

The background of the entire page is a high-contrast photograph of a mountain range. In the upper right, a sharp, snow-covered mountain peak rises against a sky filled with white, puffy clouds. Below the peak, the mountain slopes descend into a deep valley. The valley floor and the lower slopes are covered in dense, dark green coniferous forests. The upper slopes of the mountains are rocky and sparsely covered with snow or light-colored vegetation. The overall color palette is dominated by the blues and greys of the sky and mountains, the white of the snow and clouds, and the deep greens of the forest.

The Strang

FINDING THE FLAME

BECOMING WHO GOD MADE YOU TO BE THROUGH
DISCIPLINE | SPIRITUALITY | FREEDOM

FINDING THE FLAME

Finding the Flame is a media company that was created to facilitate a person on their journey to discover their Creator. One of our main focuses is on getting out of pornography, but we do not stop there. During our time desperately trying to leave our lustful lifestyle behind, we found that it is not about leaving something behind but striving for something much more significant in front of us. Our mission is to bring faithful content to people who strive for more.

Go check us out at these links!

Instagram



Website



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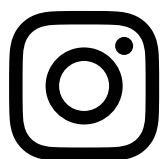


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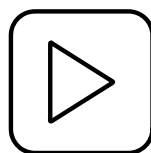


My name is Patches Carney, I am the one the Spirit worked through to manifest this program. Learn more about me at these links!

Instagram



YouTube



Facebook





THE STRONG 30

Becoming the PERSON GOD created YOU to be through
DISCIPLINE, SPIRITUALITY and FREEDOM.

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DAY 0

Let's create some habits

The Strong 30's mission is to begin the road of development into the person God created you to be. This is done not only by pure discipline but also by a change in perspective mentally while implementing spirituality into this mess. This program was initially written for people who struggle with an addiction to porn and masturbation (P&M). As I continued to learn more and more, I realized that this program will benefit anyone who desires to become just a well rounded, solid, impressive, good human.

This program will be broken down into four, seven-day increments with two days of preparation for what is next in your life. Throughout these thirty days, you will have six habits to perform every day except on the Lord's day. Because thirty days can seem very daunting, it is essential to take this program week by week and when it gets hard, day by day.

Today is preparation day, your reading will include Day 0 in its entirety.

To complete this program, you will only need two items, those items being a notebook and a pen. [You can find The Strong 30 notebooks here.](#)

DAY 0

Now, here are the six habits you will perform for the next thirty days.

1. Meditation for Five Minutes a Day
2. Waking Up 30 Minutes Early
3. Scheduling Your Day
4. Cold Showers
5. Self-Affirmations
6. Prayer and Push-ups

DAY 0

1. Meditation for Five Minutes a Day

Meditation is vital if you want to develop the mental strength and ability to shift your mind from thought to thought and remove any image, scenario, or concept that you do not wish to dwell within the confines of your mind. By meditating you become more in tune with yourself: mind, body, and soul, through this you learn about the depth of yourself and others and no longer are held up by the physical appearance. I understand that there are thousands of styles to meditate, so, I will elaborate on the meditation that you will be practicing these next 30 days. This meditation will consist of a simple breathing pattern integrated with a posture. This practice is to help clear your mind of everything to improve concentration. Begin by finding a quiet place, BCS (best case scenario) would be a chapel with perpetual adoration. Once you find a location, get in a comfortable position that you will be able to remain in for some time without adjusting. This position needs to be comfortable to remove the distraction of discomfort throughout your meditation. With that said, meditation time is not snoozing time, and you should not be too comfortable. I have found the straighter my back, the more alert and focused I feel. Once you are in your preferred position, begin to direct your thoughts toward your breath.

In, and out, in, and out.

DAY 0

Feel the oxygen flooding your mind, running through the neck to your shoulders, sliding down into your fingertips... Recognize the oxygen flowing through your lungs, effortlessly making its way to your toes.

Release.

Repeat.

Your mind will begin to drift away from your breath, and other thoughts will enter, gently bring your focus back to your breath. In and out, in and out. Your mind will soon consist of nothing but your breath, the oxygen giving you life. Stay in this state as long as you can.

Your mind is clear, focused, relaxed- what a perfect time to recognize Jesus's presence! Begin dwelling on His presence.

His love, His power, His passion.

Continue with this as long as you feel moved.

Now, meditation can be tough at first, but you will learn that it is a necessary practice which can be very intriguing after getting the hang of it. Five minutes a day is all I am asking you to do. Meditation is a time to clear your mind and enjoy the moment.

DAY 0

2. Waking Up 30 Minutes Early

The second new habit for the next 30 days is waking up 30 minutes earlier than you usually would. You may wake up at 8:00 a.m. weekdays for school or work and 10:00 a.m. on weekends; for 30 days you will make that 7:30 a.m. weekdays and 9:30 a.m. on weekends. No snooze, no excuses. Think of it as the first decision of your day, you can choose to be mediocre and sleep in, or you can choose to live a better life and wake up once your alarm goes off. This scenario is the definition of mind in correspondence with the body. The bed is comfortable, warm, and your body is begging for another 30 minutes of sleep. I'll decide for you. You are not going to be that type of weak-minded person anymore. Disciplining your mind and body in this way will not only be crucial in the removal of your addiction to porn and or masturbation but will also help you in so many ways down the road.

3. Scheduling Your Day

A huge part in being successful in anything is getting organized and having a particular goal to reach. Throughout these next thirty days, there are going to be a lot of new habits that you don't perform on a daily basis. Keeping track of everything will get difficult, so this next habit is to help you start planning your days out. Here is where the notebook comes into play. You will need to have a notebook and pen on you at all times.

DAY 0

I do not mean literally on you always, but it should be close enough for you to get to within two minutes. For me, I have my bag that I don't go anywhere without. It has my notebooks, pens, laptop, anything I need just in case there is an idea that pops into my head that will be beneficial for me to remember. No, I don't carry the bag around everywhere, but if it's not on me then it's in my truck, and I usually can get to my vehicle before I lose my train of thought. You will find carrying a pen and notebook around everywhere will come in the clutch a lot more than you expect. Random thoughts are not the only reason you need these items by your side. For the next thirty days, you will be scheduling your days with tasks that you want to accomplish. From the time you win the first battle of the day, to the minute your head hits your pillow you will have something to do, even if it is watching television for twenty minutes. Temptation thrives in the lazy parts of your day- how many times have you fallen because you had nothing else to do? Scheduling is the best way to keep your mind active and not wandering, even if it is just small things that you write down like, making a phone call to your friend to kill the five minutes you have before you go skydiving. If you have a productive day, your mind does not have time to think about temptations.

4. Cold Showers

Nothing says "you don't control me, flesh" like a cold shower. We have struggled with this sin because we let the desires of the flesh control us.

DAY 0

Cold showers have been one of the most effective and satisfying habits I have practiced. I am not saying every shower must be on the freezing level, but you should not be comfortable while showering. There are multiple benefits from this habit. The discipline of the body, shorter shower times which equals less water waste, cold showers improve energy levels, not to mention the last thing you will want to do is stand there with lustful thoughts on your mind while thirty three-degree water is penetrating your back. Bottom line, developing this habit has advantages mentally, physically and even environmentally.

5. Self Affirmations

This habit may seem very odd at the start, and I am usually not a fan of repetition, but repetition with a purpose is something I have learned to appreciate. So let's get into it, for the next thirty days, you will take your rosary/anything that you can count with, and start at the first bead of the first decade, for each bead you will repeat the words "I am pure" out loud to yourself. It is important that you hear yourself say these words so do not mumble your way through this. You will say the words am I pure a total of one hundred and ten times, (twice around the rosary) you will finish by holding the crucifix saying, "I am pure because God my creator, created me to be pure." Saying this to yourself trains you to keep the right mindset.

DAY 0

The subconscious mind learns from repetition, so the more you say these words to yourself, the more your subconscious believes that this statement is true and because the subconscious mind plays a major part in the habits that you have and develop, you begin to believe and act in a pure manner. If none of this makes sense to you, that is okay! I will be going more in depth on this subject at a later date. I need you to take this habit very seriously, clearly repeating to yourself “ I am pure,” this has the potential to alter your thoughts, tearing them away from lust and toward something much higher.

If you do not struggle with being pure, you can repeat the words “I am holy” or “I am a saint,” the benefits are the same, you begin to believe what you say.

6. Prayer and Push-ups

Now let's get excited, this is where you will see some physical improvement within 30 days if done correctly. It will be for the best if this habit is completed right after you wake up. You are up thirty minutes early, and it would be effortless to fall back asleep if you do not fill this time with anything, don't fret! You have p&p (prayer and push-ups... duh) to complete. What you will do once your alarm has been shut off is get into push up position.

DAY 0

You will then scan your mind for a petition you wish to pray for, once that petition is selected, you will complete as many push-ups as possible with that petition in the front of your mind. Once you have fallen to the ground in fatigue, you will sit up and pray five Hail Mary's. These Hail Marys will be recited thoughtfully, reflecting on the words as they leave your mouth. As you recite, you pause at each dash.

Hail Mary full of grace - the Lord is with thee, blessed are thou among women - and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus - Holy Mary Mother of God - pray for us sinners now - and at the hour of our death. Amen

I have experienced that pausing at these parts in the prayer has helped me develop a much greater appreciation for the words I am saying to my Heavenly Mother.

You have now completed your first set, write down the number of push-ups you achieved in your notebook and repeat. You will do this three times, saying a total of fifteen devote Hail Mary's while developing a "don't give in mindset" during the push-ups.

Now that you know the habits I hope you are as jacked as I am for you to start this!

DAY 0

We still have some prep work to get done before tomorrow comes. Before your pillow engulfs your head, I need you to schedule out what your day is going to look like tomorrow, now remember it does not have to be perfect. The most important thing to remember is every moment you are by yourself; you need to be doing something productive. Here is a visual of a best-case scenario (BCS) schedule. I understand everyone's schedule will be different, but this is what my schedule looks like tomorrow to give you an idea.

7:00 - Wake up/Prayers and Push-ups and workout

7:45 - Meditation/Self affirmations

8:00 - Mass

8:30 - Work (write)

12:00 - Lunch

1:00 - Work

5:30 - Dinner

6:30 - Meet up with friends

9:30? - Read/Schedule tomorrow

11:00 - Lights out

Notice that I left a question mark after nine thirty at night, this is to give myself leeway with my friends, I might hang out with my friends till nine-thirty, or I might stay with them till ten-thirty, either way, when I get home, I will have something to do and I will not leave myself open to temptation. I also want to point out that I may not stay entirely on schedule throughout the day, that is okay, I need to make sure I keep myself busy and finish the things that are most important to me.

