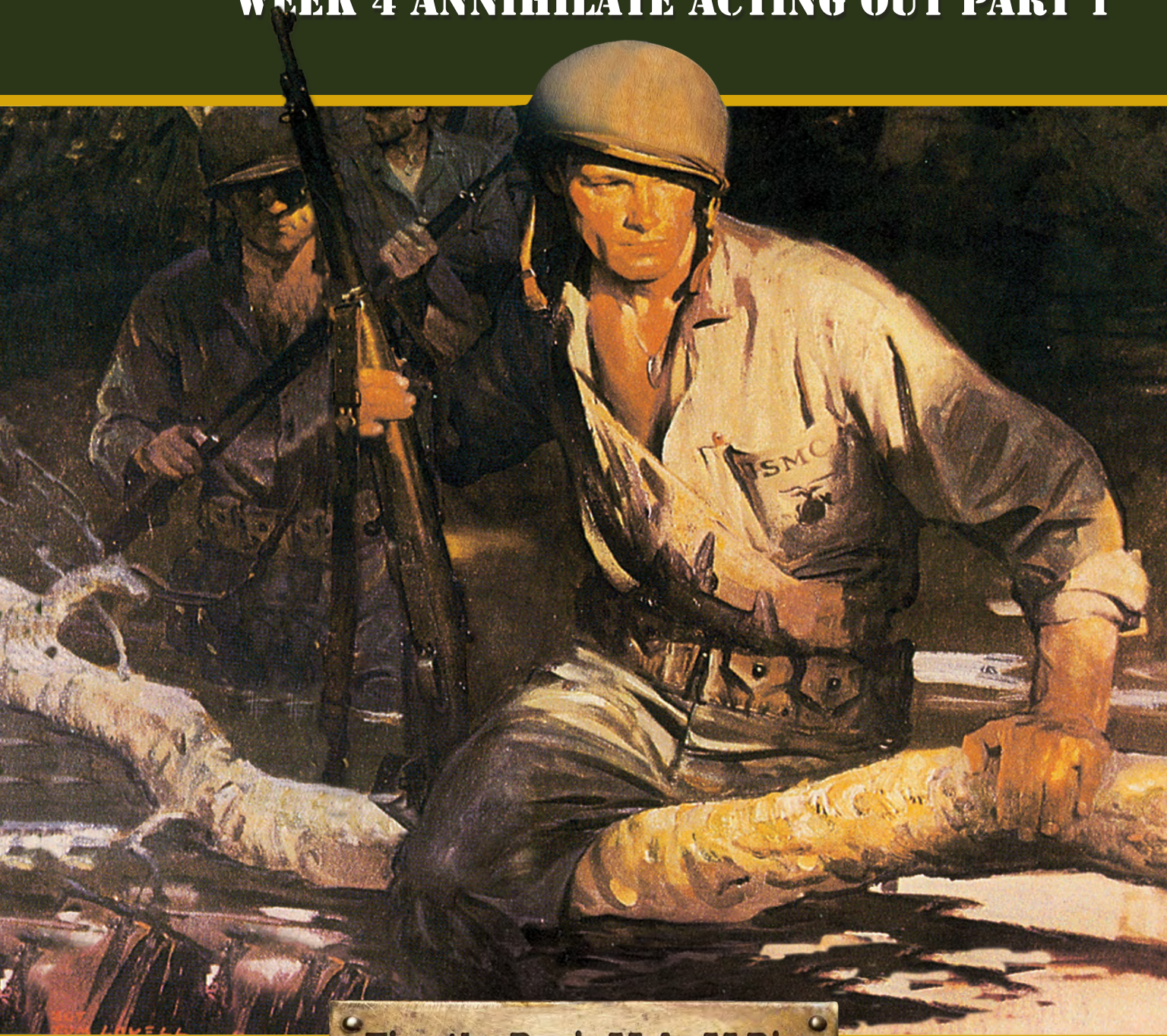




BASIC TRAINING!

**STAGE 1: OPERATION PURITY
WEEK 4 ANNIHILATE ACTING OUT PART 1**



Timothy Davis M.A., M.Div.

**THE #1 BATTLE-TESTED GUIDE
TO SEXUAL PURITY**

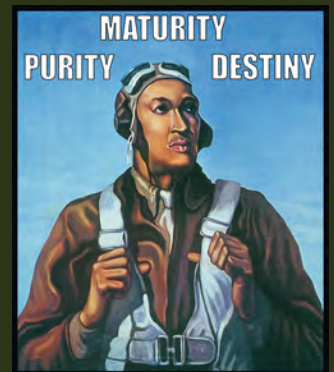
YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT IT:



Basic Training! provides a step-by-step process for breaking free from sexual sin into consistent purity, spiritual maturity, and personal destiny. Refined during 1000's of hours of pastoral counseling and proven in the transformed lives of over 500 counselees and 100's of marriages saved, the Truth can set you free!



I should know, it's the story of my life. I was sexually and ritually abused as a child. I was sickly, depressed, demonized, and sexually addicted for many years. I suffered from PTSD, repressed memories, and recurring nightmares. With character flaws too many to mention, I was an unfaithful husband, a harsh father, and a failure as a pastor. As a Christian I was wounded, addicted, cursed, carnal, and immature.



God has transformed my life in ways I never imagined possible. I now walk in purity, maturity, and destiny, and if I can do it, anyone can. Using my trademark WWII graphics, blunt and Biblical truths, and life-changing homework, I want to share my journey with you. Accept your *Basic Training!* mission today so you too can

Win the War for Purity!



Timothy Davis is the Founder and Director of Pureheart Ministries. A graduate of Wheaton College, Denver Seminary (M.Div.), and Western Seminary (M.A. Counseling), he worked as a pastor for 10 years before launching Pureheart. Timothy has personally counseled over 300 men and helped save over 150 marriages. Pureheart counselors have ministered to people in all 50 states, most Canadian provinces, and over 20 countries and seen many miraculous transformations. The truth really can set us free! Find out more at www.PureheartMinistries.net



