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# Sex addiction given renewed attention

BY CARLA HINTON  0 Comments

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Craig Gross has been busy in the weeks since the news became public that golfer Tiger Woods was seeking treatment for sexual addiction.

Gross, founder of xxxChurch.com, said the scandal surrounding Woods' reported sexual infidelities has spotlighted the subject of porn and sexual addiction like never before.

The Web site xxxChurch.com offers commentary, software resources and other Christian-based information about the negative and widespread effects of pornography and sexual addiction.

In a phone interview, Gross discussed the subjects in the wake of Woods' public apology:

*Q: How did the Tiger Woods scandal put the spotlight on sexual addiction and the problems it causes?*

A: I think the Tiger situation has brought into the spotlight the line of work that I've been dealing with for eight years. (ESPN) "Sports Center" covered it because Tiger's a golfer. "ABC News" covered it because he's a celebrity because he's a golfer. We deal with porn and sexual addiction, so we covered it because he's the biggest celebrity who has just been treated for sexual addiction. And because of that, I've done more interviews on sexual addiction since Tiger's been in treatment than I have in eight years — specifically around those terms because people are wondering whether there is such a thing. We're going to take every opportunity to speak to that situation.

*Q: How are churches dealing with sexual addiction and porn addiction?*

A: Churches — just like the rest of the world — we're catching up to the fact that there are a lot of people struggling, who are sitting in church, who are everyday people. This is an issue that affects people no matter who you are, no matter what you do for a living. We started our ministry in 2002, and we had no churches that were willing to host an event with us. Now we're out almost every weekend at a church willing to host an event.

For us, we were probably early on this, as far as all the things going on online. We were still reacting, so I wouldn't say we were ahead of the curve.

*Q: What are some of the ways the church can rise to this challenge?*

A: We say it's the elephant in the pew. We don't want to assume an elder is struggling with this or the pastor is struggling with this. There are a lot of overweight people in churches, and that's accepted in society. I don't understand. The Bible says don't indulge your body with food and don't indulge your body with sex in the same passage, yet you don't keep a pastor in place who has had an affair or who has a sexual addiction issue. Because we've set such standards, people in our congregations who are struggling live in fear of someone finding out about it. I think the first thing from the pulpit of the church is to say, "Hey, these are real issues that affect all of us, and we're going to deal with it."

*Q: What kind of message would you send to people who are curious about this issue — porn addiction or sexual addiction? Maybe they know someone who is struggling with these issues or they are struggling with it themselves.*

A: Don't wait until you get caught. I watched that Tiger Woods thing, and I said to myself, "I hope to God I never have to do that ever in my entire life." It was awful. The Bible says sin is fun for a season, but it will come to an end. Another passage says sin will find you out. Tiger said, "I played by a whole different set of rules." Men who don't get caught with the first affair, or they don't get caught on their computer with a Facebook relationship, eventually they will get caught. This is going to come crashing down on you. You have to find a safe outlet, someone you can talk to. It could mean the difference between keeping your job or losing your job, keeping your marriage or losing your marriage.