DAY 0

Remember, get yourself a pen, notebook, and also schedule out your day before you go to sleep!

DAY 1

We all have stories

I want to start this off with a story of my past, not just any story but a story of rock bottom, a story of complete and unreturnable defeat. A story of failure that I could not bounce back from, a story of no return, a story of no hope. This story of my past would be so disappointing that as my fingers apply pressure to the keys, tears would come to my eyes. Tears of sadness, regret, disgust. This story may have you feeling pretty good about yourself. The problem being, there is no such story, there is no story of hopelessness.

Yes, we all have done some very messed up stuff...

My past is not pretty, it is beautiful. It is not a story of lost hope but one full of hope. My history is a story of faults and triumphs, a story of love and indifference, a story of mercy. My eyes are dry as these words appear on my laptop in this coffee shop because I do not regret the past, I do not dwell on the sins of my past. Why?

My Creator does not ask me to dwell on the past with disgust and regret but with a pencil in hand and an empty notebook. I

have given him my past, and in return, He gives me the recognition of everything already given to me. I am not afraid to put on paper what I have done because it does not define me, to be scared of that would mean I have not given it entirely to God. I would still believe these faults define me in some way. They DO NOT. Everything in my life has happened so to facilitate the development of myself into the person I am meant to be.

This program is my attempt to share what I have learned through my years of addiction and recovery. I went through years and years of struggling with no help, and I know many of the people in the same boat...

DAY 1

I don't want that to happen to anyone else... That can't happen to anyone else...

This all starts with you forgiving yourself and giving everything you regret, to God. Take time today to dwell on things in your past that make you cringe and let them go, give God ALL of your past, the good, the bad and the ugly.

Journal 1

What about you? Is there something in your past you would be unwilling to share with someone? Write it down.

Why would you be unwilling to share?

Is keeping this to yourself helping you in any way?

I want you to say to God, "I give You ...(insert the part of your past you regret)... give me the strength to let go."

DAY 2

Self-awareness

Throughout these last couple of years, I have and am continuing to learn how vital self-awareness is in one's life. First I have had to learn what self-awareness actually is, what it looks like, and how I can practice it. I confess I am at the beginning stages of this process, regardless, I believe I have a good grasp on the endeavor. Self-awareness is pretty self-explanatory. You might be reading this and thinking to yourself, "duh I know myself, that's not hard." that is very understandable. That is only the surface of this monster we call self-awareness. Self-awareness ranges from the knowledge of your own name to what your deepest desire is, even further than that, where that desire comes from. Have you ever thought of that? Yes, you might be answering these questions as you read along, "What's my deepest desire? To have a loving spouse and family" but I am asking you to search for where that desire came from. Why would that be something you desire? What are your past experiences in this area? Why does that look pleasing to you?

From fifth grade to my junior year in high school, I can honestly say, as embarrassing as this sounds in hindsight, that my most prioritized desire was my desire to win 5a state basketball championship for my high school. My life spun around basketball, I did everything for basketball, I pushed myself at the gym for basketball, I woke up at five am and made my way to the YMCA for basketball. I stayed in on some weekend nights for basketball. I even prayed for success in basketball. If we won state, my team would be the first team ever to win state at my high school.

DAY 2

I envisioned myself on the court when the team won it, I would look up to my dad in the stands, we would lock eyes, he would do his classic fist bump and hold it there, I would do the same.

Nothing else mattered but that moment, that moment of affirmation from my father. I would then soak in the sight of my family standing and clapping, all filled with pride for their baby brother.

Where did the desire to win a state championship come from?

You are getting the hang of this self-awareness thing if you can answer. Reread the part where I describe my vision after winning state with my team. My desire to win state came from the relationship with my family, my respect for my father, my longing to impress my family. I didn't give a crap about the trophy. From an early age, I have desired to impress my dad in any way I could. I would max out on the bench in the weight room and couldn't wait to get home to tell him. My grades were hardly ever good, but when they were, I would run straight to him to let him know how good I did that month. I desire to make my dad proud of me, and basketball, at that time was one very tangible way to make that happen. I also would envision my brothers and sisters screaming and jumping in excitement full of pride. I am the youngest of six, I look up to each and everyone of my siblings. Being the youngest, I would always compare myself to my siblings in everything, no I never could reach their standards in schooling but sports, sports I could make up all of the slack! If I could win state, my brothers would be impressed, my sisters would be filled with pride of their younger brother.

DAY 2

My desire for affirmation from my father and my siblings is where my true desire resides, that is why I wanted to win state so badly.

I can take these same steps and find out why I am addicted to pornography and masturbation or any vice I may have. I watch pornography because I desire the “feel of it,” the control, and to satisfy sexual desires. As I watch porn, I can create a scenario in my head that the women on the screen actually cares about me and wants to please me. The problem is that connection is only in my head, there is no connection. Yes I can control what kind of porn I watch, but I am not in control, porn controls me if you don't think porn controls you, go for a month without it, and when you fall back into porn within a week, continue this book. I thought I could satisfy my sexual desires with porn, that way I did not have to sin with women, it would only be me. That was so far from reality, the more porn I watched to more I expected from real women and was confused why they did not act as the pornstars did. This leads to bad relationships, half-committed relationships, failed relationships. Porn and masturbation cannot fulfill a desire God placed in us that is meant for two. We cannot accomplish this by ourselves.

Let's break down these desires of “feeling good,” control.

Step 1 - Starting with “feel good,” how do I experience pleasure? Pleasure is a natural reaction to survival instincts, whether that be eating, finding water or having sex, when I take these actions chemicals are released in the brain that reward me and remind me to do it again, hence pleasure. The problem is this part of my mind that releases these chemicals does not comprehend morality nor does it understand what “TOO MUCH” is.

DAY 2

So when I watch porn this part of my brain views it as good and releases chemicals called dopamine and endorphins, these chemicals are how I experience pleasure. Now that I know where this pleasure comes from, I can find other, pure, proper, holy avenues.

Step 2 - Now how can I replace this habit of pornography and masturbation with something that will genuinely fulfill me without the side effects of sin and depression? Well, I can find something that will release these chemicals naturally while sticking to a virtuous way of life. In my personal experience, I have seen a real connection through deep conversations are just one thing that does the trick, for you, it may be hitting the gym, writing, music, running. All are healthy habits to replace porn with.

Let's repeat these steps with control.

Step 1 - What kind of control do I desire? While watching porn, I enjoy the feeling that I can watch one video for a few seconds and then switch to another, and then to another, nothing is tying me down. I have built a misbelief that I am in control when watching porn. Am I really in control? Control for me is the ability to say no, and yes without any external entities affecting my decision. Am I honestly in control when I want to work out, but porn is on my mind, so I stop working out and go into the bathroom to "satisfy" this desire for 30 minutes. Or when I want to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist but I cannot because earlier that day, in the shower, I watched porn, is that control? Or when I want to have an in-depth conversation with a girlfriend, but my mind is preoccupied with a porn scene I watched earlier that day.

DAY 2

Am I honestly in control in any of these situations? No.

Control is the opposite, the ability to control myself and say no to porn to say yes to more fulfilling parts of life is the type of control I need.

Step 2 - I can exercise the practice of real control by saying no to myself and to porn, then replace that with more fulfilling things like working out, receiving the Eucharist, or deep conversations with my peers.

Journal 2

What is the stem of your desires? Think of your sins, what are they? Write them down. Take your sins and work backwards to the stem of that particular sin, why do you do it? What do you get from it? Brainstorm some new activities to replace this sin with.

DAY 3

Mindset

A mind preoccupied with God does not have space or time for sin. For so long my mind was preoccupied with sin, I would either be scheming how I will not fall to the sin of pornography, or I would have already given up and allowed the sin to encompass my mind entirely. You might be thinking that the first option was a good thing for me to do, well I have a question. Why was the sin even on my mind? The fact that I give sin a place to reside in my mind is embarrassing.

We are better than that, we are made for more.

I love to get myself hyped over the thought that I am not of this world and that I am made for more, that all sounds good on paper, the reality is temptation finds its way into our minds, and when it does, we must be ready to get rid of it(See Day 4 The Leaf Affect). Practice focusing on God and any other aspect of your life, anything but this addiction! This is very important, what other aspects of your life can fill this space in your mind that was previously filled with pornography? We need to stop thinking about porn or whatever addiction you may have, don't give it room. Throughout these thirty days, I will be giving you practical actions you can take to get out of this addiction, but nothing will work if you still have the attitude and mindset that you will fall to this sin again. And if you are anything like me, there is something always telling you "you will watch porn again, it is only a matter of time.". It does NOT have to be that way. Let's fix that mindset.

DAY 3

Have you ever heard someone tell another that they won't be able to complete an activity successfully? The person on the receiving side of that statement usually responds with something along the lines of "well, with that attitude you won't." This has become a very common saying that I want you to reflect on today. When you begin to think about completely cutting porn and masturbation from your life, it can very quickly become daunting. It becomes effortless and natural to slide into a mindset of disbelief in yourself, I have two points I need you to remember:

You are NOT alone.

You WILL get out.

The first point, you are not alone, what does this mean? If you get nothing else out of these thirty days, I need you to at least remember this, God is on your side! You need Him to help you through this, If you do not have God leading you, there is no hope. Another thing I want to mention on this point is your friends and family are going to be very important in your road to freedom, they are there to help. We will talk about reaching out to friends and family on a later date.

The second point, you will struggle, you may have some tough days, sometimes of desolation, in these times of struggle you need to remind yourself that you will get out and each time you fall, you will get back up stronger. Develop an "I can" mindset because this time of darkness won't last forever, you will get out.

DAY 3

Answer these questions to yourself right now.

What would it be like to not struggle with this vice right now?

What kind of person would you be?

What would your day to day actions look like if this vice was not in your life?

How will you differ as a person when you do not have this addiction following you around?

Okay now take these answers and implement them into your life right now, this is no longer a hypothetical situation, be a person of the here and now.

Journal 3

Do you believe that this is the start to your freedom from this addiction? What can you do to help form a determined mindset?