Basic Training! Stage 1: Operation Purity

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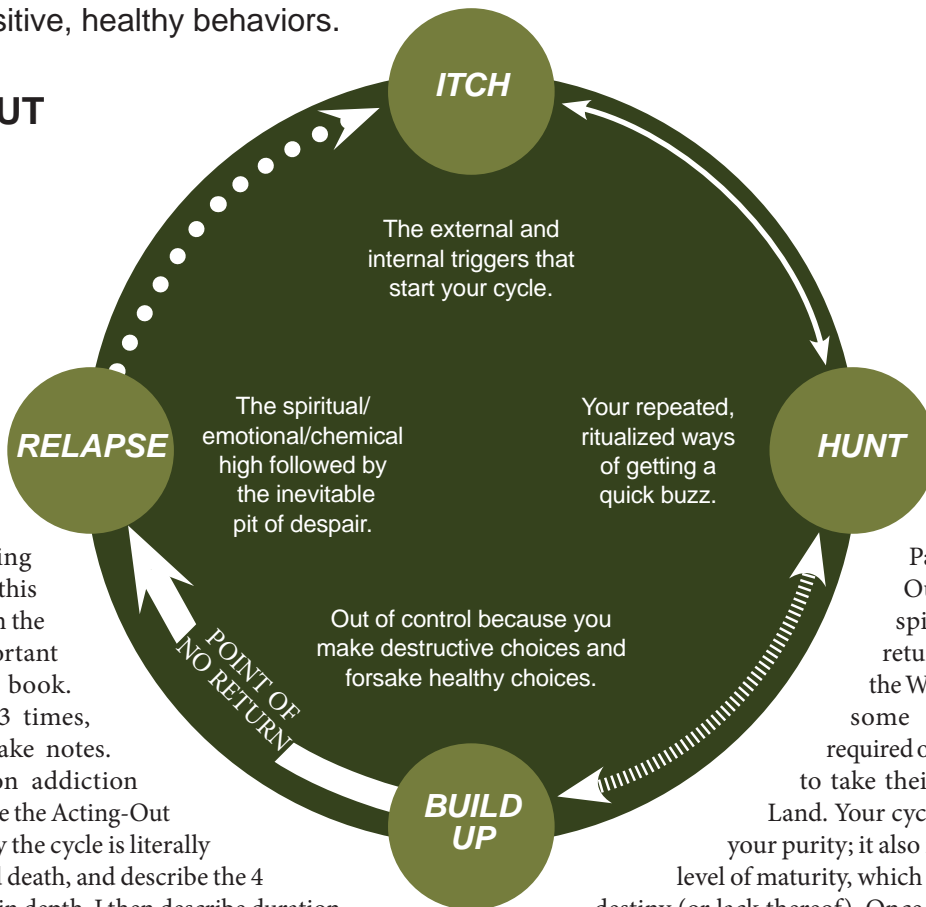
WEEK 4 4 ANNIHILATE ACTING OUT! PART 1

Your Mission, Should You Choose to Accept It...



Agent Hunt, your next objective is to completely destroy your personal Acting-Out Cycle(s). Simply put, you cannot transition from Private Pervert to Captain Clean without first identifying your personal Acting-Out Cycle and then ruthlessly killing off your former negative, unhealthy behaviors, even as you replace them with positive, healthy behaviors.

ACTING-OUT CYCLE (simplified)



Put your thinking caps on, because this 2-part chapter is in the top 3 most important chapters in the book. Read it at least 3 times, underline, and take notes. Part 1 focuses on addiction recovery, as I define the Acting-Out Cycle, explain why the cycle is literally a matter of life and death, and describe the 4 Stages of the cycle in depth. I then describe duration and frequency of the most common cycles. We conclude this chapter by covering the two cycle-busting truths every addict must immediately act on to stop acting out.

Part 2 sets the Acting-Out Cycle in its proper spiritual context. We return to the Israelites in the Wilderness and consider some of the basic tests required of all Christians seeking to take their personal Promised Land. Your cycle doesn't just destroy your purity; it also inherently limits your level of maturity, which then determines your destiny (or lack thereof). Once again, Jesus comes to the rescue, personally modeling how a successful Christian passes each specific test, thereby earning the right to take His Promised Land forever. Will you follow in His footsteps?

Your Acting-Out Cycle: Life or Death?

Simply put, the Acting-Out Cycle is the highly ritualized, endlessly repeated process every addict goes through to get his or her drug of choice and the high, fix, orgasm, connection, oblivion, or momentary peace they so desperately crave. You know it's dog vomit—*dog vomit, for crying out loud*, and everything that implies—but you need it so badly, you act out the same little drama each time so you can justify yet again why the contents of said canine's guts are worth the price of your soul.

I'll always remember the surreal experience of watching my hand reaching out yet again for the porn magazine even as my mind was screaming at me—*Why are you doing this?!* No one has ever described the Acting-Out Cycle better than Paul via the Spirit in Romans 7—*For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do... When I want to do good, evil is right there with me... waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin... What a wretched man I am!*

Note that the Acting-Out Cycle is a *cycle*. It's a circle, and circles are by nature endless, since you keep going round and round in—well, circles. Depending on age and severity of addiction, the average addict has completed his or her Acting-Out Cycle anywhere from 5,000 to 50,000 times. Many addicts spend practically their entire lives trapped in this closed loop. Many addicts die trapped in their cycle.

Every day of the week, opioid addicts die because they overdose on their drug of choice. Alcoholics die because they've poisoned their livers, or because they drive home drunk and crash into a tree. Of course, it isn't just physical death—you can die emotionally. Imagine what it feels like to be a drunk driver who killed someone while driving drunk! Sex addicts typically don't die physically unless they get AIDS or get shot by a jealous spouse, but they can die in every other way through the loss of marriage, family, career, reputation, and relationship with God.

Sex, drugs, food, gambling, and so on—the type of addiction ultimately makes no difference. If never broken, your Acting-Out Cycle will always end in some kind of death—one long, sustained relapse, as it were, until you reach the point you can no longer undo the damage caused by your oh-so-*wretched* lifestyle.

The Acting-Out Cycle literally traps you in permanent immaturity, as if you were cursed to endlessly repeat your

years as a teenager. Caught in your addictive cycle, you never fully grow up developmentally, psychologically, relationally, and most of all spiritually. As you know, living life as an ageless junior higher is toxic to every important relationship in your life. Imagine how many marriages and families have been destroyed because of addictions to alcohol, drugs, porn, affairs, work, and so on. Your cycle can destroy your career in one fell swoop, or slowly suck the life out of it like a leech. And since addicts constantly relapse and consistently grieve and quench the Spirit, how could you ever grow up and complete your awesome destiny in Christ?

To cite but one example, I counseled a brother who, back in his days as a slave to his Acting-Out Cycle, would literally spend 3 hours a day at work sexting/texting/chatting with women. He was so far gone in his addiction that he even came on (via text) to his 70-year-old aunt. As you might imagine, his sexless marriage was in shambles, a lawyer away from divorce even though he was married to a beautiful, vivacious woman. Naturally, his spiritual growth for many years had been virtually nil as he went through the motions of play-acting his faith. Any of this sounding familiar?

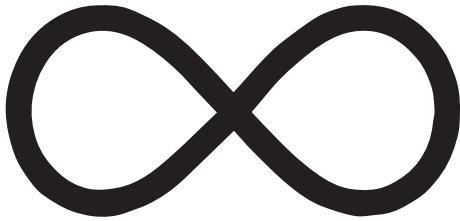
This brother thanks me every year on the anniversary of when he first started counseling, because his walk with God, his relationship with wife, his career, and even his relationship with his children have all changed in miraculous ways. This is what happens when you kill your Acting-Out Cycle and finally start living up to God's call upon your life. As deeply addicted as he was, if this brother can break free—anyone can!

