

Dr Monica's Intro to Impulse Control Tools

From her 15 hour Wholly Men Program



Pictured left to right -
Saint Agnes and Saint
Thomas Aquinas
receiving chastity cords
from angels

Postponement: Postponement is used by parents to distract children from their desires: "Sure honey you can have it in 10 minutes." Be gentle with yourself as you resist temptation 10 minutes at a time. Offer up this sacrifice of delay for a particular person and a particular issue, such as "I will delay acting on this temptation to sin so that my child has the grace to resist this same temptation." You must celebrate *your victory* of resisting sin for 10 minutes by thanking *God* for growing in grace and holiness. Every 10 minutes counts! You are building up self-control, 10 minutes at a time.

We destroy arguments and every pretension raising itself against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

Rescripting: Break up the script of your personal sexual fantasy by creating a new script filled with disturbing interruptions. Get creative with ideas that you find repulsive as you plan your own aversion therapy by corrupting your fantasy.

Let us set things right, says the Lord. Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow. Isaiah 1:18

Name and Reframe: Name a person for whom you feel lust. Pope John Paul II explained that he problem with pornography is NOT that it reveals too much of a person, but that it does not reveal enough of them. People in pornographic pictures have a name and a story. Put them back together again with a made-up name and an ordinary story. Pray for them by name to be set free from the slavery of being sex toys to others. Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *God is Love* that we can "give them the look of love that they crave." Our love and prayers can bring change and healing into their lives. Set the slaves free.

But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5:28

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Fire Drills with a Stop Letter: Fire drills are used to practice moving *bodies* to safety, so people will not get burned. They build up confidence in people for a timely escape. The frequency of the fire drill practice is the key to this prevention training. In the treatment of addiction, there is a helpful method that is also called a *fire drill*. It is used to practice an escape from habits of unhealthy behavior that is destructive like fire. Fire drills can be used to practice moving *minds* to safety, so people will not get burned. They build up confidence in people for a timely escape. The frequency of the fire drill practice is the key to this prevention *training of the mind*.

The simplicity of the method is the reason many people will not try it, but it is used successfully among desperate men and women seeking help for compulsion. Here is what to do: you must write a brief letter to yourself using language that you believe will help you to distract yourself from a specific impulse. You must include in the letter detailed instructions about **what to think** about instead of giving in to this old habit, and also **what to do**. The instructions in the letter must be your own ideas for becoming the person that you want to be. This will help to reduce your resistance to following the instructions in your letter.

If you choose, you could write: STOP. Slow down breathing. I rejoice that I have stopped! The reason I don't want to do this is because ... Right now I will *think about* ... AND [*what to do*] I will pray, or get a drink of water, or take a walk, or call my parent, friend, child ... Often people begin the letter with the word stop, but you need to try what may work best for you. Slow paced breathing for 10-15 minutes makes your blood pressure go down and relieves anxiety. This often helps to distract your mind. The key sentence used to escape addiction, in the best-seller book *The Easy Way to Stop Smoking* was, "I rejoice that I have stopped."

Anyone can write a stop letter to themselves and carry it at all times. Be careful not to include information that would embarrass you if someone reads your note accidentally. If the first one is not helpful, throw it away and write a new one trying out other ideas. You **must practice** reading it several times a day in order for it to be a fire drill. The goal of the practice is to ensure that the stop letter will be read when the impulse that "burns" you really occurs. Always keep it handy. Self-control is humanly possible.

These four tools are an excerpt from Dr. Breau's book *ABC Guidelines for Spiritual Battle*

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