DAY 4

The Leaf Affect

Last year I was in Colorado with a few buddies, we all made the trek up there to participate in a spikeball tournament. After we all got embarrassed at the competition, we made our way to Mt. Elbert, the tallest mountain in Colorado hitting fourteen thousand, four hundred and thirty-nine feet. It was late July and unlike in Kansas, the mornings at that campsite were brisk. To wake myself up, I dipped my hair into the mountain stream flowing only feet away from our tent that my buddy set up inside out, allowing the dew to soak into my sleeping bag causing an unpleasant night of sleep. As my breath altered from the chill of the water, I straightened up and began to feel the cold liquid making its way down my back. I quickly forgot about the temperature once my eyes locked in on the beautiful scenery in front of me. I stood there in amazement as I watched the stream flowing away from me, surrounded by beautiful trees that reminded me of Engelmann spruce trees. As I watched the stream becoming engulfed by the surrounded scenery I was reminded of a tip I received a couple months prior, relating to letting go of temptation. I have found this tip to be very helpful and wanted to share it with you.

DAY 4

I want you to reflect on a time when you have found yourself next to a river or stream, If you have not had this opportunity, then I encourage you to make time for this experience sometime soon. For now, I just need you to visualize a stream, you are standing right on the banks of this stream, and it is running rather quickly. You squat down, at this level you can really hear the roar of the water. In your right hand, you have a leaf, this leaf has just recently fallen from a tree nearby. You lean closer to the stream, and you set this leaf on the water, effortlessly the flow takes the leaf from you. Your eyes follow this leaf as it is taken downstream, soon the leaf is out of sight. You are brought back to the beauty of everything else around you, very quickly you forget about that leaf. Make sure you develop this scene in your mind clearly, imagine what the surroundings look like, is it hot or cold? The clearer this scene is in your head, the more effective this will be. Now that you have this scene in your head, next time you are tempted, bring yourself back to this scene next to the stream. Acknowledge the temptation for what it is and hold it in your left hand, now place the temptation unto the leaf, place the leaf in the water and let the water do the rest. Imagine the temptation on the leaf, flowing further and further away until it is out of sight. Take a deep breathe and let go entirely of that temptation. It is now out of sight, out of mind. Repeat as many times as needed.

Journal 4

Develop this scene for yourself. What does the landscape look like? What are you wearing? How large is the stream? Is the sun up? Or is it setting? Describe the scene.

DAY 5

Gratitude

Going into my eighth-grade year, I traveled to play basketball for a majority of my summer. I lived and breathed basketball, embarrassingly I admit that I put basketball over pretty much everything in my life. I remember one tournament, in Kansas

City I believe, this particular tournament was very competitive. This also was a tournament that I decided I was going to forget everything I had learned about basketball and play like it was my first time squeaking my shoes on a

hardwood floor. It was embarrassing, I had no idea what was wrong! I couldn't dribble, a majority of my passes were to the opposing team, every time I shot my team fled to under the

basket, waiting on the airball. It was the worst I had ever played. It was a very short tournament for my team, to say the least, I played so bad that they could not recover. We had the chance to play on Sunday if you made it to the championship..

we barely made it to Saturday morning.

Our team was very close, having played with each other since sixth grade, my best friends were on that team, and though we

were out of the tournament, we were all planning to spend another night in Kansas City just hanging out in the hotel and doing whatever you do in Kansas City as an eighth grader. All of their parents were fine with staying and paying for another night at the hotel. Well, my parents had another plan, we were

home-bound within fifteen minutes. I reacted as you could

imagine a stuck up moody eighth grader would, I let my parents know about how bad my life was, how the other

parents always allowed my friends do more than me, how I don't get anything I want in life.

DAY 5

To this day I cringe when I recall the things I said to my parents in the back of that car.

My dad let me finish my rant then proceeded to put me in my place. I do not recall everything he told me that car ride, but there is one word that I have not forgotten.

Gratitude

He told me to look at the position I was in at that moment in time. I was three hours from home, playing in a basketball tournament with my best friends that my parents paid for. He reminded me of my family that loves me, my parents that aren't divorced and provide any and every necessity in my life, and then some. His voice was raised as he explained to me that I have done nothing to be in the fantastic position I am in and how outrageous it is that I dare to complain about not staying in Kansas City for another twenty hours. He finished this lesson with a statement that left me feeling so embarrassed that I wanted to walk home. He said, "you have it better than ninety percent of the people in this world, and you are complaining." I do not know if this percentage is right, but I genuinely believe that it is probably close to being true. I sunk back into my seat and did not say another word the rest of that quiet drive.

DAY 5

As the years have gone by, I have learned to look at my position in life as a whole and realize how blessed I am. I have learned that when I am grateful for what God has given me and really reflect on the blessings in my life, I do not go searching in worldly things for pleasure. As you find your way through these next thirty days, I want you to step back and bring your attention to all of the blessings in your life. From the food, you are blessed to receive to the water you wash your hands with.

Today reflect on the things in your life that you take for granted.

Journal 5

What are things in your life that you take for granted? How can you develop a better appreciation for these things?

DAY 6

Replacements

Habit - “a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up.”

By now P&M (porn and masturbation) have become habits in your life. In my own experience, P&M became almost as ingrained into my schedule as a nightly shower was, most nights, both were scheduled at the same time. P&M were habits that were tearing me down spiritually and mentally, I knew I had to break them, you might be in the same boat. Here is where I want to save you a lot of time and inefficient effort.

You don't break habits, you replace them.

I wish I knew this piece of advice so much earlier in my life! You are fighting an uphill battle already, trying to break a habit that has been around for a while now is no easy task.

How many success stories have you heard of with the approach of stopping cold turkey? Maybe it's successful for a bit, but relapse is bound to happen because there is no replacement for the habit that used to be. Let's make this an easier fight. Just as using switchbacks makes climbing a mountain easier and more efficient, so does finding good, solid actions to replace P&M.

DAY 6

I used to be addicted to chewing tobacco, I tried to stop multiple times but always found myself back at a gas station buying another can. The more research I did on how to stop chewing, the more I learned about this aspect of replacing bad habits for good. When someone quits chewing tobacco, it is not the tobacco they crave, they crave having something in their mouth to keep them preoccupied. Especially for me, I was used to having the chew in my mouth and spitting every thirty seconds on car rides. I recognized that I had a habit of chewing whenever I got in the car. I needed to find something I could replace that with. So I replaced the tobacco with gum, or a healthy drink, every time I got in my truck, I would make sure I had something to sip on or chew on that wasn't tobacco.

After I found that this worked, I realized that I didn't chew tobacco while driving because I loved tobacco. I chewed tobacco while driving because I got bored in the car and needed something to entertain myself. To this day I either say the rosary in the car, or I make phone calls to my friends, and that keeps my mind off the tobacco.

Whether you have noticed or not, you have been practicing this in your own life these past six days. When you wake up thirty minutes early, how easy is it to fall back asleep if you don't have something to do instead of sleep? You need to find something to keep you awake. In other words, you are replacing that thirty minutes of rest with thirty minutes of push-ups, or meditation, or reading, or whatever you decide.

This is a critical aspect to understand, you need to find something to replace the habit of P&M.

Journal 6

What is going to replace P&M in your life?

DAY 7

Reflection Day

You have made it through the first week of The Strong 30, good work, not a lot of people can discipline themselves for six days as you have done. You should have confidence in yourself, allow yourself to feel some pride for what you have accomplished this week. I pray that you have been able to stick with all of the habits and that led you to stray away from P&M. If not, do not fret, you are still reading this book. Therefore, you are still in this fight. Whether you fell into your addiction to P&M or didn't this past week, I challenge you to give everything you got to make week number two more fruitful than week one. Today is considered your rest, reflect, rebuild day or, for short, 3R Day. First I will explain what 3R day is and how it differs from the first six days of this program.

Today I want you to focus on three things, rest, reflection and rebuilding.

1. Rest

Odds are you are tired mentally, physically and spiritually.

Adapting six new habits into your life can become very exhausting. When you are participating in a program like this, it is effortless to push yourself too hard and eventually, you force yourself to a breaking point and find that you fall back into the same hole as you started. If you need an extra long nap today, take it. Today and at the end of every week, you may choose one of the six habits to not perform on that day. So take advantage of that and allow yourself to settle down and rest after a week of growth.

DAY 7

2. Reflect

Today I want you to reflect on what you did well this last week and what you struggled with. Then ask yourself why. Why did you struggle in certain areas? Why did you strive in others? If you fell into P&M, why did you fall? Was it because you woke up late and that led to you not being able to complete all of the habits which eventually led to you falling? Dive deep into the process of you falling, follow it all the way to the beginning. Record that information. If you did not fall this last week, how? Was it the fact that you were too busy to think about temptation? How did you go an entire week without falling to something you are addicted to? What changed and how can you repeat it? I invite you to spend more time in meditation today and really develop your thoughts around these questions.

3. Rebuild

Week one is done, over with, week two is knocking at the door, after spending time reflecting on how you did last week, create a game plan for week two. You know what you struggled with, now is the time to rebuild yourself in that area and brainstorm ideas on how to improve in that area. Don't only focus on your soft spots though, you should find how you can build upon the areas that you are already very good at. By the end of the night, I need you to have a good idea of how you are going to make week two better than week one.

Good work this week! Tomorrow is the start of week two, make sure you are mentally, physically and spiritually ready.

You can do this.

DAY 7

Journal 7

Answer the questions presented under part 2. Reflection.

DAY 8

Shine a light

Recently I went to play a round of golf with a few seniors in high school, and as we were searching for our golf balls in the left rough, one of the seniors asked me what I was doing with my life and so I began to talk about The Strong 30 and what I aim to do with it. He explained his past struggles with P&M for a brief moment then told me that he doesn't remember when the last time he fell into P&M was. Very impressed with this statement I wanted to know more, starting with what he did to overcome this struggle in his life. His answer was very short and reminded me of the importance of today's topic. He said he finally got enough courage to tell his mother and he has not fallen since. This is a beautiful reminder of how important it is to bring sins like P&M into the light. I have not been able to wrap my mind around exactly why it helps so much to tell the people you love about something you are struggling with, but when I explained my addiction to my parents, it was an absolute game changer. They were so understanding, loving, and helpful, all three of these I did not expect from my parents on this particular topic. The benefits of telling them didn't stop there, from then on, it was just more natural for me to say no to porn. I'm not sure what it is, but this is why we need to open up to the loved ones in our life about this problem, they love you and want what is right for you so they will fight to remove P&M from your life.

I understand that this is very intimidating and you might not even know how to start this conversation with your parents or loved ones so, in the effort to give you an idea, I will tell you how I approached this conversation.

