating, is finding out if you're compatible and especially what you're trying to find out about each other is if your values are compatible, if you both value the same things, and if you're headed in the same direction. And the third reason why this is so important is because, Oh, and I think this one's so arguably the most important, is that you really want to understand your significant other's experiences and like the culture that they're coming from, the emotional context that they're coming from and who they are and how they operate and why, why that impacts their lives. And so these three reasons why, we're going to break those down. We're going to tease them out a little bit and we're so excited to share them with you.

Creed:

So the basis of great relationships, especially with a dating partner is honesty and openness. At some point in these deep relationships, the only way for them to be you know, the most healthy, the most wonderful is by being open and honest with each other, right? So it's really important that at some point in these dating relationships, you have conversations where you share all your thoughts and feelings about sexuality, pornography, experiences, emotions, all that stuff,

Crishelle:

Creed, you always talk about how intimacy you like to break that word down into, in to me see. And I really love that because that's what this is all about, is really opening up and allowing someone to see us and to love us anyway because we all have parts of us and things about us that we're not super stoked about and that we usually hide or we mask. And as we allow someone to see that and that person loves us, like in spite of, or even because of those things that can be so freeing and so healing, and really creates a foundation for a healthy and beautiful relationship. And I just want to add to, we hope that you're having open and honest conversations about everything, about finances, about your favorite color, about your favorite ice cream flavor, like everything about where you want to end up. Like, do you want to stay where you are right now or do you want to travel the world? And it's not that you have to have all the answers right now, but that you're establishing this pattern of just really sharing what you think and what you really feel with the other person.

Creed:

Yeah. And in later episodes we're going to talk more about when and how to do all these, those things. But it is so important to share with another person who you are and, as someone else shares who they are, to you to respectfully listen, seek to understand, and just get to know someone in that way.

Crishelle:

Totally. And this leads us right into our next principle because as you start understanding and you're having these open and honest conversations, you're going to start seeing what the other person values. You're going to start understanding what's important to them. And as much as dating is about having fun and kissing and all the, you know, Instagram posts and all of that that come with it, it's really about finding someone that you're going to share your life with and, you're going to share every aspect of your life with this person. And so you really want to find out if this person's values align with your values. And, that's such a fun journey. And sometimes you're like, well, our values don't, don't align. And, and that happened a lot to me and in my dating relationships. And I was like, man, we are not headed in the same direction. And it's not that you're headed in a bad direction or I'm

headed in a bad direction. We're just not, we're not lining up. And so those relationships ended and, and I'm so grateful that I learned those things about those people.

Creed:

And you don't need to be the exact same person, right? You can have your likes or dislikes. You don't have to like the same color or the same type of ice cream, the same sports. But it's really important if you're going to have a committed, intimate, and close relationship, one that we always talk about within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. One that is, you know, righteous and deep, you're going to have to have most if not all similar values. So it's really important to at least get to know your partner in that way, know their values so that you can start making decisions about if that relationship will be compatible for long-term.

Crishelle:

Yeah. And a spoiler alert in the "when" podcast we'll talk about when to start talking about these things. I don't think that you start figuring out if your values align on the first date.

Creed:

Nope. Nope.

Crishelle:

I think that comes a little bit later on. The first date you're far too worried about what they look like and what you look like.

Creed:

I mean, you can talk about those things. But, definitely. Don't just pop those questions or that kind of conversation, right. Willy-nilly out of nowhere. But we'll talk more about that.

Crishelle:

Yeah. So, we'll spend a whole episode focused on when, but as you start discovering those values and you start understanding what the other person values, it's also really helpful to

start seeking to figure out why they value those things. Like what's happened in their life that brought them to that value or that realization or that direction. And I think like I mentioned earlier that this is arguably the most important principle is that dating allows you to really understand someone else and to understand their experiences and to really start understanding who they are and why they are the way they are.

Creed:

It's important to talk about past experiences with sexuality and pornography. I mean, first of all, like we've said, that starts to make the relationship even more deep, close, and intimate as people respectfully listen to each other and, love each other for their experiences. But it's important to know, like Crishelle was saying, where people come from, why they are the way they are today because of their experiences. And that's always just helpful to know so that you can continually know what to expect, even the future and get to know your partner in that way because that stuff is so good to know.

