

191. What's Possible with Sam (Replay)



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Sara Brewer

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You are listening to the *Overcome Pornography for Good* podcast, Episode 191: What's Possible with Sam.

Welcome to the *Overcome Pornography For Good* podcast where we take a research-based, trauma informed and results focused approach to quitting porn. This approach has been revolutionary and changed thousands and thousands of lives. I'm your host, Sara Brewer.

Hey, everyone. Welcome to today's podcast episode. Today, we are doing a replay of a "What's Possible" interview with Sam from a couple of years ago. It's such a powerful episode, and I'm really excited for y'all to listen to it. Or re-listen to it, if you were one of the people who listened to it back in the day, just a few years ago.

But before we hop in, I just want to tell y'all that we have another free new training, free live training, coming up on September 19th. You can sign up for that with the link in the show notes. It's called The New Revolutionary Way to Quit Viewing Porn.

And this is for you, especially if you have tried all the things, if maybe you've tried the addiction recovery, you've tried the Sexaholics Anonymous, you've tried willpower, pushing away, filters, and you've just tried and tried and tried maybe for years and years and years. You've been to the meetings, you've gone to the help that you've had available to you, and it hasn't worked. It hasn't worked.

If that's you, I want you to know that it's not your fault that you haven't been able to quit. It's like you've been trying to fix the refrigerator with the manual for the microwave. You can't do it, not because you're not smart enough, strong enough, good enough, you just have the wrong instructions. And so I'm going to break that down for you in this class.

What exactly do you need to quit porn for good in a sustainable way? How do we need to approach this differently? And this process that I've used has been called "revolutionary" by many of my clients. It's been just totally game-changing for them.

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So come and join us in that class. I'll be there live to teach it. That's a great place for you to come and ask me specifically any questions that you might have about quitting porn. And enjoy today's episode, "What's Possible with Sam."

Sara Brewer: Okay, everyone, I want to introduce you to Sam. He is so, so great. Sam, do you want to go ahead and introduce yourself and tell us about you?

Sam: Yeah, absolutely. Hi, I am Samuel Dastrup, and I found the program from a Facebook ad, actually. I was meeting with another coach at the time and financially I was kind of making excuses that I couldn't do it. But I felt drawn, and I even felt directed to this program. I almost felt like... I mean, to be perfectly honest, I felt like God was saying, "This is right for you."

I'll tell you more about myself and then I'll get into that. I was born and raised in Arizona, one of eight kids. I had wonderful parents; they raised us well. They did the best with what they had, what they were given.

And if you've ever been raised in a family that large there's a little bit of neglect, but that's okay, parents are doing their best. I can't really say anything about that because when you have two kids and you're barely hanging on, then you realize why they were not able to give you the attention that you needed sometimes. But that's okay. I'm married.

Sara: That can still be difficult.

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: You can still let that be difficult.

Sam: Yeah. Anyways, they were amazing parents. So yeah, I'm married. I've been married for coming up on nine years. My wife is amazing, and I love her so much. Our marriage is better than it's ever been because of this program. I could probably talk about that a little bit more in a little bit.

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But we've got two kids, [verify sp: 0:04:14.4 Adrie and Raylee]; a four-year-old and a two-year-old. And for work, I'm a dentist. I live in Merced, California and I practice in Chowchilla, California, in Central Valley. So that's a little bit about me.

Sara: Tell us a little bit about your history with pornography and challenges around that for you, and what that experience was.

Sam: When I was young, I feel like every child has a little bit of curiosity around... kind of like you've talked about how we're sexual beings and there's some curiosity around that, even as a child. I've actually talked to my wife about this, and she even had mentioned things from her childhood. So it was very interesting to see that it wasn't just me.

Sara: No, it's not just you.

Sam: That's kind of where it began. And it was never really talked about, it was very hush-hush in our house. It was very traditional, kind of Church of Jesus Christ kind of mindset, and very much like, "No, no, we don't do this. We don't do that." So a lot of shame kind of subconsciously around it.