DAY 8

I had been struggling with P&M for years, and I was just then starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel, I was trying different habits, training myself, increasing prayer, all of this was slowly working. I was constantly researching the best way to get out of P&M, and one thing that kept coming up was to get help from your loved ones, especially your parents if you live with them. I kept putting that step off because I was too scared, I figured they wouldn't talk to me, or they would take everything away from me. (Side note, this is the same fear the senior in high school had before he told his mother, he said her response was "I've been waiting for you to bring this up.") One night, I was sitting in the adoration chapel, and I felt this push to tell my parents that night, so I prayed for strength and drove home on a mission. I pulled onto the right side of the driveway, made my way inside our house and walked into my parents' room, it was around nine o'clock, and my parents are in their sixties, so they were both reading in bed. I started some small talk, which had lead to more small talk and more and more and more... then I found myself walking out of their room without bringing up the one thing I was supposed to bring up...

Attempt number one failed.

About a week later I was in the same adoration chapel and felt the same push to tell my parents.

DAY 8

This time after the small talk I explained to them how rampage porn is in my generation, (remember, they are in their sixties and didn't know I could watch porn from the iPod they gave me in six grade), then I told them that I had been addicted since sixth grade. That was it, I finally gained some humility and said to them that I need some support to rid porn from my life. They were both very understanding, and they even said sorry for not knowing earlier. I know that their prayers have been a massive part in my recovery from this addiction.

We tend to convince ourselves that our loved ones are going to judge us if we share our struggles with them, that is just not the case. Don't be afraid.

Journal 8

Have you told your loved ones? If not, what will be the best approach? If you have already told them, in what ways could you ask them to help you remove P&M from your life?

DAY 9

Repetition and the subconscious mind

The last couple years I have explored a lot of radical ideas, habits, practices people have found to improve their lives. This research ranges from the best workout regimen to breathing exercises to improve my mental focus. I have seen that if you are struggling with anything in life, with enough time searching on the internet, you can find hundreds of books, vlogs, or blogs describing how to improve upon that specific area in your life. I have also learned that there is never one answer for everyone, in other words, there is more than one way to skin a cat. With this in mind, I believe that it is essential to search for what works best for you continually. Out of all of the habits you have been practicing in the last eight days, the self-affirmations are the most “out there,” they might seem a little weird if you don’t understand how they could possibly help you in so many aspects of your life. This style of affirmations that I have laid out for you have been very beneficial in my own life when I can consistently stick with them. So, why and how do they work? Here is a fundamental way to explain it.

Two parts of your mind are the conscious and subconscious.

The conscious mind includes such things as sensations, fantasies, anything that you are currently aware of. Now the subconscious... the subconscious mind is where it all goes down! The subconscious mind is the powerhouse of your brain, it has the power to influence your mental and physical health without you even realizing it. The subconscious is almost entirely in control of the decisions you make throughout the day.

DAY 9

This is where your instinctive behaviors and routines occur without you being consciously aware of them. Your habits reside within your subconscious mind, and the only way to change a mental habit is replacement by repetition. Hence saying “I am pure” one hundred and ten times. It is so easy to convince yourself that you are lustful due to past experiences, these are all beliefs your unconscious holds and your actions have reflected this. This is why it is so important to flip the script and continually remind yourself that you are pure, that the Author of life created you in His likeness, to be pure, holy, and powerful.

So today, as you repeat the truth that you are pure to yourself, remember that each time you say “I am pure” your subconscious will hold this truth and your actions will start to reflect this more and more.

Journal 9

Reflect on things you're proud of that you have done in your life, now think about who you are as a person, what about yourself are you proud of? Write these thoughts down, it is important to remind yourself that you have done good and are capable of so much!

DAY 10

The Bounce Back

When I played basketball in high school, my coach preached a lot on bouncing back, whether that be on the offensive side of the court or the defensive side, every time we made a bad play we needed to bounce back as quickly as possible. For instance,

I was a decent three point shooter, so if I missed a shot, I would get frustrated. My coach always pushed me to bounce back and not let that one bad shot affect my game, well sometimes I didn't bounce back, and I allowed myself stay frustrated, this would lead to me making a mistake on the defensive side out of anger. Did that do any good for the team or me? No, I let one mistake lead to another, and if I continued to let myself be frustrated, then I would eventually allow the entire game become a lousy game full of errors that I never learned from. The key was to bounce back after that first mistake, learn from it and move on without letting my mind dwell on how bad of a mistake it was.

I knew I was going to miss some shots, the nights that I had my best games were the nights I was able to forget about all of the bad shots I took and dwell on the ones I made, that kept me in the right mindset to do what was needed to win the game.

DAY 10

"I fell last night to P&M, so I am already in mortal sin, there is no reason to resist the urge to fall again." How many times have you said this to yourself after you have fallen? I used to tell myself this consistently, I would always convince myself if I just do it one more time, I will get it out of my system and then go to confession. This goes on and on, and by the time I get to confession, I am confessing the same sin done three, four, five times. The devil is very good at convincing you that one more mortal sin won't hurt you, this is just not the truth, every time you fall, you are making it easier to fall the next time. Every yes you say to P&M, the next yes is going to be easier. On the flip side, every no you say to P&M, the next no will be more natural. We cannot allow ourselves to fall into a pit of despair everytime we fall to P&M, this will only hurt us, we should be sorry for our sins, but guilt and sorrow are not the same things. When we are overloaded with guilt, we convince ourselves that the position we are in is worse than it actually is. I have found that it is effortless to stop praying after you have fallen into P&M, just like it was easy for me to not try on defense because I was dwelling on that missed three-pointer. This is where we really lose the fight when we give up. We need to turn this time of guilt and self-loathing into a time of growth. There will be times that we trip up and stumble, we cannot allow ourselves to fall and stay in a mental funk. Let's bounce back right after the fall and not let one mistake lead to another. There is not much more I can say on this subject... If you fall pick, yourself right back up with no hesitation, and continue to complete the habits and task you are presented with that day.

DAY 10

Journal 10

Do you beat yourself up when you fall? What are some ways you can pick yourself up rather than beat yourself up over something that is in the past?

DAY 11

Guilt, Shame, Desolation.

The reality is some days, weeks, or even months, you will have desolation. (moments in your life that you do not feel God) These are times not to lose hope, these are times to stay strong, stay level-headed. During these times you need to put your head down and work, you'll find that continuing to strive will be challenging. There may be a time in your life when you feel shame about what you have done, and you will feel like so little of a person that you begin to believe that there is no turning back, there is no hope for you to become a better person. When these thoughts come into your head, it is a struggle to let them go, to recognize that these are from the evil one and not the Creature. I'm not going to lie to you, it is hard. Somedays you feel as though you have not and cannot do anything right, you most likely know exactly how the pain I am describing feels. As I write today's journal, I am currently in the most desolate place of my life, I feel like such a hypocrite as I write these words because I know how much I struggle and I know how much wrong I have done, and how much wrong I continue to do. To consider myself a good man is something beyond what I can comprehend right now. This is the evil one at work in my heart. The devil is real, he is alive, and he is beating the shit out of me right now.

In these times, when the battle is an uphill one, I have to continue to remind myself that the devil is not in between God and me, the evil one is below me, he only has as much power as I give him. God allows me to fight through these times of desolation so that I will become stronger and closer to Him.

DAY 11

If I were always on a “Jesus high,” I would not grow, I would not become stronger. When we begin to struggle, we begin the process of growth. One of my favorite artists has a song about struggling through the darkness, one of the lines in the song goes like this, “you can’t rush your healing... darkness has it’s healing”. As much as we wish we could just skip over the tough parts of life, we can’t, if we did, we would not have a chance to become better warriors for good. So, when the wind is in your face during the uphill walk, and every step you take seems to take you further away from the top, remember, you are just on a switchback, and you may not notice, but you are moving forward.

Journal 11

Imagine you are having a tough day, maybe you just fell... What would you want yourself to hear in this time of distress? Write it down.

DAY 12

Meditation

You only have a few days of week two left! What is your game plan to finish strong?

Today you will be reading about a couple of meditation methods and tips that could really step your meditation game up and make your time of silence even more productive. You have been practicing a type of very basic meditation which is useful, but maybe it hasn't worked for everyone, or perhaps it has worked well for you, but you are getting bored of it, in that case, it is good to switch it up and continue to learn new techniques and methods.

Okay, the first couple of methods are going to be focusing on your breath because the best way to start a meditation is to begin by recognizing the movement of your breath as it goes in and out, in and out. This first method is going to involve more breath control, it is known as the 4-7-8 technique. This is how you will want to execute this practice.

You want to start your meditation off just like you've been doing for eleven days. Once you are relaxed and focused on your breath, you will begin the 4-7-8 breathing technique by letting out all of the air in your lungs, then inhale while counting to four. After that, you will hold your breath for seven seconds and then exhale for eight seconds. You will repeat that three or four times then return to regular breathing.

So it goes like this...

Inhale - 4 seconds

Hold - 7 seconds

Exhale - 8 seconds

Repeat...

DAY 12

Your muscles will naturally begin to tense up when this happens just bring them back to a relaxed position. This will be a little bit challenging at the beginning, but you will improve in time. It is good to have something you are continually trying to improve upon during your meditation so that you do not get bored.

This second method is one that I am in love with. If it were a woman, I'd be married right now. Real talk, I have not had a cold, runny nose, cough or any kind of sickness in a year and I credit that to cold showers and this breathing method. Enough said this is how you do it. Start by laying down with your heart raised a little higher than your feet, I usually lay on a couch with a pillow holding my upper back and head up. Then you will take thirty deep breathes keeping a consistent rhythm. Focus on your stomach expanding on the inhale and returning to normal on the exhale. If done correctly, you may feel tingling, I usually feel it in my cheeks, this is because your body is not used to having that much oxygen, but oxygen will not hurt you so don't worry. You may also feel lightheaded, that is fine! Again, oxygen will not hurt you. Once you take thirty breathes, release all of the oxygen and hold your breath for as long as you can. Then repeat two or three times. Make sure you are doing this in a safe place, I have never gotten close to passing out but I have heard stories of people doing this in water and then passing out, not good, don't do that! Do this on your couch and not near water or in a car...

- 1 - Lay down
- 2 - Thirty deep breathes
- 3 - Release oxygen
- 4 - Hold for as long as you can
- 5 - Repeat

DAY 12

Side note, this has increased my ability to hold my breath dramatically! My personal record is three minutes and thirty-two seconds. Before I started this exercise, I could hold my breath for maybe one minute if it was a good day.

Tips.

- Have a goal to strive after during each meditation.
- Meditation after prayer and push-ups makes staying awake much easier.
- Every time your mind drifts bring it back by focusing on your breath.
- Schedule a time for meditation right before your prayer.
- Always turn your phone off.

