

## LEARN HOW TO BEND SO YOU NEVER HAVE TO BREAK

By: Lynette Beer



"For many years my emotions were out of control. I always knew better and was constantly trying to change people. Worse still, I was always ready to take people down a peg or two. I used my tongue like a sword. This made me a difficult manager, a poor colleague and a critical friend. Often, after a confrontation I felt a miserable failure and realised that what I was doing wasn't right. Yet, I didn't know how to change".

Does some of this sound familiar? Do you find yourself judging and wanting to change others instead of focussing within, where real change can take place? To change our behaviour, we need to understand our emotions. And it's possible when we know the difference between temperament, character and personality. We can change some things whilst others are inborn. For example, **temperament** is the combination of inborn qualities which subconsciously influence our behaviour. The colour of your eyes and skin, whether you are tall, short, male or female etc are all genetic. It's a given and cannot change.

Our **character** is who we really are. It is shaped through our circumstances and environmental factors such as education, religion, principles, motives and attitudes of those around us. Sometimes character is called the soul of man and consists of the mind, the emotions and the will. So we might not have control over our environment, but we do have a choice over which influences we internalise as parts of our true self. And finally, our **personality** is the outward revelation of the inner man. It is what we show the world. Our personality may live in harmony with who we really are but for some people this is the mask they use to get acceptance from others. A mask can only deceive others and "protect" us, for so long, but eventually our actions will reveal our true selves. So, a change in behaviour must result from within and not from the outside. This is also why we can never change anyone else, from the outside.

All temperaments are born with a sinful nature. The upside is that when we understand our temperament and its natural behaviours, we can manage our natural weaknesses and concentrate on functioning in our natural strengths. We no longer have to live at the mercy of our temperament and our genetics. When we open ourselves up to others and to God we will better understand how the power of God helps us to overcome our weaknesses. We will come to understand that people are different. And they should be different because each and every one has a different purpose in this life.

Variety is certainly the spice of life and if we were to use colours to illustrate the various temperament types, we would see that there are four main personality types. One is often dominant but we can have a combination of all four in different amounts.

1. The popular "Yellow" temperament is extroverted, talks much, make friends quickly and are generally very optimistic but they are also motivated by emotion, find it difficult to say "no", are easily distracted and gets bored quickly.
2. The powerful "Red" temperament is extroverted. They are decisive, born

leaders, love a challenge and are well organised. They want outcomes but they might also be overconfident, unemotional, and opinionated and has little need for friendships.

3. The perfect "Blue" temperament is introverted, organised, accurate and analytical but also easily depressed, struggle under pressure and is very hard to please because they are so perfectionist.
4. The peaceful "Green" temperament is calm, likable, and reliable, balanced and often uses humour to bring balance in situations. But they also tend to be stubborn, hard to get moving, hate conflict and change and sometimes lack the energy to follow-through.



Lynette Beer

So whatever your colour, you can stop comparing yourself against others because we are all an interesting mix of genetics, characters, personality, strengths and weaknesses. There's further good news. We can **choose** every minute of every day whether we will depart from the **platform of light** or from the **platform of darkness**. Visualise two platforms for yourself every morning. One light and one dark, and know that you can choose where to stand and where to depart from. When we choose to stand in the platform of light we cultivate insight and try to understand others. We choose to accept and love others because they differ from us. When we choose the dark platform, we maintain an eye for an eye lifestyle and are often ruthless and judgemental.

I have learned that success in relationships is all about choice. You decide from which platform you want to start today. You decide if you will be driven by temperament, personality or character. Your decision has far reaching results for how you approach others. If you can learn to bend a little, you will never have to break.

### For more information

Audio messages on [www.seedsofinspiration.co.za](http://www.seedsofinspiration.co.za)

Facebook at: [lynettebeer](https://www.facebook.com/lynettebeer/) / [seedsofinspiration](https://www.facebook.com/seedsofinspiration/)

Twitter at: [@lynettebeer](https://twitter.com/lynettebeer)



I AM SORRY ☹️

## Yes, I relapsed!

By: Sorika de Swardt – Addiction Consultant

The festive season is a time of mistletoe and wine for many South Africans. For the addict it's a difficult time in which their strength is tested. There is always that friend, colleague or family member who tells the recovering addict: "surely if you've been sober for 10 years, one little drink won't make a difference"! Your answer should always be no, no, no! One drink, one drug use, one gamble, can instantly have you back in a place where you lose control.