It started with masturbation and then the wrong types of friends. They introduced me to pornography. I was probably 11 or 12 when I first started to see some things. There was just any opportunity, like something in the mail, a magazine that was like the underwear section or something just things that I would see and then I never was addressing it.

I just felt shame; just shame and willpower, shame and willpower and shame. And yeah, I dealt with a lot of that all the way up until my Mission. I had the whole talk with the bishop and cleaned up real quick and then go on a Mission. And no pornography use on the Mission, but still had masturbation issues. And had talked to the Mission president and will-powered through it the whole Mission.

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And was clean the last six months of my mission and then quickly fell right back into it. I mean, I guess this is everyone's story, right? It's probably the same for pretty much everybody.

Sara: What I appreciate you sharing too, it's just so helpful, one of the best ways to help with shame is to hear that other people have done this too and that you are not the only one.

Sam: Totally. Yeah, I mean, I have many friends who are in similar circumstances, who we are in a place where we can have those conversations. And I'm also trying to preach this, the Sara Brewer you got to meet with her and do this program. And they're doing other programs, which is fine. But I'm so sold on it. I'm like, "You got to just try it." And sending them podcasts.

Anyways, but it's true, they're in the same boat, same story, lots of shame, lots of willpower, and never worked, right? Go figure, beating yourself up never actually works.

Sara: What?

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: So you struggled with it young growing up, lots of willpower, lots of shame. Which, by the way, I just want to say all the studies show now that we have is that the best way to protect our kids from porn, unwanted porn use is sex education, period.

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: we think if we don't tell them about it, they'll stay away from it. But the more we talk about it, actually, the more protected they are because like you said, curiosity, they're just curious.

Sam: Yeah.

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Sara: So and then you went on your mission, kind of will powered with your mission.

Sam: Yeah, when the mission came home, straight into dating. And probably within six months I was already starting to have struggles again into pornography and masturbation. And I always told myself the lie that, "Oh, yeah, when I'm married it won't be an issue anymore." So wrong. Just so interesting.

And going back to the mission, even the talks with my mission president, the thing he would say, and I'll never forget this. And he was doing the best that he could, and I don't blame him at all. I don't knock him for this, but his words were "Why don't you just stop?"

And that just was so shame inducing because I kept thinking, "What is wrong with me? Why can't I just stop? Why? There must be something wrong with me. Like you've talked about, I must have excessive sexual tendencies, or drive, or whatever, but something's wrong with me. I'm just not like other people and something's wrong with me.

And even meeting with bishops, it was always like, "Yeah, you'll probably struggle with this your whole life because that's what we see often." Just so shame inducing. And I don't blame them, they were doing the best they could, so I don't.

But I seriously am like, every bishop needs to know about this program and needs to just say, "Look, stop right there. Go listen to Sara Brewer's podcast." Because that's what I needed to hear.

Sara: Yeah, because hearing that over and over from spiritual authority can be especially damaging, yeah.

Sam: It hurt and it just, yeah, it tore me up. And I just beat myself up and I tried to throw it under the rug and say, well, I'll never give up trying and I'll always keep fighting. But I knew I was totally out of control. I had no, I

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would willpower for two weeks, maybe a month and then I would look again. And it was cycle after cycle, never going anywhere.

I did the 12 Step program going into dental school, getting married, thinking this will get better. Not long after marriage, struggling again. You know, obviously, too much shame going on.

And I didn't have the heart to tell my wife and I hid it for years. And I was eventually found out, basically. And then hid it again and again. I was just trying not to hurt her but also always not okay to hide stuff, no matter what intention I had.

I went to the 12 Step program. It was it was good. Well, I'll say this, so I lost my dad about a year and a half ago. No, it's okay everybody goes through the sting of death, right? But he also struggled with this, and we'd had conversations.