I have written down some methods and tips that I have found to work for me and I believe they are going to be great starting blocks for you, BUT you are the one meditating, so take these tips and methods and make them your own!

Journal 12

What is the hardest part of meditation for you? How can you change this up to make this part of your day more productive? Create a plan to improve your meditation for the last two days of this week, then write it down.

DAY 13

Humility

Frustration and guilt are easy to come by after falling to P&M over and over again, these feelings can build up inside and make a reasonable person believe that they are not worthy or deserving of love or happiness, leading to depression and irrational choices. Frustration comes when you think you shouldn't be struggling with sin anymore, but it still makes its way into your life. This is not healthy. Yes it is good to have the mindset that you are better than P&M, and you don't need it in your life, but remember...

"I'm God, you're not" -God.

We are not God, we are not perfect, we fall. God allows us to fall on our faces for reasons unseen, yes this is hard to accept, some days it seems as though we are going nowhere but down.

We are blinded by the sin we are stuck in, and we can't see that God is slowly but surely pulling us back to him.

This is where humility comes in, we must accept ourselves as we are, to learn what God created, what we really are and not what we want to be. We are worthy and deserving of love because God created us to be, that is not pride but humility, to accept that even with our addiction, we are still God's children, so let's continue to work toward the potential He knows we can get to.

Setting a goal to never fall to P&M again is something that is going to take some work to achieve, and it may take a while to complete.

DAY 13

When you set such a high goal, expecting to hit that goal on the first try is not realistic, humility is the thing that keeps you going, keeps you pushing toward your goal even if you fall over and over again. When you feel like giving up, remind yourself that this is who you are, you fall and stumble but you are God's creation that is worthy of love and happiness, and then continue to move forward.

Journal 13

List all of the gifts God gave you, then list all of the things about yourself you are not proud of. How can you learn to love the things you are not proud of the same as the gifts you are proud of?

DAY 14

Don't push the snowball!

I am on top of a steep a hill, snow covers the ground for as far as I can see. While on top of the of this white coated plateau, a thought pops into my mind, I could build a giant snowball for everyone to see on this hill, the snowball could be dangerous if it rolls off the hill but the snow is perfect for packing, and this could be amazing. To start the construction of this snowball I begin forming a small ball in between my waterproof gloves, snow falls in between my feet as I shave off the sides of the ball to make it smoother. The ball is now perfect size for throwing, so I begin to roll it around on the inner part of the plateau. Each push I give this ball of snow the more snow packs onto it. I desire this ball of snow to be huge, so I continue to push and push.

The ball is very heavy now, but I can handle it, "I will stop before it becomes more than I can handle.", I tell myself. Snow is minimal on the inner part of this plateau, so I begin to push the snowball along the sides of the plateau, I recognize the risk of the ball rolling down the side of the hill, but I tell myself, "I will stop before it starts to roll down the hill.". Curiosity leads me to push the ball closer to the edge, I want to see how big I can make this ball. The snowball is now taller than I am and is now on the right side of the slope. I cannot see what is in front of the ball, but I think to myself one more push cannot hurt. With my hands pressed into the snowball I begin to push from the legs (not the back, I could hurt myself doing that!) but my right foot slips, and I fall to my knees, I look up at the massive snowball I created as it slowly begins to tip right, with nothing to stop it before the slope.

DAY 14

I slide onto the side of the hill, still on my knees and frantically attempt to stop the motion of the snowball, but the slope is too steep, and the ball begins to roll. As the ball rolls, it picks up more and more snow, increasing weight and speed. I fall face first turning, sliding, flipping out of control behind the snowball that I created which is now too much for me to handle. I come to a halt at the bottom of the hill, cold, hurting and embarrassed, I look around for the snowball to find that it had knocked my brother to the ground covering him in the snow.

Before you start your journal go back and reread the paragraph above and put yourself in the narrative as the one building the snowball. The small snowball you form is your thoughts, just as you constructed the snowball you also form your thoughts, without you intentionally forming thoughts, you will eventually forget that you had them. Once your snowball(lustful thought) is formed you begin to roll it on the ground collecting more snow(lustful desire and curiosity).

Each push adds interest and excitement to your lustful thought as this dangerous combination continues to grow. The inner and outer part of the plateau represents the setting you are in. As the desire and curiosity grows, you find yourself escaping to a secluded room(edge of the plateau, inches away from the slope). You know what happens. Next, you slip, the snowball begins to roll, and there is no stopping it. You know what it feels like at the bottom of that hill, disgusted, embarrassed, frustrated. In the first person narrative, you see the snowball hit your brother, your brother represents your loved ones.

DAY 14

You may not see it right after you fall to P&M, but that choice does hurt the ones around you. So now reread the short narrative and reflect on how this scene relates to the process that leads to sin.

When was the snowball easiest to stop? Stopping the ball when it was on the slope was near impossible. Even when you started pushing the ball closer to the edge, curiosity was getting the better of you, it would have been difficult to stop at that time also.

So when was the best time to prevent the snowball from rolling down the hill? Before the ball was formed in your hands! When the snow was on the ground! With that said, when is the best time to say no to temptation? The instant a lustful thought enters your mind! Before you begin to pack the snow in your hands let go of the snow, remove the thought from your mind and move on with life. Soon the snow will melt, and that temptation won't be there. Say no when the no is easy.

Journal 14

Reflect on the last time you fell, just as I described the process of letting the snowball roll down the hill, describe what happened before you fell. Where could have you said no to the temptation? Remember this for the next time you are tempted.

DAY 15

Mother's dream

Last week I was having coffee with my mother and she was explaining a very unusual dream she had the previous night.

In the dream she was with one of my best friends and his family in a different country, they were preparing to go wheels up with a destination of Wichita sweet Wichita but they could not leave because my best friend was sick. For the majority of the dream, they were unsure what was wrong with him but he looked very thin and he did not have the capability to walk. She told me she was in and out of sleep during this dream so it was a little tough to remember every part of it but after some time, they found that the reason for his sickness was pornography. He was disabled mentally and spiritually so drastically that it began to seep into his physicality. As she told me more about this dream I couldn't get the vision of my buddy laying on a couch, not able to move, depressed and helpless, out of my head.

That dream reminded me of why I am writing this program, how many of my friends are mentally and spiritually broken due to P&M. How many families have been broken because the father has given up to lust and P&M was the start of his struggles?

Think of how many people around you struggle day to day with this and because of it, they are not living to their full potential. They lack confidence, love, happiness because of P&M.

DAY 15

They deserve a light in this dark world, they deserve a bright flame to help ignite their hearts. Let's find our flame so that we can be that for others.

Journal 15

What can you do to help others? Can you be an accountability partner? Can you share this program with someone? Are you praying for others and their struggles? Brainstorm some ways you can help others and record it in the notebook.

DAY 16

Stay Simple

Something I have noticed over time is we, as a human race, love to over think, over-complicate even the simplest of things. In our religions, we get so caught up in the hypothetical world and dos and don'ts that we overlook the presence of God. We complicate our friendship and our families when that confusion can just be avoided by simple communication. We confuse our school work, our clothes even our sports! Sports in our society are not about having fun and learning valuable life lessons, no, we have twisted that, we now have the mindset that we have to be the best! We have to practice year-round while throwing money away at training camps. We must push our kids until they no longer enjoy the sport that is supposed to be something they look forward to every day, now the kids sit in school dreading the bell cause that means they have to go to practice. Okay okay, I'm sorry for going on that rant. I just want to open your eyes to how complicated our lives are now.

Have you been to a coffee shop lately? Coffee shops in Wichita, KS. are exploding right now, people love the atmosphere of these places, not to mention... COFFEE! I am sitting in a coffee shop right now, and I finally understand why people like the look of coffee shops so damn much. Coffee shops are SIMPLE. Whether we know it or not we are all searching for simplicity in life.

DAY 16

Everything about a coffee shop is comforting and straightforward, the shelves behind the counter, the counter itself, the paint on the walls, the iPad register, the wood bar, the chalkboard with the menu on it. It is easy to do your homework, to write, to have a meeting in a coffee shop because you are not distracted by the complication of the outside world. We desire this simplicity in life.

It won't take long for you to come up with examples of how pornography has complicated your life, from your passions to your relationships, pornography has complicated a lot. And what is the best way to fix complication? It's simple, just simplify.

What can you simplify in your life that will clear your head? Clearing your head will result in well-developed thoughts that lead to objectively good actions. Think about the last time you fell, right before you fell, the only thing you could think about was P&M, you could not get it off your mind, you came to the conclusion that you had to do it to be happy. Your brain was cloudy, and you could only see the immediate future, nothing past. So you fell, and that felt awful, you were not happy, rather the opposite. You wish so badly that you could get that last twenty minutes back and swear you would not have done it if you knew you were going to feel this bad. The thing is, you knew you were going to feel terrible about what you have done so why can't you stop before you do it?

DAY 16

This is because your mind is cluttered and confused, you are not naturally capable of comprehending the future in a partial and fallible way anymore, at that moment it is so lost in the thought of P&M that nothing else matters.

This brings me to the main point of the day. We must find ways to simplify our lives physically mentally and spiritually. What I mean by that is we have accumulated a lot of “extra” in our life, whether that be good or bad it is too much. Do you really need ten different shirts? Or ten pairs of pants? What about the latest iPhone? Is that necessary? Let’s work on simplifying the objects in our life, example, I had an iPhone, now I have a flip phone and have noticed a huge change! I now have one less distraction in my life and surprisingly less stress. Mentally we stress ourselves out, we overwhelm ourselves with so many tasks, let’s work on one job at a time. Spiritually we complicate our relationship with God, we say prayers but do we really pray them? Let’s slow down and listen to Him.

Journal 16

Recently I sold my two thousand seventeen Chevy Colorado for a nineteen ninety-two ford ranger, and upgraded my iPhone to a flip phone, these are just a few examples in my life. Write down some ways you can simplify your life in efforts to clear your mind for more optimal use.

DAY 17

Clear Vision

You would think I am trying to always go back to my “glory days” as often as I talk about my high school basketball career, but I swear I am not living in my past! With that said, here I go again... The more I reflect on my time playing basketball, the more I realize the life lessons God was teaching me then, one of the lessons was having a clear vision in life. Recently I have been unsure of what I am to do in this life, I feel lost. That is a feeling that I did not have in high school, I always felt like I was moving towards a goal, working for something. Why would I, just now start to feel lost and unsure about the decisions I make in life when I used to be “happy go lucky” and didn’t have a care in the world. The answer, clear vision.