If you choose, you can stay trapped in this cycle your entire life. I know a man who, at the ripe age of 80, is still a sex addict. This former Bible college student and full-time missionary is now divorced from his wife. This man cannot visit his grandchildren because the family doesn't trust him to be around their children. He is homeless, living in an RV. Once a Christian, at least by all external evidence, this man espouses some strange heretical mixture of OT teaching and Islam, and is now borderline psychotic. Since he has threatened the President, he's now on the White House watchlist. His life is the tragic story of a man utterly destroying everything of personal consequence because he never broke free of his Acting-Out Cycle. This man's addictive cycle may very well *kill him for all eternity...*



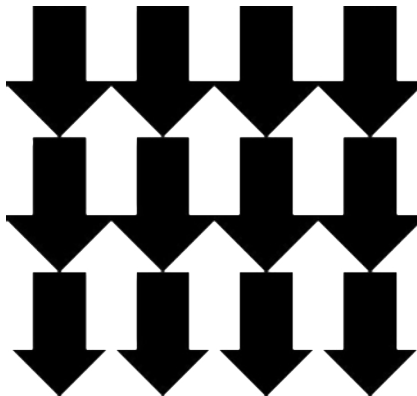
Visualize the Acting-Out Cycle versus the “Long Obedience”

Remember your Mission Possible? You desperately need to get this, Agent Hunt! Everything important in your life literally hinges on your ability to permanently break free of the Acting-Out Cycle, precisely because we always reap what we sow. Imagine all the crap you have sowed into your spiritual account thus far, and then use that as motivation to fry the following images into your brain forever.



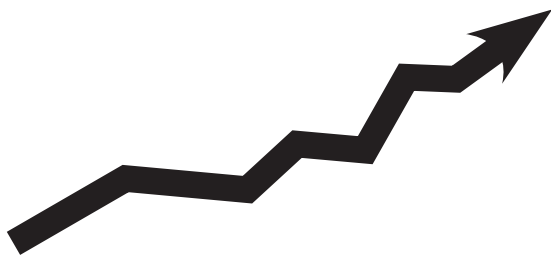
The Endless Circle

Does this describe your life? Addicts trapped in their cycles never move forward because they only go around in circles, covering and recovering the same ground over and over again, like the Israelites in the Wilderness. Your only consistency is inconsistency! You can never move forward because you never pass the tests of life, you never learn from the past. Making the same mistakes over and over again will eventually cost you your marriage, your children, your job, your sanity, your faith...



The Endless Up and Down

Here's another way of thinking about the Acting-Out Cycle visually. If you spend all your time going up in pursuit of your next high and then crashing down into yet another depressed low because you relapsed yet again, you're still vertically covering and recovering the same old ground. Over and over and over again. You can spend huge amounts of energy, money, and time—most of us already have—going up and trying to stay up. Or conversely trying to dig your way out of that deep pit you just fell into yet again. Either way, there's no forward progress; history just repeats itself, and you're doomed to suffer the consequences.

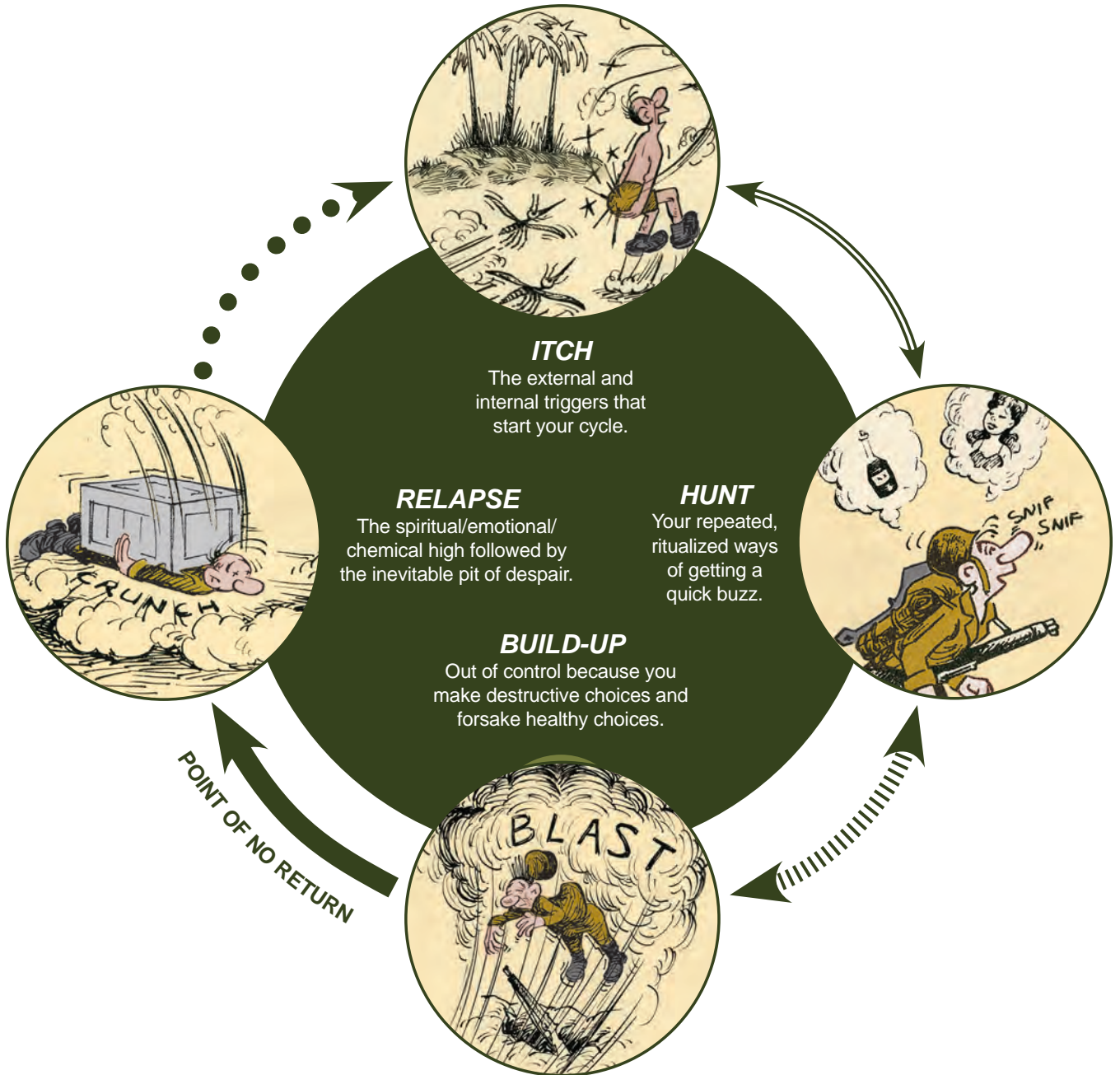


The Long Obedience in the Same Direction

Hey, look at that! Here's another alternative to the endless cycle. You can actually move from Point A to Point B, Upward and Onward into the Kingdom of God. Eugene Petersen calls this *The Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. Notice that there are still ups and downs climbing up the mountain of God, but even so, you're covering *new ground*. In a sense, when you're moving forward, even a downward pit is a victory because *at least it's a new pit you haven't fallen into before!* And what about those successes?! You're learning from past mistakes. Making progress. Building a sure foundation.