Crishelle:

It's so good to know because you're going to build a life together and it's going to be so fun and it'll probably be messy at times and you're going to be figuring everything out together and hopefully you laugh about it every second of the day. And sometimes you'll be mad about it as you try to figure things out. But ultimately what you're seeking to do with this person is you're seeking to find out if this is a person that you really want to become one with. 'Cause that's what marriage is all about. It's all about becoming one with each other, aligning your values, aligning your life so much that that you really are a partnership. And if you don't understand someone and you don't know where they've been or what they've gone through, and then it's really difficult to align and to be headed in the same direction. And I just want to add this as like a bonus fourth reason why, as painful as this conversation might be right now, it will be infinitely more painful if you're having this conversation for the first time in five years, in 10 years, in 20 years, and when there's way more on the line. And so that to me is why it's so important that—this is why I'm a part of this podcast is because I want to help people to have the tools to have the courage, to overcome their fear, to overcome the silence, and overcome the shame that has infiltrated our lives and has crept in in sneaky ways and then not so sneaky ways. And to get rid of

that so that we can have faith and we can have courage and we can have compassion and connection in our relationships.

Creed:

And that's what dating relationships are for is to practice relationships and practice communication. So as soon as you begin to practice these types of conversations with the people that you're dating of course at the right time, but you'll get better. You'll learn, you'll learn things, you'll fail, which is great 'cause that's the only way you can learn. But it's important that you practice it so that with someone where a relationship really, really works, you can have, you know, some experience with talking about these things. And if it happens to be the first person you're dating, great. But it's so important to get the practice with it.

Creed:

As you're having these conversations with a dating partner, it's important to figure out why someone may have the emotions that they have when they talk about their experiences, with pornography or sexuality, as well as their values. Because there's many people who if they've used pornography, they may have a ton of shame surrounding it, even their own trauma for having used it. And then on the other side, for those who haven't used it but have been affected by friends or past relationships or family members who have struggled with pornography, they might have trauma of their own. So, really recognizing and being respectful of people's emotions is really important, but also understanding why they might have them is important for every relationship so that you understand where that person is coming from.

Crishelle:

Totally. And I hope my, my hope for this episode is that you walk away recognizing that there's a lot more reasons why that are positive, then you just shouldn't date someone who's had history with pornography, like we were told growing up because that's not true. And it's about much more than what someone's done. It's about who they are and who they're becoming and where they're headed. And, and that's what we're really trying to figure out. And so as we have these conversations, and again, like I hope in this episode we don't want to be prescriptive and give you like, this is what exactly what your relationship

would look like. But rather we want to give you principles that will help you to understand one another and to feel connected and to have more compassion for yourself and for the person that you have a big, huge crush on.

Creed:

Exactly. And if you're feeling afraid about having these conversations, work through that, understand why you might feel afraid to have them. And it's okay to feel afraid. Maybe you're afraid that you sharing your own experiences or values that this person will reject you. Maybe you don't want to hear that this person struggles or has past trauma even. But so work through that fear because it's better now to work through that fear than not having the conversation at all.

Crishelle:

Totally. And for the record, I still get scared to have this conversation and I'm married and we talk about it pretty often and it's still something that scares me and that I get really nervous about and have a lot of anxiety about. And I recognize that that's because of where I've come from and I'm so grateful that I'm able to recognize that and I'm able to be like, it's okay, I can work through this and I can have courage. And just acknowledging that fear has helped me to bring that out in the open

Creed:

And as you, you know, if you share, have these conversations and they either don't work out well or someone does decide that it's not a good relationship, just know that as you keep going and have hope that there is someone and are people who will love you for who you are, with your struggles, with your trauma, with your past experiences. There are people who will listen to you, love you. So just keep having that faith and keep trying to establish those connections and relationships so that you can find those people that do and will love you.

Crishelle:

Totally. We are so grateful that you joined us today for our conversation of why talking about pornography is important in a dating relationship. Just for your information and for your, you know, to add to your bank of resources on our website and in our show notes we

have an outline of, it's kind of like a lesson format. So you can use this to share with other people, but you can also just use it for your own benefit. It's called "Love, trust and truth: Talking about pornography when you're dating" and in there are tons of really great resources and ways to talk about it, when to talk about it and can be an awesome resource for you, for people that you care about. We also have in our show notes a form where we are collecting stories. We want to hear from you. We want to hear about your experiences, about your victories, about times where maybe you didn't come out as victorious as you wanted to and what you've learned about that experience. And these will all be anonymous so you can submit your story anonymously and that can be a way for you to share your experiences with people and provide hope and and peace for other people.