Yes, most would say that everyone is “happy go lucky” in high school because they have no “real” problems to worry about like a full-time job, or raising a family and such. Yes, I have to agree with that aspect of it, but I want to bring it back to my own life.

The reason I never second guessed myself in high school was I had a clear vision of what I wanted in life, which was to win the state championship in basketball. Every step I took was towards that goal whether that be going to the gym or running line drills, I had a clear vision of where I wanted to go and how to get there. The difference now is I am not sure what my goal is, and therefore I am unsure of each step I take. The only thing I know for sure is that I am called to be a saint, so I pray that every step I take is leading me to that end goal.

DAY 17

Without a clear vision, we live lives of aimlessness and ultimate meaninglessness. Just as I explained above, my one call in this life is to become a saint. Clearly, I have lost my clear vision of this goal if I watch pornography, pornography is spiritual suicide, why would I watch porn when I have a clear vision of my path to sainthood.

We fall to P&M because we have lost our vision, and without a clear vision of where God wants us to be, we lose our way.

Journal 17

What kind of person does God want you to be in a month? How are you going to get there? Reflect on what life will be like when you are where God wants you to be. Feels good right?.

DAY 18

One Day at a time

Yesterday I asked you to reflect on what life would be like when you are where God wants you to be. Surprise! You are where God wants you to be, but He loves you too much to want you to stay there. He wants you to keep taking steps forward.

By writing this program I am not asking you never watch pornography ever again, I am only asking you not to watch porn today, that's it. We make this problem we have so much larger than it actually is! If we would just change our perception, we would come to find that we have the God-given power to overcome this addiction to P&M.

When I started to honestly put effort into getting my mind clear of lust and myself away from P&M, I found myself falling into disbelief when I reflected on how hard it will be to go a week without porn or even a couple days. You probably have felt this same lonely, heart-tugging feeling. This feeling made it difficult to truly believe that I could end this addiction in my life. It wasn't until I began to take practical steps (like the six habits you have been executing like a champ for the last eighteen days) that I really started to feel confident that this addiction was only a stage in my life and I will get over it. Before then, I always just figured that I would stop P&M suddenly one day and I would not struggle after that. In eighth grade, I told myself I would stop once I am in high school. When I was still addicted in high school, I told myself when I am a senior I will stop because then I would be an adult and adults don't struggle with P&M. After I graduated and still was addicted, I decided something needs to change.

DAY 18

Today's journal, like most of the journals in this program, is not only written to help you out of your addiction to lust but I want you to take this advice and implement it into every aspect of your life so that you may become a well rounded, bad-ass follower of Jesus Christ.

So, how do we take one day at a time?

We start by changing our mindset, we have to start living like we don't have tomorrow. ALL WE HAVE IS RIGHT NOW. If capital letters are hard for you to read let me repeat myself. all we have is right now. We don't know for sure what will happen tomorrow, or even in the next couple of hours for that matter! All we can control is our actions right now. When we are knee deep in temptation, a common excuse is, "I will do better tomorrow," what if you don't have tomorrow? Then you spent your last day on earth committing a mortal sin, being selfish.

Wow, that got dark real quick... I apologize for that, but I am not erasing it.

All you have is right now. Flip that script when you are in temptation, "I will be better today." The secret to getting out of this addiction to P&M is saying no right now, don't worry about tomorrow. You only have right now.

Yeah, I admit that implementing six new habits in your life for thirty days can seem harsh if you look at it the wrong way. It becomes a whole lot easier when you focus on a day at a time. Just think, six habits within twenty-four hours. Still seems to hard?

DAY 18

All you have to do it one habit, right now. Bring yourself entirely at the moment and focus only on the task at hand, that is when you realize that all God is calling you to do is what is right in front of you. This is when life becomes a whole lot of fun.

Journal 18

What is God calling you to do right now? Write it down and then perform that task. Don't worry about what's going to happen after, practice being completely in the moment. Repeat this throughout your day.

DAY 19

Fueling the Flame

For years I had no idea what an accountability partner was, this was my own problem to fix, and I was too damn afraid to tell anyone about my struggles with lust. I was dead set that I would be able to figure this out on my own without help from anyone besides God. Time went on, and I was continually told that I needed to reach out to someone about this problem, and after years of “trying to stop on my own,” I reached out to my best friend at the time. It turns out we were struggling with the same thing, P&M. I thought the person I told was bound to judge me, but he knew what I was going through because he also was struggling through a life chained up by P&M. We both knew we needed to rid this sin out of our lives, but the question was how.

We both felt right about this new thing we had going, we communicated about P&M regularly, we talked about when the last time we fell was, how much we hated the feeling after we fell, how much we wish we could trade this addiction off for another addiction. We were doing everything that people told us to do, we started the conversation about P&M... We were being “accountability partners.” Well, we continued to fall and fall and fall, all through our years in high school. The reality is we did not know how to be effective accountability partners. Our only plan was to tell each other when we fell; eventually, we stepped our game up, and we set up some consequences if he or I fell. An example would be, if he fell, I would have to do thirty minutes of adoration on a Friday night(which is hard in high school). Another example would be, if one of us fell, we would have to fast for the next twelve hours.

DAY 19

The problem with that kind of accountability is, it is all REACTIVE. We were taking action after the fact. It's comparable to me walking into a fight that I know I'll lose, losing and then running to my buddy and telling him that I lost the fight... The only thing he can do for me then is stop the bleeding and give me some ice. The key to being an effective accountability partner is being PROACTIVE. If I ask my buddy for help before the fight begins, it is a whole new story. If I am asking him how he is feeling before temptation, then I already know if he is feeling weak and if that is the case I need to do my part not to allow him to fall.

This is where fueling the flame comes into play. The fuel is relatable to wood that you put in a fire to make sure it stays aflame. The logs are actions that can range from a plethora of habits and or goals. Developing the habits or striving to reach your goals will keep you disciplined and self-aware. The Strong 30 has set up a good base for you to start from, the six habits that you have been executing is your fuel, the fuel is helping you develop discipline and self-awareness. You may have already noticed that the days you don't perform the habits are also the days you fall to P&M. This is common and why it's essential to have a solid stack of fuel that will keep you away from temptation. Now, it is vital that we are well-rounded people, so our fuel needs to consist of all four pillars.

The four posts being, Mental, Physical, Spiritual, and Intellectual. It is important that the fuel you use for your flame is practical, giving yourself a clear vision of how you will fuel your flame consistently..

DAY 19

Here is an excellent example of fueling your flame, hitting all four pillars.

My Fueling System

1. Mental

I will work on improving my relationship with my friends
This will be done by intentional visits to their colleges and intentional conversations

I will find friends who are willing to hear and understand
This will be done by focusing on my ability to hear and understand through eye contact and investing in conversations

2. Physical

I will work out no less than 3 days a week
This will be done by finding a workout plan I love
I will slowly transition to a vegan lifestyle
This will be done by eating more by myself and not going out to eat so often

3. Spiritual

I will learn to calm my mind in adoration
This will be done by sticking to a scheduled time of adoration
I will give more of my time
This will be done through the Lord's Diner (this is a kitchen for the less fortunate)

DAY 19

4. Intellectual

I will continue my study of theology
This will be done by reading a chapter from Practical
Theology everyday

I will develop my skills in film-making
This will be done by posting a video daily

This is a well developed Fueling System, It has the habits and goals, and then it has practical steps and actions that I can take to ensure I am performing these habits and striving for my goals.

Now, an accountability partner without a Fueling System doesn't work, nor does a Fueling System without an accountability partner. So, if you don't have an accountability partner, start the conversation, but don't stop there as I did, be proactive, and continue with the following steps! If you have an accountability partner already, great, both of you need to write your own Fueling System and then share them with each other, maybe even print each other's out, so both of you have a copy. Every day you will check up on your accountability partner and ask them how they are doing, this is changing the conversation from reactive to proactive. If your AC (accountability partner... duh) has been struggling, it is a tell-tale sign that they are vulnerable to temptation and they need extra prayers, regular phone calls, they may require you to get to their house and distract them for a while! The Fueling System is a great way to keep each other accountable before the fall, not after.

DAY 19

Journal 19

There is no time like the present, today will be the day that you reach out to a friend and ask them about becoming accountability partners, or if you already have one, you will explain the Fuelling System to them and begin implementing it now.

DAY 20

Know yourself, know God.

Have you ever introduce yourself to yourself? I want you to reflect on that for the rest of the day, what does it mean to introduce yourself to yourself?

What would your answer be if someone were to ask who you are? Write it down.

Now I want you to write down your strengths, any kind of strengths you may have.

Following that, write down your weaknesses, anything that you struggle with.

The importance of knowing yourself is something that is, to be honest, something that you really don't think about. At least I never thought it was something I would ever struggle with... Because in all reality... You are you, and you know you right? How could you ever struggle with knowing yourself!? That sounds impossible!! You've spent your entire life with yourself! Well, it turns out that there is a lot to you that you don't know, self-discovery is a beautiful thing. It also turns out that God made us in His likeness. We personally don't have a book that explains who we are, but God does. If we are made in His goodness and likeness, then the more we learn about Him, the more we know about ourselves. This seems like a simple concept, but this has taken me a really long time to grasp. The more scripture we read, the more we come to understand ourselves, the more spiritual reading in general, the more we can learn about who we are and why we are.

DAY 20

I don't want you to say no to porn just because someone else told you-you should. It is hard to follow the rules when you don't understand the meaning behind them. The fact that you have gone this far in this program means that you know that P&M is not in your best interest, that is a good start. I want you to continue to learn about the personal disadvantages to your addiction/vice/whatever you may be struggling with, and build up such a great argument against it that when you are tempted, you understand the cons outweigh the pros.

I don't have a lot written down today because I want you to do most of the writing. Today is about you, take some time to reflect on these questions about yourself, then write them down.

Journal 20

What are your goals in life?

Why are these your goals?

If one dream of yours could come true tomorrow, what will it be?

Why would you want that specific dream to come true?

DAY 21

Pray for them

We can filter our phone, internet, laptop, desktop, tv, language, but we cannot filter the world. God created beautiful people on this earth, some choose to respect that beauty by looking very good without revealing, and some people just don't understand the struggle they put us through by wearing yoga pants, tight shirts, cut-offs, or even deep Vs.