Enough with the Acting-Out Cycle. Become an Overcomer and move forward!

Your Acting-Out Cycle (Visualized with the help of Private Pervert)



ITCH



Simply put, *ITCHES* are the external and internal triggers that drive your addictive behaviors. Imagine you've got ants in your pants. You can't sit still; that edgy feeling is rising inside you yet again—it's the ITCH you can't scratch. Every cycle starts with the ITCH, so your first task is to identify your primary ITCHES.

My modified HHALT acronym is great place to start. Are you Horny, Hungry, Angry, Lonely, and Tired? What about Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Boredom, Trauma/PTSD, Childhood Abuse (remembered and/or repressed), Change of Routine, Travel, Conflict, and Physical Pain/Sickness? This list is in no way complete, but even so, is it any wonder addicts relapse so frequently?! Who doesn't experience ITCHES like this every day of the week?

Heck, you could be horny, hungry, tired, bored, depressed because your boss reminds you of your abusive dad, and utterly stressed because that same boss just fired you—and all *at the same time!* You aren't just itchy; you just broke out, addictively speaking, in massive head-to-toe hives! Get this, brothers and sisters: *Your ITCHES are the locomotive engine that drives the entire train of your addiction!*

You must be able to identify your primary ITCHES and learn how to scratch your ITCHES in healthy ways. Otherwise, that locomotive engine will always be a-churning, and you'll always be a relapse waiting to happen.

Action Steps!



Circle your ITCHES!

- **HORNYY • HUNGRY • ANGRY • LONELY • TIRED • PHYSICAL PAIN •**
- **SICKNESS • STRESS • ANXIETY • DEPRESSION • RESTLESSNESS •**
- **BOREDOM • TRAUMA/PTSD • CHILDHOOD ABUSE • ANGER •**
 - **RELATIONAL CONFLICT (especially with spouses) •**
 - **UNFORGIVENESS • SELF-HATRED • SHAME/GUILT • JOB •**
 - **TRAVEL • CHANGE OF ROUTINE • FINANCIAL PROBLEMS •**
- **PARENTS/RELATIVES • EX-SPOUSES/GIRLFRIENDS/BOYFRIENDS •**
- **MAKING/SPENDING MONEY • CHEMICAL/HORMONAL IMBALANCE •**
- **FAILURE TO VENT EMOTIONS • LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY •**
 - **MEMORIES/ANNIVERSARIES • OTHER? •**



HUNT



The HUNT is your highly ritualized, often repeated search for a quick buzz. This stage is literally *hunting* behavior—stalking deer, shopping in the mall for that perfect bargain, or scanning eBay for the comic you need to complete your collection. The HUNT is exactly the same process, except that now you’re sniffing around for your drug of choice. You aren’t desperate yet. Plus, as a Christian, you know deep down that you shouldn’t be hunting for your drug, *so first you play addict charades.*

A textbook example is the porn addict who visits the Sports Illustrated website while at work to—*check on my favorite sports team. How did those women in itsy-bitsy bikinis get there?* (That’s a sport too, right!). *Well, it isn’t porn, right? There’s nothing wrong with looking at beautiful women, right? It doesn’t hurt anyone...*

Surfing channels to glimpse something erotic. Watching R-rated movies or reading Romance novels and being “surprised” by the sex scenes. “Harmless” flirting with a co-worker. Going on Backpage or Craigslist ostensibly to look for “cars.” Lingering second looks and fantasies. Aimlessly searching the Web. Scanning social

media. The variations of HUNT behaviors are endless, but it’s really all the same ritualized steps you’ve taken thousands of times before. The key here is that you’re opening the door and peeking in, but not going all the way through. You’re playing with fire, but not—yet—burning the house down. *You’re feeding the dog of your addiction yet again, and acting shocked when it bites the hand that feeds it yet again.*

Go back to the Acting-Out Diagram once more. Notice how the arrows go back and forth between the first 2 stages. Notice also that these arrows grow larger as you move further into the cycle. Does looking at women in itsy-bitsy bikinis on the SI website make you more or less horny?! Does trolling through all those dating sites make you less lonely?! You just added gasoline to the campfire and horniness/loneliness to the other ITCHES you were already experiencing. Each pass through each stage builds intensity and momentum. Mix your unscratched ITCHES in with additional HUNTING behaviors, and the BUILDUP stage is naturally only an hour or day or week or month away...

Action Steps!



Circle your HUNTING Rituals!

- SURFING TV CHANNELS • R-RATED MOVIE SEX SCENES •
- “SOFT-PORN” ROMANCE NOVELS/MOVIES •
- “RESEARCHING” PROVOCATIVE SUBJECTS ONLINE •
- SEARCHING MAGAZINES, EBOOKS, NEWS • SEARCHING THE WEB •
- UNFILTERED MEDIA DEVICES • SOCIAL MEDIA • CLICKBAIT ADS •
- FLIRTING • LINGERING SECOND LOOKS • FANTASIES •
- INNUENDO IN TEXTS/PHONE CONVERSATIONS •
- DRIVING PAST PLACES OF PAST RELAPSE •
- ISOLATION/NO CHECKINS • PROCRASTINATION •
- OBSESSIVE THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIORS •
- PASSIVITY • OVEREATING/JUNK FOOD • SPENDING MONEY •
- USING/BREAKING RULES FOR ALCOHOL/DRUGS •
- BREAKING COMMITMENTS/SCHEDULE •
- ANY KIND OF BINGE BEHAVIOR •
- OTHER?



BUILD-UP

Take a moment and refer back to the Pureheart Checklist (the last page in the previous chapter). Find the questions in the “Buildup” section.

“I chose to lose control” is the key phrase in understanding the BUILDUP stage, because it’s all about the choices you make—the things you do and don’t do so you can ultimately give yourself permission to RELAPSE! My new counselees often describe their relapses as “just happening,” as if RELAPSE happens like a lightning bolt from the blue. No, No, NO! Your addiction is *your* responsibility, and every RELAPSE is directly caused by the series of choices you make over the course of your cycle.

As usual, Scripture hits the nail on the head: *Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death* (James 1:14-15, ESV). It’s your desire, it’s your responses to temptation, and it’s the way you carefully nurture (enticement, conception, birth, growth, death) your cycle that always creates the same old sin/confess/sin/confess cycle. The tired cliché that “I just couldn’t help myself” is nothing more than a steamin’ pile of BS! That’s right, your addiction isn’t some disease, and you aren’t some helpless victim, no matter what Big Pharma preaches. You can fix your addiction to your “drug” of choice by buying their drugs? I don’t think so!

