

Counterfeit Love - Real Love: Takeaways

- When we are involved in behaviours that are destructive, there are deeper underlying causes. In David's case, insecurity played a big part in him turning to porn. For others, these behaviours can be different eg. alcohol, over-eating.
- David says that in the short term porn made him feel immediately better and then a lot worse.
- Caroline says that she played a part in creating a vulnerable atmosphere by having a fantasy idea of what marriage would be and not really engaging with the issue when it was presented to her by David.
- An affair happens when we **look outside the relationship for fulfillment** that should be found within the relationship.
- Addiction and affairs are different. The very nature of addiction and the impact it has on the brain mean that it is very difficult to deal with it alone - Knowledgeable friends and professional help are very helpful.
- Addicts are often very good at hiding their habits.
- Healing requires HONESTY... many fail to turn to others for help because they feel ashamed of the behaviour.
- David found his Christian faith very helpful. Christians believe that Jesus came to give us freedom from the things in our life that trap and burden us, including addiction.
- David found prayer helpful and one of his turning points came when he knew in his heart that "God knows me... I matter to God... I am loved by God... I am OK". The knowledge of this helped David to want to change.
- Changing involved being honest with Caroline (again) and asking for help.
- Caroline decided to trust David and to help him. She said "there was still goodness in the marriage". **They faced the problem together.**
- David said that it was helpful to him (in dealing with his addiction) to recognise that pornography is all about the abuse of women and he didn't want to be part of that.
- To rebuild their relationship David and Caroline had to do a number of things:
 - Be honest, open and real with each other
 - Together - deal with the addiction
 - Rebuild trust
 - Rebuild love
 - Rebuild intimacy (including physical intimacy)

Reflection Questions:

- For the men: How do you view women and sex?
- For the women: How do you view men and sex?
- In what ways do I look for fulfillment outside of my marriage?
- Do I have any addictions which I need help with to face?
- Are there any secrets that I need to be honest about with my spouse?
- In which areas do I need to concede my powerlessness and seek help?
- In which areas of our relationship do we need to rebuild love and trust?

Useful Resources for Christians:

- www.xxxchurch.com
- www.thenakedtruthproject.com