Prayer

Prayer is the answer to this situation. By lusting over that person, we take their body for our own, without asking, we destroy their dignity within our mind. We steal what God gave to them. This behavior is feeding our take take take mentality that carries over all too well to our struggles with P&M. In the realization that this sin we struggle with, is based off our own selfishness, we find that the more we push ourselves to give, instead of taking, the more we see that we are made to share. We no longer find desire in pleasing only ourselves through lust, because we understand that happiness comes from giving, not taking.

Happiness is amplified when shared.

When the time comes, and you are tempted to lust over someone the right move is to pray for that person. It can be any kind of prayer you want, I would recommend you come up with the words yourself because then you really dive into a giving spirit instead of murmuring a repetitive prayer.

DAY 21

Here is my layout for this kind of prayer.

I give props to God for creating such a beautiful creature
I ask God that He grant her self-confidence
Then I give Him my desire to lust over her by saying just that.
“I give you my lustful desire, take it from me.”

Journal 21

Take this time to write a short prayer that you can say every
time you are tempted to stare too long.

DAY 22

Uniquely You

When you are ultimately and unapologetically you, you are a danger to the mediocrity in this world.

Think about that for a bit...

Okay if you actually took the time to think about that statement, your heart is probably racing, your mind is filled with ideas, you might even have a new sense of energy. At least that is what happens to me when I think about the reality of that statement.

Think about people you admire, I have one guy in particular that I am thinking about. He is a very successful Youtube vlogger, photographer, and all around awesome dude. People from all parts of the world are drawn to watch his videos, purchase his pictures, buy his merchandise. Most importantly, they listen to what he has to say because he doesn't conform to the norm, he doesn't do what others do, he knows who he is, and he acts on the desires that God has given him without anything else slowing him down. He is not afraid of what others think of him and he understands what he does may be different, but that is why he is able to make a change in this world.

It is common to look at the people you admire and think, well I am not as funny as her, or as good looking as him, or as smart as they are, and then we make excuses for ourselves. Here is the hope in this, you don't have to be as intelligent, good looking, funny or whatever it is you wish you were...

DAY 22

You just have to be you! It is a fantastic feeling when you realize it is not about changing who you are, it's about becoming completely and unapologetically you.

God has created you to be a saint, a radically bold saint. No one else can be you, and you can't be like anyone else so why would you even try? You can do anything better than anyone else because you can put your twist into it! Sure, I am not the best writer, nor do I come across as a well-studied individual, these are subjective facts that do not hold me down because I know as long as I am who God created me to be, whatever I do will reflect God. That is all I need in life.

Journal 22

Who are you and who are you made to be?

DAY 23

Tracks in your brain

When I begin to implement a new habit into my life, I will only get so far if I do not have the *proper* amount of knowledge to *back the practice* up. This makes sense because why would *someone* ever do *something* if *they* didn't know what the outcome was going to be, or at least had an idea of what the result would be. I think you have an idea of what will happen if you continue on with TS30, you would have a sense of confidence that you completed thirty days of self-denial and self-growth. You may have some brand new habits that will stick with you for life, BCS you will have the knowledge and self-discipline needed to forget about lust for the rest of your life. There is a reason you are reading this book right now, it's because you believe things can change, you believe you don't have to have the habit of watching porn, it's just hard to keep that belief when you are unsure if the process you are using works.

My father was the first one to introduce me to this disciplined type of lifestyle, everyone that knows him well is impressed with his daily habits of constant self-denial, sometimes I think he is a robot. I would always get frustrated as I strived to live a disciplined lifestyle like my father, but I would continually fall short (and still do). I wanted to know why discipline comes so easy to him! He wakes up without a struggle, heads to the gym without questioning whether or not he feels like going, before leaving the gym he snags a free tiny cup of terrible black coffee instead of paying for a fancy drink elsewhere.

DAY 23

At the age of sixty-five, he stays at the job he has had for twenty plus years with enough vacation time saved up to take off for five years and then retire at the ripe age of seventy. When he arrives home from work, into his room for a fifteen-minute nap, then a snack, (which usually is his third apple of the day) out the door and over to the neighbors. My father has built up a reputation of landscaper, painter, mower, sewer cleaner, any outside help you need kinda guy, so most of his time spent off, is working on the *neighborhood*. *All I am saying* is his life is discipline, it is in every part of his life, and I wanted to know how I can get to that level! For me to really understand how discipline came so easy to my father I needed someone to paint a mental picture.

Imagine you are looking down at a beach, nothing on it, no water, no buildings, no people, just sand, this sand that you are imagining represents your brain. Now imagine a dirt bike riding through that sand, the dirt bike is going straight but it's kinda struggling through the sand, that dirt bike is a habit, picture what kind of trail it leaves behind. Eventually, that dirt bike is out of sight. Again, the bike makes its way through the sand, the bike is on the same path as it was before, so this time the bike didn't struggle as much because the trail was smoothed out a little from last time. The motorcycle goes again and again, and each time it gets a little bit easier and more accessible, the path gets smoother, wider, more accessible to go through. That is what happens when you start a new habit, it might seem unnatural, a little bit off at first, but the more you do it, the easier it gets. That is why my dad can make himself get up at three a.m. every morning to take a walk around the house to make sure everyone is safe and secure.

DAY 23

It is also the same reason we have such a tough time trying to stop watching porn, we have been going down the same road of lust for so long now that the road is smooth, steep, and easy.

The Strong 30's goal is to get some new paths of discipline imprinted on your brain so that the trail of lust may become abandoned and overgrown.

The more times you choose self-denial, discipline, delayed gratification, the easier it is to say yes to these good traits, the more paved the road is. My dad has been practicing self-discipline for a more significant part of his life now, and that is why it comes so easy to him, the roads are paved, smooth and steep. It is easy for him to say yes to discipline.

The more we say yes to porn, the easier it becomes to say yes, BUT the more times we say no to porn, the less smooth that road is and the easier it is to say no. That is how self-discipline can lead us out of a life of P&M.

Journal 23

Think about what habits in your life have a paved road, then write down the habits you want to have a smooth road in your mind. Follow that up with a game plan of how you are going to execute those habits.

DAY 24

Live your life

Here I am, laying down with my head crunched to the side in my buddies vehicle. If this were any standard SUV I would have plenty of room back here but my best guess is this is a hybrid of some sort, made to seat seven but we have ten piled in, and I was the one to get the trunk. It is two a.m., and we are leaving the bar that my truck is parked at. I only know two guys in this vehicle, and they are preoccupied with their college friends, this is the last place I want to be. I am not drunk, but I do have alcohol in my system, so driving is not a smart move. I feel invisible, it was weird, I usually am loud and outgoing enough never to feel this way, but at this moment I feel out of place. I was confident that no one was going to start a conversation with me, so I got lost in my own mind which has been a fairly unsafe place for me to go alone these last couple of months, I dive in regardless. I begin to reflect on the previous couple of weeks and the various destructive positions I have found myself in, most have been side by side with *drinking* and drugs. Too many times lately I have noticed myself hanging out with people I don't want to be with, in a place I'd rather not be, drinking something I shouldn't be drinking. I have felt as though I have no control over where I am going and what I am doing. (Yes, that is true because God only knows where I am going, but when it comes to drinking or not drinking, I should be able to say no) I continually do things I don't want to do, but I can't stop myself for some reason! I have goals, but my actions are not even pointing me in the correct direction, it's like I am unable to live my own life.

DAY 24

This may sound very familiar to you, maybe in your mind, you are switching drinking with video games or Netflix. Regardless,

I bet you know what I am talking about as I describe those weeks of my life. I honestly felt like I was floating outside of my own body, knowing what was the right thing to do, but I would watch myself do the wrong, it was horrifying.

Life can get away from you if you don't watch out. When I find this happening to myself, I have to slow down and make sure that I am being intentional about every action I take.

A great way to be intentional about what you do in a day is to schedule your days out, everything you plan to do that day, everything you need to do that day, everything you want to do that day. Make sure it's all there and then comes the hard part.

For you to be productive and get everything you need to be done in a day, you need to learn to say no to people and yourself. Even though you may want to hang out with your friends, sometimes you have to be selfish with your time and do what needs to be done to get your head on straight, so you can really make a difference in others lives.

Journal 24

What are situations and or people you need to gently say no to, so that you can be more productive?

DAY 25

We are built to chase

Humans desire to have something to strive for, something to chase after. This is why we don't feel fulfilled when we sit around all day and do nothing productive in our life. This is also why we are drawn to work. When we work, we are fulfilling a desire, we are working for a goal, and that gets us excited and feeling good.

It is when we don't have a goal, that is when we struggle, we get inside our own heads, and everything goes to s***.

In our own desperate actions to remove porn from our life, we try to suppress our lust, we run away from it. We have no goal in mind, we are not chasing anything, we are just running. This can and has worked for me... for a bit... but after a while I subconsciously got bored... I was running but had nowhere to go, nothing to chase... so I fell back into porn.

This is where the relationship comes into play, instead of running from porn, lust, masturbation, we run towards Christ, we work for a relationship with Him, we chase heaven. This is something worth working for. We will never be bored in pursuing a relationship with Christ because each step will get better and better. When we set our mind on Christ, somewhere along this journey, we will stop watching porn because it is so far behind us that it doesn't even cross our mind. The best part about chasing a relationship with Christ is, once we get there, once we catch up with Him, we will not desire anything but Him ever again.

DAY 25

Journal 25

What are ways you can actively run with and after Christ.
How will implementing habits into your daily life help?

DAY 26

Out of your comfort zone

This program, from the beginning, was written to help myself and others out of porn. It has grown to be so much more than that. I have learned so much from writing this, and the central and most important part that I have learned is that it is not all about getting out of porn. Our lives consist of zones, our family zone, our friendships zone, our school zone, our faith zone, our work zone, possibly even the friend zone. You can summarize these into two zones, our comfort zone and our not so comfort zone.

We are content and comfortable in our comfort zone, that is why we stay in this zone, why would we leave? We begin to form our own beliefs about the zone we are uncomfortable with, and eventually, we grow a fear for the unknown, so we never leave the comfort zone.

The problem being, life starts outside of our comfort zone.

At the last job I had, my boss invested in me, he wanted to help me develop to my fullest potential. He would consistently push me outside of my comfort zone, even though I pushed back trying desperately to stay within what I know and understand, he would drive me into the unknown.

At that time in my life, I was deathly afraid of public speaking. I hated speaking in front of a group with a passion, and that is why my heart dropped when the boss announced that I will be doing presentations from now on. He told me to start studying right away.

DAY 26

A month goes by, and I find my nineteen-year-old self in the middle of our office shaking with my notes in hand.

I tell my boss I cannot do this, he laughs and says the same words that run through my head each time I get nervous or don't want to do something because of the fear of failure. He said,

"Patrick, life begins outside your comfort zone."