I routinely help brothers with multiple addictions break all their addictions. The cycle is essentially the same, so assuming they apply the Pureheart process, it works for all their addictions. To cite one example, “Steve,” just texted me a photo of his first child, a beautiful, baby girl. He calls me every six months after he passes his polygraph, even though we stopped counseling several years ago. He thanked me again and told me that without my help his marriage



would’ve never lasted, much less produced a baby girl. Steve was the usual porn and masturbation addict—and he was sleeping with prostitutes while in college. And he was addicted to marijuana. And cigarettes. And he liked his liquor. And he was a liar through and through (hence the polygraphs). Honestly, even I didn’t have much hope for him at the beginning. He stuck with the

process, however, and one by one, we picked off his addictions by applying the basic principles of stopping the cycle. If it worked for “Steve,” and we have the polygraphs to prove it, why wouldn’t it work for you!

BUILDUP behaviors are as much what you do as what you don’t do. Staying up late so you’re all alone with the computer or the Xbox. Procrastinating on that huge paper due for class. Hanging out with addict friends. Failure to exercise while eating too much, so you look and feel like a slob. Too busy to do your devotions. Missing your accountability group and Checklist. Letting the conflict with your spouse go unresolved for days on end. Spending too much money. No schedule. Working too many hours. Skipping church. Isolating. Sinking into depression. Too much TV...

Again, the variations on the theme are almost endless, but the point is, each unhealthy choice stokes the lava in your interior volcano so the pressure builds and builds. As a Christian, you still have the Spirit’s voice and your conscience (even if they are much abused) crying out in Godly conviction. *BUILDUP then is all about getting so out of control that you just don’t care anymore about conscience or consequence—the only thing that matters in your world at the moment is getting your fix.*

Look out, the volcano is about to blow!

Action Steps!

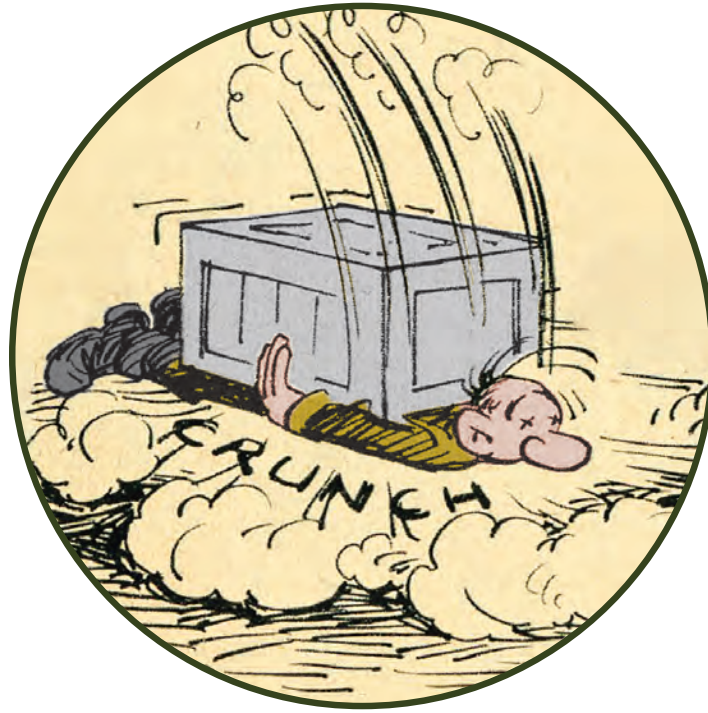


Circle your BUILD-UP Behaviors!

- STAYING UP LATE • NO ROUTINE/SCHEDULE •
- SKIPPING DEVOTIONS, CHURCH, SMALL GROUP •
- ISOLATION (not checking in) • AVOIDING OTHERS •
- CONTINUED PROCRASTINATION • MOOD SWINGS •
- ALCOHOL/DRUG/JUNK FOOD (numbing, buzz, and/or intoxication) •
- IGNORING STRESS • CONFLICT • ANGER •
- NO EXERCISE • POOR SELF-CARE •
- OBSESSIVE, OUT-OF-CONTROL AND/OR NEGATIVE THOUGHTS •
- SPEEDING UP • OVERDOING IT • SPENDING BINGES •
- TOO MUCH TV, MOVIES, VIDEO GAMES •
- REPEATING SAME PRE-RELAPSE RITUALS •
- UNFILTERED DEVICE USE •
- POINT OF NO RETURN •
- OTHER?



RELAPSE



Somewhere between BUILDUP and RELAPSE, you reach the Point of No Return. This is where it gets scary, because you're going to RELAPSE—even if it means losing your job, marriage, reputation, and health, and/or going to jail. Like old Esau and the stew, all that matters in the moment is the fix, and eternal consequences be damned! The longer you go in any addiction, the more you inevitably risk in order to get an ever-decreasing high. Imagine if I offered you an investment program where every year you invested more and received less and less in return. *Invest a \$100,000 in my company and I guarantee you will get \$1,000 back!* Nobody in their right mind would sign up for this program, but this is the kind of deal with the devil that addicts make every day of the week.

RELAPSE (sex, drugs, alcohol, food, porn, orgasm, etc.) is often a great relief, simply because it temporarily stops the cycle and you can step off the hamster exercise wheel. The longer you stay trapped in your cycle, the shorter the duration of your cycles even as they increase in frequency. You can plateau with any “drug” for a time, or even experience periods of “freedom” if you white knuckle it hard enough. These periods of false sobriety, however, can actually lead to longer binges and/or crossing new lines in your addiction (you go from chatting, say, to actually meeting one of the people you’ve been chatting with).

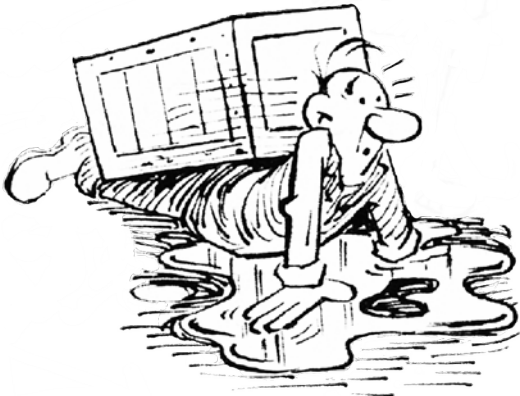
The temporary chemical high of RELAPSE lasts for a time, and then here comes guilt and shame; here comes renewed efforts at being good again (more church, Bible, prayer, etc.); and here comes more rationalizations about why you keep going back to the dog vomit. More promises to the spouse, more lies, more self-hatred, more fear over being caught and exposed, more despair over ever being free—you know this tune all too well. This internal toxic stew (naturally, you can't tell anyone what you've done) bubbles and brews up inside you until it turns into the all-too-familiar urge that you just can't scratch, the ITCH. And here you go right back into the same old insane cycle you've done literally thousands of times before. A typical alcoholic, drug addict, or porn addict will literally have gone through their Acting-Out Cycle 5,000 to 50,000 times!