And in a moment when I was really struggling, I reached out to him. And he straight up told me, "I'm sorry, Sam, but the 12 Step program, it doesn't work." And I was like, "What do you mean, it doesn't work? You're wrong, it works." And he's like, "No, I have the same friends over and over again and they say, 'Hi, I'm Sam. I'm an addict'. You know, it's a great program but it misses the point."

And yeah, I told him, "I'm sorry, but I don't agree with you." And now I wish you were around, because I wish I could tell him, "You were right. You were right," and have that conversation with him.

Sara: Well recently I posted about that a little bit, just this addiction mindset. My friend... I call him my friend even though we just only kind of comment each other's Facebook or Instagram stuff.

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: TJ Counseling.

Sam: Okay.

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Sara: He said, "Yeah, well, addiction recovery works great for addictions. But most people aren't really addicted to porn, they think that's what it is. And so, it's just not a useful tool." So maybe, I don't know if that resonates with you, but maybe that's what was going on too.

Sam: It's true. It goes so much more; it goes so much deeper than the porn. One thing I loved about your program was the Pavlov's dog analogy because it was like, "Oh my gosh, that is so true. My mind is conditioned to just go there." I'm comfortable with that when I'm stressed, when I'm lonely, when I'm tired, when I'm exhausted, this and that.

And, of course, I go back to what I was comfortable with and what my brain, so I loved that part about the program. It's not about the number of weeks or the number of months you've had, but it's the number of urges the process that's how you see success.

Sara: Yeah, a lot more productive.

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: So, tell me a little bit, so doing 12 step and then somehow you came across this approach? Or is there more in between there that we need to hear first?

Sam: So yeah, so my wife would occasionally just ask, "How are you doing with porn?" And it was just such a yes or no answer. I would just be "I'm doing good." It was in my mind. I'm working on it. But yeah, I don't want to hurt her again and again until I've got this figured out. I want to solve this and then I'll tell her. Kind of like the atonement, "I'll fix myself and then I'll go to God and ask for forgiveness." Totally the same thing.

Well anyways, it came to a head, and she found out that I wasn't doing as well as I thought. And she was just shattered again. And it was just so hurtful. And right about that time I was meeting with a coach, actually because my sister and my mother had a come-to-Jesus meeting with me after my dad passed.

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My sister had struggles with some habits and I opened up to her about my habits. And she had gotten some serious help and was in such a good place. And she said, "I want you to get help, Sam."

And she involved my mother. My mother was like, "Look, I know you're going to justify it like you're okay, you'll get over this, but I don't give a crap. I'm going to pay for you to get coaching. I'm going to help you. You need help." And I was like, "Yeah, you're right."

So, I found a coach. She was great. She was great but it just wasn't going anywhere. And when I saw a Facebook ad for your podcast I was like, "Well, I can listen to a podcast." I drive a half an hour to work every day, that would be great.

And so, I started listening to your podcast and I was just like, "This is truth." There are things in life where the spirit is just like, "This is truth." There's nothing about it that is remotely like Satan speaks; in two truths and a lie or something. This just spoke to my heart like, "You need to seek this out. You need to. This is it."

So, I was just bingeing on the podcast, and I was like, "I know I need to join this coaching. I don't know how I'm going to do it," because I haven't told my wife that I've been slipping up, and this is going to crush her. And then on top of that, financially I don't know if we can do both. I don't have the heart to crush this coach's heart.

I was not good at confrontation, so I didn't want to... Anyways, it finally came to a head. She found out; my wife found out. I told the other coach I need to look into this. And I jumped into this. And from the moment I started it was a huge change, a completely different thing.

And I don't want to put my success on the months of sobriety because I know that's not truly what it's about. It's about the number of urges. But I can't deny that I've never had this kind of control in my entire life.

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I first went four months straight with no slip ups. I had a minor slip up and now it's been six more months. And it's been like, in 20 years I've never been in a place in life that felt this good. In 20 years. From the moment I first was struggling with masturbation and then eventually pornography, in 20 years. And that's massive. For me that's massive.

Sara: That gives me chills.