So I did the presentation, well, "did" is a strong word. I tripped, stumbled, fell, through the presentation, it was awful, one of the most embarrassing moments of my life. I look back on it now, and I see it as a whole semester of public speaking class, in one day. I just probably learn a lot more than I would have at school.

Here is the kicker, I now want to travel, speaking to large crowds daily as a Christian speaker. Life begins outside your comfort zone, go do something crazy for God.

Journal 26

Is your comfort zone holding you back? The answer is yes. Make a plan to do something you are not too comfortable with today, and then do it!

DAY 27

Discipline is freedom

If you have struggled through these twenty-seven days viewing these habits as tasks you have to do throughout your day and never actually wanted to do any of them, I want you to take a new look at discipline as you move forward. I do not expect you to take cold showers if you don't know the benefit or the goal you are striving for in taking cold showers. I don't think anyone would wake up early if they didn't have a reason behind it. I would not have stopped watching porn if I didn't know how fantastic life without it was. As we move forward in life, we need to be intentional in everything we do. I take cold showers because it has stopped me from getting sick, I keep a good diet because I don't want to have a beer belly when I am forty. I WANT to maintain a disciplined lifestyle because I am free when I am disciplined. The critical word here is "WANT" I want to make these habits because I know the outcome if I am disciplined. These habits are no longer tasks that I HAVE to check off every day. These habits are things I WANT to do every day because I know they keep me disciplined and therefore free. This is the mindset I want you to have, if you truly know and understand that keeping daily habits will improve your day to day life, then it becomes easy to perform them.

Today I want you to write down your goals for the next month, you have, after today, two more days of The Strong 30, but improvement does not stop there.

DAY 27

Think about things you want to work on in the next month, whether that be getting better in prayer, or school or work or whatever in life. Then, reflect on habits that you can do each day that will help you get to that goal. These habits could be the six habits I have introduced to you over the last twenty-seven days, but they do not have to be! For the next two days of The Strong 30, you get to pick the habits you wish to perform. If you have no idea what kinda habits you want to try, that can be fixed by Google, search anything regarding habits, and you will have more than enough to read up on, or you can hit up my Youtube channel! I have plenty of videos regarding habits.

I have fallen in love with watching Youtube videos, learning about new, weird, outrageous habits and seeing if I can implement some of them into my life is something I love to do. I will admit, I try a lot of different habits, and some don't stick, some do, that is just how it works. You have to find what works for you, the only thing that I can say will work for you no matter what is that of a disciplined lifestyle.

Journal 27

What is something you want to work on in the next month of your life? What habits are going to help you get to that goal? Before you go to bed, do some research on six habits you want to do for the last two days of The Strong 30.

DAY 28

Motivation

Motivation has always been something that comes and goes very quickly in my life. One week I am excited to work out, eat right, pray for hours, then the next week comes and I all of a sudden don't feel like doing anything but sit on the couch. I have always heard that someone who has motivation will be more successful, they will live longer, and they will be happier.

Well cool.

How do I get motivation? I have been told I need it, but it wasn't until my twenty-first year on this planet that I learned where motivation comes from. To really get a good grasp on how motivation works and where it comes from we have to know what external locus of control and internal locus of control mean.

So, someone who has an external locus of control mindset believes that everything that happens to them is not in his/her control. In any particular task, they think that you are either given the talent to perform that task or your not. Everything is outside of your control.

On the other hand, someone with an internal locus of control mindset believes that they have a say in what happens to them. They think that you have control in what you can do, what task you can perform. All you have to do is work for it.

DAY 28

The reason I am telling you this is because the difference they have found in these two mindsets, or ways of thinking, is that the people with the internal locus of control mindset are more motivated in general. Why is that? What is the difference between these two mindsets?

Choice.

The reason people with an internal locus of control mindset have more motivation is because, motivation is activated by choices. A child is going to be more motivated to do chores if you let them choose which chores they want to do instead of telling them what to do. When you have the opportunity to choose, you develop a sense of ownership and thus become more motivated.

I see this most clearly in my workout schedule. The reason it is easy for me to start a three-month workout program is because I made the choice of which program, which pre-workout I'm going to take, I even make the choice of where I am going to workout. I have a sense of ownership, and therefore I am motivated about working out.

About a week into that program, I lose motivation, why?

Because I am not making any more choices, the workout seems more like something I have to do instead of something I choose to do. This is when it is essential for me to change things up. Maybe I will make a choice to work out at a different time of day, or I'll change up some part of the workout. I have to get that motivation back by making a choice.

DAY 28

Motivation is activated by choice.

Journal 28

What in your life are you losing motivation in? What choices can you make to jump start your motivation back up?

DAY 29

Game Plan time

Today it is time to set up a plan for your life after The Strong 30, you are no longer the same person, you are still exactly where God wants you to be, you are just closer than you were thirty days ago. The problem with programs like this one is that you crush it during the program but once the program ends, you don't know where to go, what to do, and you eventually just drop everything you worked for.

We can't let that happen.

Today I want you to look at the next year of your life. What are your goals for this year? I know it may be a difficult to think that far in the future, but this is a good habit to get into. I have found the more you can reflect on the future and bring yourself to a wider perspective, the more you come to appreciate the present. It seems paradoxical and yet, meditating on the future has given me the knowledge I need to understand the importance and beauty of the present. With that said, take your mind to exactly twelve months from now.

Where do you want to be?

What do want to have accomplished?

Don't limit yourself, these goals can range from physical goals to spiritual goals, even mental goals. Spend some time today reflecting and praying on goals for your life. It is important to understand that you may end up editing these goals down the road so don't feel like you have to have the perfect goals right now.

DAY 29

Yearly goals are amazing, they can also seem very daunting because they seem so far away. It is easy to push them off and eventually forget about them, so that is why the next step in this game plan is essential. We need to break these goals down into monthly, weekly, and daily goals. This helps us figure out what needs to be done today so that we are making steps toward our yearly goals today.

Let's use an example.

Say you want to become a filmmaker, you love creating films and want to become a very good filmmaker by the end of the year. That is your goal, to increase your film-making skills. First things first, if your goal is as broad as "increasing your skills," you need to make your goal more precise. You want more of a tangible goal, more precise and detailed goals are better. So, for this example we will say that your goal is to make X amount of money through film-making by the end of the year. Okay, now you have a defined goal, picture yourself achieving this goal, feels good right, now bring yourself back to the present. Let's break this goal down so you can start your adventure towards this goal today.

DAY 29

Yearly goal

Make X amount of money through film-making

Ask yourself what is needed to become a great filmmaker, and write it down.

What is needed?

1. Knowledge
2. Practice
3. Equipment

Now, this is where we get very practical with ourselves and our goals. We need to set up, monthly, weekly, and especially daily things that we can do to get the knowledge, practice and equipment necessary to become a good filmmaker. So let's break them down.

Yearly goal

Make X amount of money through film-making

What is needed?

Knowledge

1. I will read one book a month about film-making
2. I will watch four Youtube tutorials on film-making a week
3. I will reach out to people who I know have knowledge on film-making

DAY 29

Practice

1. I will make a video with the equipment I have right now,
once a week
2. I will push myself to practice a new camera skill every week

Equipment

1. I will get a side job so I can afford camera equipment
2. I will do research on the camera equipment that will be
most effective for me
3. Every twenty fifth video I make, I will allow myself to
purchase a new piece of equipment

Now this is in a format that you can implement into your daily
schedule just like this.

Monday

1. Read for fifteen minutes
2. Youtube Tutorial
3. Film a part of the weekly video

Tuesday

1. Read for fifteen minutes
2. Film the second part of the weekly video
3. Search for the most affordable camera equipment

DAY 29

Everyday of the week you want to be doing something that will get you closer to your goal. If you define your goals and then break them down into daily habits, you will find that achieving goals is much more realistic than ever before.

We are men and women of training, we thrive when we have goals to train for, most of us have just never been taught how to train. I encourage you to picture everyday as an opportunity to train yourself, taking steps towards the person God made you to be.

Journal 29

Follow the steps above to develop a goal and define how you will achieve this goal.

DAY 30 PART 1

We are moving on

Today is the last day but like I have said before, our learning, growth, and improvement does not stop here. We cannot go back to our old ways after this, we must keep pushing forward, we must keep smoothing out a road for good habits to develop in our mind. It might get hard at times, but if we give it to God, we can find ease (this can be done by literally saying, God, I give this to You). This program was written to help you understand the beauty and freedom that comes from discipline and self-development. This process does not have to be a process of white knuckling, there is another way. We don't have to struggle with this forever.

When you are addicted to something, it is effortless to blame yourself for that addiction. The reality is that it is not your fault, something from outside of you lead you to this addiction.

You are not naturally a lousy person, something that happened to you in the past lead you to this addiction.

Whether that be your friends exposing you to porn for the first time, or your mother not showing you enough affection in your childhood that left a sincere desire to strive for more affection and eventually led to sexually acting out. Either way, I know in my own life I blamed myself for this addiction until last weekend. Yeah, you read that right, LAST WEEKEND, I have been writing for three years now, and I finally understand that it is not my fault I had this addiction, but it is my opportunity to fix it!

DAY 30 PART 1

I always used to say things like, “once I get out of porn, then I can...” I always viewed porn as an end. My goal was to get out of porn, THEN move on with my life. That is just not how it goes, we are made for so much more than that. Let’s move on, let’s strive for something much higher than just getting out of porn. Then somewhere along this road is when we will lose the habit of P&M.

Journal 30 Part 1

Let’s move on, what is worth striving for in this life? Answer that question, and it’ll help you in your development of the game plan for the next couple months of your life.

DAY 30 PART 2

This is just the beginning

In my adventure of getting out of P&M, I have learned more than I planned on learning in this lifetime. I have fallen in love with the process of leaving porn behind me, this is a process of desire, of fighting, of elevated consciousness, of learning, of despair, of hope, of joy, of love, most of all, this is an adventure with our Creator. Enjoy this ride and keep moving forward.

THOUGHTS

Thank you for giving our Creator a chance

Programs like this one are not easy at the start so I applaud you for getting to this point. Unless you just flipped to the back of the book to check it out...

If you flipped to the back, today is Day 0 for you and I am excited that you are here! Now get to the front of the book where you belong.

For all of you who actually finished The Strong 30, congratulations! You are apart of the family! Well you always were... But now even more so! Please check out the links in the front of this eBook and hit us up!

Thank you and please pray for me as I pray for you.

-Patches Carney