Action Steps!



If you can relate to it, **CIRCLE IT!**

- **ORGASM • SEX • BUZZ • NUMBNESS • OBLIVION •**
- **CHEMICAL RELEASE • SHAME • GUILT • LYING • HIDING •**
- **PHYSICAL CONNECTION • BREAK FROM CRAVING •**
- **FEAR OF BEING CAUGHT • SELF-LOATHING • JUSTIFICATION •**
- **DEFENSIVENESS • DENIAL AND CONFESSION (sometimes) •**
- **TRYING HARDER TO DO GOOD**
(burst of Bible reading, attending church, being nice to spouse, etc) •
- **ADDICT FORGETFULNESS (if I forget that I relapsed, it didn't happen) •**
- **PROMISES • ITCHES (and here we go again...) •**
- **Other?**



Your Acting-Out Cycle: Duration and Frequency

Even as you expose your ITCH>HUNT>BUILDUP>RELAPSE stages, let's lay the groundwork for permanently ending your cycle. The next step is to identify the duration and frequency of your particular cycle. In this case I'm referring to the duration of the most common cycles for sex addicts, but these time periods apply to many other addictions as well, with some variation.



Hourly Cycle:

The bottom of the barrel in sexual addiction is the person who relapses hourly—the most I've ever seen is 7 times a day, typically with porn and masturbation. I counseled one brother, now walking in consistent purity, who masturbated so often he made his penis bleed. Obviously, sex with prostitutes at this rate would get expensive fast, but I've counseled brothers who "needed" sex with their wives 4-5 times a day. This isn't a need, people; this is addiction in action. In this case, the addict rapidly passes through the 4 stages of the cycle on a near hourly basis.

Daily Cycle:

This is the addict who looks at porn and masturbates 6-7 times a week, or again, the brother who "needs" sex with his wife on a daily basis. A typical scenario is that the addict is stressed at his or her job (ITCH), goes online during his/her break and looks at "soft, erotic material" (like clickbait sites) because they can't actually look at porn while at work (HUNT). This continues throughout the day (BUILDUP), even as the addict fails to process his/her stress in a healthy manner. RELAPSE happens when they get home—as soon as the spouse leaves to go pick up the kids at sports, the addict jumps on the computer or their smartphone and gets their fix.

3-4 Day Cycle:

This was my primary cycle back in the day, and in my considerable counseling experience, it's the most common cycle, at least for men. Male testosterone seems to peak naturally about every 3-4 days so the extra horniness or "burning," as Scripture says, helps perpetuate the cycle. It's the same pattern as the daily cycle except that now the 4 stages happen over the length of days. Again, the most common "drug" is porn and masturbation, but it may also be sexting/texting/chatting, actual affairs, prostitutes, fetish behaviors (like using women's clothing), and so on.

What's the duration and frequency of your Cycle?

Weekend Cycle:

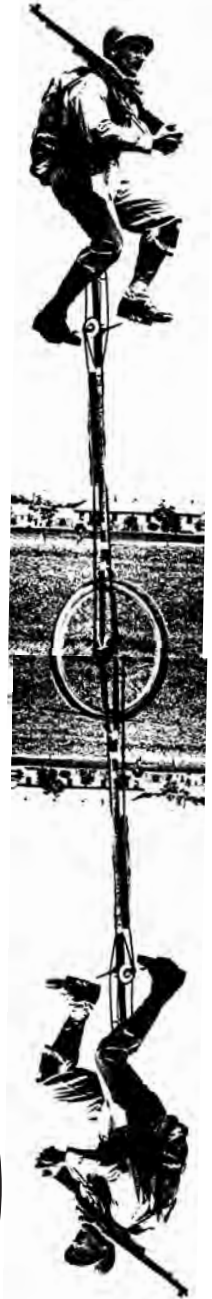
I read a statistic somewhere that Sunday is the day more people look at porn. I assume this is because typically you can't look at porn at work. The ITCH, HUNT, and BUILDUP happen throughout the week until the addict finally has some time alone to get his or her particular fix. These later cycles are often associated with binge behavior, where the addict will white knuckle it for 5 days while busy at work and not look at any porn or call a prostitute. Once the weekend hits, however, they lose all control and literally spend hours (sometimes all night) looking at porn with multiple masturbations. Or they spend the weekend with their lover. Or meet the person they've been chatting with...

Monthly Cycle:

This can be a challenging cycle to break. It's a lot better than being trapped in the hourly cycle, but because the ITCH, HUNT, and BUILDUP stages tend to last for a week or so at time, it's easy to miss which stage you're in that particular week. Addicts also cycle back and forth through the stages even as each pass through the ITCH, HUNT, BUILDUP gauntlet ramps up the intensity of each stage and virtually guarantees RELAPSE. Again, binge behaviors are common in this particular cycle.

3-Month Cycle:

This is normally the last cycle. Once you break the 3-month mark, you're well on your way to recovery (assuming you maintain it). For sex addicts, the physical/chemical withdrawal phase is typically a 2-3 month process. Breaking past the physical craving for your drug is normally the hardest part of recovery—so this coincides with the 3-month cycle. You can spend a month in each ITCH/ HUNT/BUILDUP stage, so it's easy to miss the fact that you're cycling through that same old circle, since it takes months now to get to RELAPSE. Once again, binge behavior is common.



Medicator or Compensator? Stop on a Dime or Sir Relapsealot?

So far so good. You're learning the basic stages of your cycle, and you've identified the duration/frequency of your particular cycle. Now we want to determine your basic type as an addict. There are many different kinds of "drugs" you can choose during your particular cycle, but generally speaking, there are only two kinds of addicts in this world:

Medicators seek to numb or medicate old trauma, childhood abuse, the absence of a father/mother, the wounds caused by divorce or growing up in an addict home, and so on. The key here is the presence of inner pain that drives the outward search for the "drug" that will relieve the agony (temporarily at least).

Compensators, on the other hand, typically have little if any obvious trauma from the past. In their case, the key is the outward stress and pressures of life that drives them to *compensate* by seeking a temporary relief from what they feel are overwhelming, inescapable demands. Your boss is constantly on your case, your spouse yells at you when you get home, the kids are driving you crazy, the bills never stop—your "drug" is your way of releasing steam from the pressure cooker that is your life.

What starts the itch for you? I was a textbook *Medicator*. My weekly cycle invariably started with the repressed trauma and pain from my past abuse trying to surface. This interior ache would make me restless and start me on my cycle. If you're a medicator, present pain and stress commonly triggers buried pain and emotions, so it's really a double whammy.

Compensators often feel trapped in endless loneliness or a stressful marriage, an impossible job or a failing business, and when you combine this with personal insecurity and passivity, relapse is just a couple of clicks away. A textbook example is the passive-aggressive husband who can't deal with either his angry boss or his accusatory wife, so he passively submits to their constant demands, but then gets revenge by going behind their backs and acting-out sexually.