Sam: Yeah. Well, it for me is like, "Okay, I don't even care about anything else," that right there tells me this is it. But it wasn't just the time. The time didn't even really matter. It was that for once in my life I didn't feel out of control. I've always felt like I had no control over the situation. And for once I feel like I am going to do this, like I'm going to get there.

Sara: And probably, that slip up you had after four months, that wasn't like, "Oh crap, now I have to start over."

Sam: Right.

Sara: It's really been 10 months of really amazing success for you.

Sam: It has.

Sara: And that has just pushed you and helped you more.

Sam: Yeah, and my mind, I can feel my mind conditioned, reconditioned. I can feel the urge lessening. I can feel, I mean, I still have those urges but it's not like I just have to give into this, or it won't go away. It's not like that anymore. It just isn't, you know? And it doesn't have that pull like it did. And that's massive.

Yeah, so I'm still working on it and Tina, and I have been talking about the next step.

Sara: Yeah, beautiful. That's amazing. So, tell me a little bit, what were some of those big breakthroughs that you had that helped you get to this point?

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Sam: Yeah, so we focused on the urge milestone first. And that was, honestly, the majority of it was urges.

Sara: And just let me say really quickly when you say we, just so everyone knows. You worked private coaching with Tina in the program.

Sam: Yeah, with Tina.

Sam: And sorry, one more thing, just for those who don't know or haven't heard me say it, in the program you can come in and do the work yourself. Which you've heard some people in these interviews that I've been doing talk about that and some people who also work with a private coach alongside. They both have great benefits and that's just the path that you took. So just wanted to clear that up.

Sam: Yeah, yeah. And yeah, so Tina, I am very much an all or nothing kind of person. And that was another thing that the program has showed me is, no, that's not the right mindset.

And so, Tina, and your podcast, and you, have shown me all or nothing is not great. And even the judging based off the number of months is not great because it kind of urges you towards an all or nothing mindset. And so, she's like, "Let's just focus on one milestone, let's not do all of them." Which was really good because, yeah, I just go there to the all or nothing.

So, we just focused on urges and counting them. Like the app, I started counting the urges. And when I started, I wasn't so good at the stop, drop, and breathe. I'm still working on that even. And even just, drop, I was thinking, I was processing. But I was really kind of still over analyzing and almost will powering slightly instead of dropping straight into my emotions and stop, drop, and breathe. And so that's been the process of that.

I was working on that and that made a huge change. And then she saw a critical area of my life that had nothing, well, not nothing, but it had seemingly nothing to do with porn, and that was my job. I was in probably a worse place than the pornography, to be honest, with my job. Because I,

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for one reason or another, was being extremely critical about myself and about the quality of my work.

I'm a perfectionist and that's a dangerous thing, you know? And I compared myself to my brothers, they're both dentists. And I actually work for my brother. And anyways, I knew my numbers my production numbers and theirs, and I would just doubt myself and beat myself up.

And if I'm so hard on myself about... If patients are completely satisfied with me and I would just come home just beating myself up, and I would be a wreck and it would just lead to worse, like when psychologically you're not in a good place your performance goes down, right?

And Tina helped me see, okay, we need to step away from the urges and we needed to go into belief system. And so, we started working on that, and my whole life changed dramatically in a short period of time.

From dreading work, doubting myself, hating myself. Really just struggling to keep it together, kind of wanting to erase myself. Not actually going to go there, because I wouldn't ever leave my family destitute like that, but not wanting to live anymore in that place.

And it went from that to better than I've ever been. I do not dread work anymore. I am able to drive to work and say there's going to be some crap today and it is going to be stressful. But I am a great dentist and I know how to do good quality dentistry and I'm going to get through it, I always do. I'm going to do my absolute best and I'm going to provide quality care. And things just totally flipped, like 180.

Sara: Wow.

Sam: And now I'm trying to take that and use the same methods that I used there to get to the next level of my urges in public settings. Something where I'm just stuck in this fight or flight mode where I can't get away from the urges, they're everywhere, and I'm trying to get to that next level of processing.

