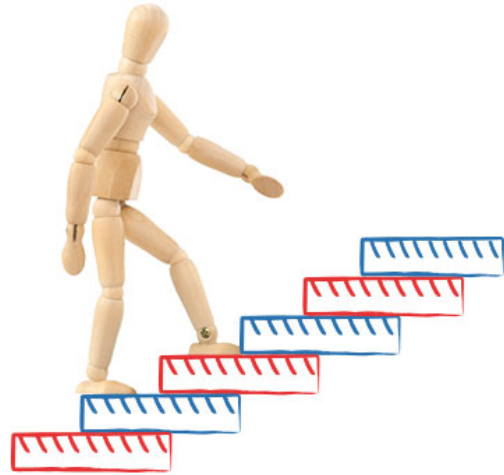


Module 4: Taking Responsibility

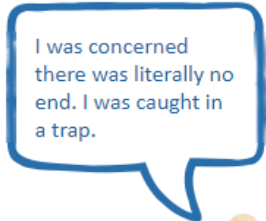
Objectives

This module aims to help you explore and gain understanding of the following:

- Your level of control over your current online sexual behaviours
- How you have used denial to allow your problematic behaviour to continue
- How to make immediate changes to start the change process



Anxiety is often a response to feeling out of control. When we feel we have lost control, we often attempt to regain it. When we fail, we feel a deep loss and our anxiety starts to build. This feeling can be overwhelming. It causes us to feel uneasy, discontented, and lost because we are always looking for something else to make us feel better. We often turn to short term fixes such as alcohol, drugs, gambling or sex to feel better. Sometimes these behaviours then start to feel they are out of our control.



Starting Point

Identify your past and current level of control (1 = very little control; 2 = some control; 3 = strong control).

My behaviour at the beginning of my Internet offending.	1	2	3
My behaviour as my on-line behaviour progressed.	1	2	3
My time spent on-line now	1	2	3
My time spent using adult pornography now	1	2	3
My time spent on accessing indecent images now	1	2	3

What do you notice about how your control has changed from when you first started looking at sexual images of children until now?

How does feeling out of control affect your mood?

How in control would you like to be in a year's time?

Module 4: Taking Responsibility

Denial

Denial is probably best explained in the book [Cybersex Unhooked](#).

Denial is the confused kind of thinking and reasoning used to avoid the reality of behaviour or the consequences of behaviour.

Denial is a way to manage and explain the chaos in your life and an effort to protect the online behaviour you believe you can't live without.

It is a way to deflect attention and responsibility. Here are some examples of excuses that represent denial. As you read through the list, make a note of any that sound familiar to you. (Delmonico, D.L., Griffin, E., 2001)

- "It was only once in a while."
- "I needed to get my needs met somewhere."
- "We are all adults."
- "I am just being a man and I have a high sex drive and men are more sexual than women."
- "At least I'm not as bad as so-and-so."
- "My situation is different from everybody else's."
- "Just this one last time and then stop."
- "Just this second time more and then stop."
- "Well, I've already started so what the hell."
- "I'm just looking and not saving anything to my hard drive."
- "I'm just looking and not saving anything to my hard drive."
- "I'm pretty sure it's all legal so it's ok."
- "A reward for lasting a certain period without accessing porn, so this time is ok."
- "I need to wean myself off rather than quit cold turkey."
- "I'm dealing with a lot of stress and need to unwind."
- "What she doesn't know won't hurt her."
- "My wife (husband or partner) isn't responsive to my sexual needs."
- "I deserve this."
- "It doesn't hurt anyone because..."
- "It's just my way of relaxing."
- "It isn't real because it is on the computer."
- "I only do this in private so it isn't affecting anybody."
- "I can stop any time I want."

Denial

Here are some examples of excuses that represent denial. As you read through the list, tick any that sound familiar to you. (Delmonico, D.L., Griffin, E., 2001)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "It was only once in a while." | <input type="checkbox"/> "It doesn't hurt anyone because..." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "I needed to get my needs met somewhere." | <input type="checkbox"/> "It's just my way of relaxing." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "We are all adults." | <input type="checkbox"/> "It isn't real because it is on the computer." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "I am just being a man and I have a high sex drive and men are more sexual than women." | <input type="checkbox"/> "I only do this in private so it isn't affecting anybody." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "At least I'm not as bad as so-and-so." | <input type="checkbox"/> "I can stop any time I want." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "My situation is different from everybody else's." | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Just this one last time and then stop." | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Just this second time more and then stop." | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> "What she doesn't know won't hurt her." | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "My wife (husband or partner) isn't responsive to my sexual needs." | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "I deserve this." | |

Module 4: Taking Responsibility

Here are some suggestions which can help increase your feelings of control:

Changes to your environment:

- moving your computer to a high traffic more public area of the home to make it less likely that you will access pornography;
- changing your employment if your current job brings you into contact with children;
- having a photo of your partner/children next to your computer so you think of them and what you are risking by accessing sexual images of children

Changes to your computer:

- having security software installed on your laptop so that you cannot access pornography;
- having a picture of a place you want to visit or prison bars as your screen saver or wallpaper (this can act as an incentive not to offend or a reminder of the consequences if you do);
- entrusting PC password to another person to limit access;
- set your password to be a reminder of something you would lose if you offend on-line;

Changes to when you go online:

- only use computer when others are in the room or in public places where you would not access the material;
- only use the computer for specific purposes such as internet banking, do not allow yourself to 'browse';
- unplug your wireless router at night so you have to make more effort to go on-line and therefore have more time to think about and stop what you are doing;
- get a mobile phone without internet access;

Exercise 1: What I can do.

Make a list of three things you can do to immediately reduce your risk of accessing sexual images of children, e.g.:

1. *Move computer*
2. *Install security software*
3. *Switch wifi off after 8pm*

NOW TAKE ACTION!

Module 4: Taking Responsibility

Reflection

As with the Introduction to this module, identify your current level of control (1 = very little control; 2 = some control; 3 = strong control).

My time spent online now	1	2	3
My time spent using adult pornography now	1	2	3
My time spent on accessing indecent images now	1	2	3

Now, consider the following questions:

- Have any of your responses changed from 1 to 2 or 2 to 3 since the start of this module?
- What have been the most positive changes you have made? Why?
- Has this module raised any further questions for you or made you want to explore any ideas further? What steps do you plan to take to seek out this information?

If you want to discuss anything covered in this module, have struggled with working through the self-help material or just want the opportunity to work through the self-help site with a practitioner to guide you then please [call the Stop It Now! Helpline](#) for confidential support from our trained staff.