On rare occasions I run into an addict who's a mixture of both kinds. But even then, if this describes you, you'll be more driven by either your past pain or your present stress.

Regardless of your type—Medicator or Compensator—you break your cycle in one of two ways:

Stop on a Dime. Some of you will stop the cycle immediately and, at least in my counseling, never go back. Oh, you might have a relapse here or there in a couple of years, say a masturbation, but it is normally just a blip on the radar screen. Once you confess the relapse, you immediately go back to the maintenance stage of purity and never restart the cycle. More than half the men I counsel—usually older, married men—fall into this category.

Sir Relapsealot. If you're like me in the olden days, you will struggle greatly with relapse. The typical progression here is to move, say, from the 3-4-day cycle into a couple months of the weekly cycle, and then to the first time ever breaking the 3-month mark for consistent purity. Then, often, you can go backwards into, say, a weekly cycle, but then back into breaking the 3-month cycle until something clicks and you're finally done with the cycling. Patterns like these often (but not always) apply to younger single men. Regardless of how you break out of your particular cycle, you must learn the specifics of your Acting- Out Cycle, because this knowledge is critical to achieving ultimate annihilation of that cycle.

Let me give a special shout to those of you still struggling with relapse. I've spent practically my entire life trapped in the cycle, breaking free of the cycle, free of the cycle, and now successfully helping many brothers out of the cycle—so pay attention, because I know what I'm talking about. I was not one of those people who stopped their addictive behaviors on a dime. I relapsed many, many times in my recovery process—it took me 20 years before I finally put it all together. Now, to be clear, it didn't remotely *need* to take 20 years. If you know what you're doing, you can break free of the cycle in a year or less! So be encouraged. And remember—if I can break free and stay free of the cycle, anyone can!



Your Acting-Out Cycle: KILL the HUNT, SCRATCH the ITCH!

Regardless of your addict type, here's the crux of the matter, so pay particular attention to this next section.

Rule of Recovery #5: Scratch the Itch, Kill the Hunt! Don't wait until you are out of control and in the BUILDUP stage to hit the brakes. Kill your Acting-Out Cycle at the ITCH and HUNT stages.



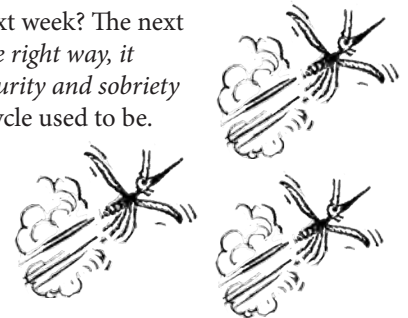
In other words, you win the battle by never starting the battle! Preventing RELAPSE by trying to stop during the BUILDUP phase when you're all ramped up and out of control is like trying to save yourself *after* you've already fallen off the cliff. What's the point? You can exert all the willpower in the world, but there's only one possible outcome when you're dropping through midair like a lead balloon. Remember, I've personally counseled over 600 addicts (in individual and group sessions), so I know what I'm talking about. So many addicts make this fundamental rookie mistake, so they fail in achieving long-term sobriety. It's called the *Point of No Return* for a reason!

Stop your cycle first at the HUNT stage, and then at the ITCH. How do you do this? The first step is utter ruthlessness in stopping *all* HUNT behaviors. Remember the brother who spent 3 hours of his workday texting/sexting/chatting? He purchased a dumbphone with no Internet access, then deleted all his social media accounts. Since he makes good money, his tangible consequence was a \$1,000 per erotic material, masturbation, or any type of nonwork chat or text with a woman. In 1 year of counseling, he only had to pay his TC once (after briefly looking at a bikini picture online), while remaining sober from any masturbation or sexual contact with a woman.

Given the fact that this brother masturbated approximately 20,000 times over the course of the last 40 years, not to mention all the hours spent texting, this was awesome progress! He also joined one of my online accountability groups, so he did his Pureheart Checklist 3 times a week (with me, his wife, and his BOB group). This brother is taking seriously Jesus's *command* to pluck out the right eye—as he should—and he has the results to prove it. *Failure to ruthlessly and consistently cut off all HUNTING behavior is often the primary cause of continued relapses, especially for the Internet generation that apparently thinks Jesus was joking about that right eye.* Figure out exactly what your HUNT rituals are, and methodically kill them all with consistent, cold-blooded single-mindedness!

Once you've stopped all HUNTING behaviors, focus in on the ITCH stage. *Important: You cannot get rid of your ITCHES; you can only "scratch" them in healthy ways.*

Are you likely to be stressed, angry, lonely, tired, horny, or sick at some point in the next week? The next hour? Welcome to the real world! Here's the good news: *When you scratch an ITCH the right way, it goes away for a while, and with your ITCHES and HUNT behaviors out of the picture, purity and sobriety become easy.* In fact, they become, after a time, as automatic as your old Acting-Out Cycle used to be.



I never have cravings for porn or masturbation anymore, but I still maintain my purity via the weekly Checklist with my bros and locking down/filtering all my Internet accessible devices. That's it! I know you don't believe me about purity/sobriety being easy, but trust me, I've now successfully led over 300 brothers through the Pureheart process. All this victory aside, however, my brothers and I still get ITCHY every day of the week.

Captain Clean understands that ITCHES are a fact of life. That's why he/she has learned healthy ways of scratching that old ITCH. Plan on becoming an expert at scratching your various ITCHES. There are a million positive alternatives that will help you vent your stress or relieve your boredom in a healthy way. Feeling horny or angry or lonely? At age 45, I set a goal of running a half-marathon for the first time in my life. Trust me, when you train by running 8 miles up and down serious hills, you stop feeling horny, angry, and/or lonely! In fact—write this statement down—*hard physical exercise, such as running, swimming, rock-climbing, weight-training, P90X, and CrossFit, is the best thing any addict can do to scratch a wide variety of ITCHES.*

And yes, I know many of you lack the discipline to exercise consistently by yourself. This is why you join CrossFit, take a class at the gym, talk your buddies into working out with you, and/or put tangible consequences (money) on getting the job done. Pay \$100 to each of your 3 friends if you don't go to the gym this week 4 times—and maintain this tangible consequence every week for 3 months—and trust me, you've just added the discipline of serious exercise to your life! Get a hobby, join a club, take the dog for a walk, take the kids to the park, build something, plant a garden, go fishing/hunting, get a motorcycle, volunteer at the homeless shelter—the options are endless. Find whatever works for you in scratching a particular ITCH, and then every time that ITCH surfaces, kick in with your anti-ITCH medication.

Trust me, as an expert on the Acting-Out Cycle, this is how you kill the cycle. It really is this simple!



Captain Clean scratches his ITCHES in healthy ways and thus never starts his cycle!



Pureheart Group Discussion Questions

(Remember to write down your answers.)