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Sara: Wow, I love it. How did that experience with your job, did it have any relation to pornography and urges? Because you said it didn't look like it had any relation, but have you seen any?

Sam: I mean I would be lying if I didn't say that the pornography stole a massive part of me spiritually, my confidence, in my marriage, in myself, in my priestly callings and all of that. And so yeah, it does apply in a way if I'm bringing that lack of confidence already to work, already kind of doubting myself in that regard, I'm going to doubt myself in other places like work.

So yeah, it does come around full circle, if I were to be honest. And so, yeah, I feel like yeah, they are connected in a way.

Sara: Yeah. We think that we're coming into quit porn, but you also come in and you get to learn how to love your job again.

Sam: Yeah. Right, that was the bigger, honestly, and it goes so much further than that. Now I have more capacity to love my children when I come home because I'm not bringing that home. I am not snapping at them. I am more patient with them, with my team at work, with patients because I love myself again.

I've just hated myself my whole life, I knew nothing more than to hate myself and loathe myself. And I didn't realize that or admit that. But yeah, I hated myself. And I've had a lot of trauma from my childhood, from bullying that went into this and into hating myself and telling myself I'm no good.

And for once in my life, I don't hate myself anymore and that goes straight into how I treat my children and the capacity to love them and teach them it's okay to have that sexual curiosity and it's okay to have those conversations. And then help them not be traumatized like maybe I was. And I don't fault my parents. They did a really good job. They did a lot better than what they were given.

Sara: Yeah, what lucky kids. What a gift for them.

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Sam: Well, yeah, I hope so. You can really screw up your kids, I feel like. Yeah, I've just started realizing you can, but anyways.

Sara: I'm with you there. I'm like, "Oh my gosh, is there any way to not add trauma to your kids? I don't know. I don't know, but I'm going to do my best."

Sam: Right, how do I not shuffle my crap onto them?

Sara: Yeah.

Sam: I guess that's the point of life, right?

Sara: I mean, I think that's a big shift we're seeing, at least I see in the world a lot, is people are now more focused on healing themselves. Because they realize when you heal yourself, you heal your kids. When you just focus on other people and you're ignoring the stuff inside of you, it perpetuates trauma and stuff.

Sam: Totally. Yeah, that generation was hush hush. If you're getting therapy, there's something wrong with you. And still some of that is still today, there's a little bit of it. And I'm just like, "I don't care." I'm just like, "Okay, I look at porn. I've had problems with porn. And this is who I am. And I'm going to talk about it so I can help others and I can fix myself."

Sara: Yeah, so good. I love it. So, what do you think is possible for you now as a result of the work you've done so far? What's next?

Sam: I love your recent podcast of the don't settle, right? And that's kind of what's next. So yeah, I'm working on that. But I still buffer a ton and not in the way of pornography, but I'm a YouTube addict. And I started a YouTube channel because I want to create rather than... My new mantra. And honestly, because of you and your podcast is "create not consume." Create not consume, right?

And you've talked about that. And I love that. Because consumption is our generation. And I just hate it. I hate what it does to me. I hate that I run

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away from my problems. I just spent so much time on YouTube consuming. And what it really comes down to is I want to do things, but I don't have the money for it. I want to race, I love racing.

And yeah, I want to create a life where I can be a dentist, I can be a father, and I can spend tons of time with my family. But also, I can do some of the things I love and have the resources to do that. And so, what that looks like for me is maybe I can create a YouTube channel and over the years maybe build up to where it can financially, I don't know.

Sara: Love it.

Sam: But even if it didn't, just creating rather than consuming is enough reason to do it. Because how many freaking hours did I waste just consuming? And creating content, even if nobody watched it and whatever, it would still be a better use of my time. Not the best use of my time, but a better use of my time.

Sara: Yeah, I love that. And with porn too, you thought you'd never be able to quit porn. And now look at the success you're having.

Sam: Right.

Sara: I mean, people create and make a lot of money off of YouTube, why not you?