1. Describe your ITCHES in detail. List your Top 3 ITCHES, and explain why they are the Top 3.
2. Describe your most common HUNT behaviors in detail. Top 3 and why.
3. (*This should be your longest answer*). Describe your most common BUILDUP behaviors in detail. Remember, it's all about choosing wrong behaviors and refusing to do right actions until you lose all control.
4. Describe your typical RELAPSE. Focus on what happens internally after your RELAPSE (your self-talk, your emotions, your relationship with God, others, etc.).
5. Write down the duration/frequency (hourly, daily, 3-day, etc.) of your current Acting-Out Cycle. Are you changing cycles? Explain your answers.
6. Are you a Medicator or Compensator? So far, are you stopping on a dime or relapsing frequently? Explain your answers.



**Annihilate your
Acting-Out cycle
before it
ANNIHILATES YOU!**

Basic Training! A Battle-Tested Labor of Love



The book you've been reading took 15 years to write, rewrite, design, redesign, and edit, at a cost of \$30,000. It's birthed out of nearly 50 years of personal study, testing, failure, and success. Plus 7 years at seminary, 10 years as a pastor, and 15 years as the leader of Pureheart Ministries. Not to mention my own experience with sexual abuse, ritual abuse, demons, PTSD, depression, and (obviously) sexual addiction, and all the things I learned by the grace of God in overcoming these Goliaths in my life. All things are indeed possible for those who believe!

I've spent literally thousands of hours in individual and group counseling sessions testing and refining the truths contained within these chapters. By the grace of God, I've personally led over 300 brothers into consistent purity, brothers from practically every denomination in the Western Church, and from over 20 different countries. Men of diverse races, economic classes, educational levels, ages, careers, and addiction levels.

I've successfully counseled many pastors, church elders, missionaries, and ministry leaders. I've helped save over 150 marriages, many of these on the rocks, and some on the verge of divorce. And I haven't even mentioned all the people my counselors have helped. So when I tell you that this book is proven and battle-tested, believe it! And please, don't just take my word for it. Check out the Testimony tab at pureheartministries.net, and judge the tree by its fruit.

No Punches Pulled

As you will soon discover, I write like I talk—blunt and intense. Some of this is personality. Some of it comes from the extreme events of my life. And some of it comes from having counseled literally hundreds of drug addicts, alcoholics, and sex addicts. The bottom line: I call it like it is. Think of me as your personal Nathan (as in David and Bathsheba). Like Nathan, I'm hoping to rock your world enough so that you cast aside things like denial, deceit, dysfunction, sexual sin, and spiritual immaturity, so you live utterly sold out for Jesus the rest of your life. I'm here to help you get consistently pure and spiritually mature, so you can live out your awesome destiny and calling in Christ!

Brace yourself...

Message of Hope

You can expect blunt intensity, but nobody is more hopeful than I am when it comes to turning all your junk into gold. I know the dark side of life well. As a child I was sexually abused by my grandfather and ritually abused by either an organized group of pedophiles or outright Satanists. For most of my life I was sickly, depressed, seriously demonized, and completely sexually addicted. I was a failure as a pastor, an immature and unfaithful husband, and a harsh and mercurial father. And yet, by God's grace and lots of work, I've overcome my past and now lead others into ever-increasing freedom and victory. (See my testimony a little later in this book, and in *Special Ops!*).

It never ceases to amaze me how God uses even the worst events of my life to radically change people's lives! Hear my message of hope loud and clear, because it's literally the story of my life. If I can break free, anyone can!

This Means War!

I use the metaphor of war as a way of illustrating a fundamental reality of the Christian walk. Christians live in a state of war—it's the explicit teaching of Scripture. Peter urges believers to abstain from the passions of the flesh (sexual sin) which *wage war against your soul* (1 Peter 2:11). To paraphrase Ephesians 6, we are engaged in hand-to-hand combat with demons. In the spiritual realm, there's no such thing as a Christian pacifist. You're either overcoming the devil, or he is devouring you.

Sexual sin is at the very heart of this war, because it will—given enough time—literally destroy everything you hold dear. Sexual sin is the devil's #1 battle strategy for destroying you and your God-given calling.

World War II was the most devastating war in human history, yet it pales beside the war over purity now raging in the spiritual realm as we draw ever closer to Judgment Day.

My brothers and sisters—welcome to the war!

Follow Instructions

In 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, Paul says we must *learn* how to live sexually pure, which clearly implies: 1) sexual purity is *not* natural behavior, and 2) we need people who can teach us truths we do not know. I know how to walk in personal purity, and I know how to pass it on to you. It's absolutely critical however that you learn from the truths in this book. In other words, you've got to follow the instructions!

I refuse to dumb down my teaching, so you'll need to read and reread my chapters, because they are densely packed with truth and instructions. Pace yourself. I recommend you focus on one chapter a week (and sometimes spend 2-3 weeks on a particular chapter). I strongly recommend that you write out your homework, because this will help you remember what you learn. Finally, I provide many practical steps that will radically change your life.

You must—absolutely must—consistently apply these steps if you want the Pureheart Process to work for you.

Men and Women

This is obviously a masculine-looking book, and since I only counsel men, there's a natural focus here on the male side of sexual addiction. At the same time, female sexual addiction is going through the roof. And while this is only a guess, I believe that female sexual addiction is increasingly comparable to the male equivalent. While the relationship component will undoubtedly continue to be a major issue for women, I suspect that women are increasingly addicted to the buzz and the chemical high of masturbation, porn, and acting out sexually for its own sake. If this is the case—then

ladies, read on, because you'll find much in these books that addresses these specific issues.

Individual and Group

Basic Training! is designed for individual use as well as group settings. As the author, I strongly recommend that you go through this book with someone else—your pastor, a church elder, your best friend, a counselor, or best of all, a group of brothers or sisters. This will give you immediate accountability for getting the work done. You'll need the encouragement, prayers, discipline, and occasional kick in the pants from a brother or sister (the same sex as yourself), because breaking free of addictions is no small task. In other words, don't fight this war by yourself; form your own BOB (Band of Brothers) or BOS (Band of Sisters), and join forces in the war to change your life.

Second Edition, 5 Stages, and a Note for My International Readers

I split *Basic Training!* into 5 Stages so make sure you read all 5 books. Stages 1 and 2 focus on breaking free of sexual addiction, Stage 3 on spiritual warfare, and Stage 4 and 5 zero in on connecting with God, self, and others, while preparing you to move forward into Purity and Destiny.

Also note that I use WWII photos and comics because in America, something produced by the government is public domain and not copyrighted, which means I don't have to pay someone to use it. Given all the graphics in this book, it would cost a fortune otherwise. I'm thus primarily limited to pictures of the US Armed Forces, even though obviously many countries fought the good fight. So, for my international readers—please do not interpret the lack of photographic global representation as a slight in any way. I'm simply trying to be a wise steward with a heavily illustrated book.