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: Why not you? It's the same thing.

Sam: As you know my views have changed, but I just want to race. I just want to race, and I want to be a good dad, and I want to be a good dentist. And I do love dentistry. And I love the craft and I love getting better and better. And I love seeking excellence in everything that I do.

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That's the one thing that I'm just hell bent on to be excellent at everything, for better or for worse. But as long as it's not perfectionism. Excellence is okay. Yeah, anyways, I digress.

Sara: Cool. Well, so thinking about people listening this podcast that are where you were a year ago, a couple years ago, three years ago, whenever, thinking about them do you have any last insights or anything else you want to say?

Sam: Yeah, totally. Yeah, just freaking spend the money. Get the coaching because, like you say, the best investment that you can make is not in the stock market, it's not on this, it's not that, it's in yourself, it's in your mind.

Investing in yourself is the greatest thing that you can do because it will not only empower you, but it will empower generations to come. Your wife, your family, it will heal relationships. It will give you what you're seeking for in life.

It's worth the money. It's worth the money, just do it and stop making excuses. That's what I would tell myself. I'm not telling people because I know how hard life can be with money, but yeah, I'm telling myself that really six or however many months ago.

Sara: Yeah, really beautiful. I love that.

Sam: Do it.

Sara: I remember making a really big investment in one of my first coaching programs, like \$18,000 or something.

Sam: Yeah.

Sara: And we were living in my parents' basement and barely starting to make a little bit of money and my husband was like, "Are you freaking kidding me? You are not asking; you're not seriously considering this are you?" I'm like, "I actually am." Because it was kind of like I had been

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listening to this podcast and it totally changed my life. And I'm like, "I can do so much with that." And so, we did it and it was crazy.

Sam: And look where you're at.

Sara: It was crazy. And going back, even my husband, he says, "Going back what I would tell myself is 'don't fight her on that.' This is going to be one of the best things you guys can do for your marriage, for your relationships, and then of course for what I do in the world now too."

Sam: Yeah, exactly.

Sara: So, I totally feel you there. And I've tried to make my program much more affordable than \$18,000. But it's still, if you're not used to investing in yourself it can feel like a lot, for sure.

Sam: It's always going to feel like a lot. Honestly, your program is amazing, and it is more than worth the money. It is more than worth the money and it's not even that expensive, just do it, you know? So that's my plug.

Sara: Thank you. Thank you. And congratulations. Just like I said, thank you so much for showing up and sharing your story with people. I know it's so, so, so helpful for so many people. And yeah, look where you are because of you and because of what you committed to.

Sam: Yeah, and thank you, I have a lot to owe to you and Tina. And really, thank you guys because I would be in the same mess if it weren't for this program. I'd be in the same mess.

Sara: Well, and I am continuing to tell people, "Remember, you're the hero here." Because there are also 25,000 people who listen this podcast every single week. Not all of them are where you're at. You're where you're at because of what you have done. I got to teach you, I got to give you this stuff, but the results come from you.

Sam: Yeah, and unfortunately it took a whole hell of a lot of pain to get there. And I mean, not rock bottom, but like the pain that I caused my wife

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to push me, and the being pushed by my sister and my mom. But nonetheless, I feel like God directed me to this program. I really do. I really do.

Sara: Yeah, that's how I feel about the programs I started with too. Yeah, that was God.

Sam: Yeah, I really do feel that way.

Sara: Yeah. Well, thank you. Okay, thank you so much. Have a great day.

Sam: Thank you, Sara.

I want to invite you to come and listen to my free class, How To Overcome Pornography For Good Without Using Willpower. We talk about how to stop giving in to urges without pure willpower or relying on phone filters so that you can actually stop wanting pornography.

We talk about how to stop giving up after a few weeks or months. And spoiler alert, the answer isn't "have more willpower." Lastly, we talk about how to make a life without porn easily sustainable and permanent.

If you're trying to quit porn, this class is a game changer. So, you can go and sign up at SaraBrewer.com/masterclass, and it is totally free.