Maybe you just had a once off use / slip (lapse), or perhaps you felt such a failure after that lapse that you lost control completely (relapse). You may feel that you are back to where you once started your journey to recovery. Either way, you will wish that you and everyone else could just forgive and forget and move on. But the gift of memory is a crucial tool in learning from, growing and overcoming bad experiences.

Our learning and life experiences are all stored in our memory bank and our growth and maturity is directly linked to the way we reacted in the past. Spending energy to try and forget all about a traumatic incident or events leading up to a relapse, equates in a sense, to denial of both the past and what the experience can teach us. The lesson lies after all in the memory. If something bad happens to us, our first instinct is to hide it, suppress the memories or to try and forget because it's so painful. But in remembering we acknowledge the past and affirm new possibilities for the future. We can carry forward the lesson the experience taught us and this may protect us in future from further pain.

In relationships we need to understand what caused the cheating, betrayal or breakdown so that we can make adjustments for the future of either this relationship, or the next one. Similarly, a recovering addict wishing to achieve and maintain real behaviour change should never forget where their weaknesses and strengths lie. So, the key is to turn a lapse or relapse into a learning experience (prolapse) that will make you better equipped to handle a clean and sober lifestyle in future. You can do this as follows:

- 1. Forgive yourself** – It happened and can't be undone. Sincerely apologise out loud to yourself and anyone else you might have hurt in the process and then don't waste more energy on guilt or worry and fear.
- 2. Manage your guilt and fear** – When you are anxious or feel guilty you want to have a drink or take the drug that used to make you feel better. A better way to handle this fear is by using the relaxation exercises you learned in rehab. Start now, not tomorrow. It will also help for increased cravings.
- 3. Manage the increased cravings** you experience after a lapse by identifying and re-engaging in other enjoyable things. They may not seem very exciting compared to drinking or drugs, but keep an open mind. Think about

activities or experiences you have always wanted to try but never did.

**4. Remember and document** in your journal exactly what happened leading up to and following the relapse. Was it running into an old using friend? Stressing about paying the bills or wanting to celebrate your performance at work?

**5. Immediately contact your sponsor**, therapist or support person who understands addiction and recovery. Together you can identify your previous blind spots and think of preventative and safety measures.

**6. Memories** are not meant to contaminate the present; instead they can empower us to find new strength and wisdom. Now that you know what you didn't yet grasp before, add the causes of the lapse to your **list of high-risk situations** so you can in future avoid them or plan for it.

"Falling off the wagon" is not all bad. Most people who eventually succeed in quitting find that this can be their best learning experience. If this happened to you recently, follow the steps above and then, **acknowledge, let go and move on.** Forgive yourself, but don't forget the lessons you've learned.

### FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

A date to remember and put in your diary: on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014, Elim Clinic will host its annual open day and we welcome any and everyone who would like to see "what really happens in rehab".

For more information please contact [info@elimclin.co.za](mailto:info@elimclin.co.za)

### Paulos Radebe – He just did it!

By: Peggy Ntswane – Therapist at Elim Clinic

Paulos Radebe (22), a promising Elim Athletics Club youngster, started his "running" career by chance six years ago. At the time he was an 11<sup>th</sup> grader and had no inkling about his own potential. He was not remotely interested in athletics as his hobbies were playing soccer and cycling. Paulos is an orphan and he was taken in by his uncle and aunt in 2003. He has a younger brother and they both live with the uncle's family consisting of four cousins.

"One day in 2008, a teacher came to our class looking for tall and slim learners for the school athletics team and I was naturally selected because of my stature. The same teacher also instructed me to train after school

# BEWARE OF THE "CROCODILE"

By: Suzanne Jacobs – Therapist Elim Clinic



Codeine, gasoline, paint thinner, hydrochloric acid, iodine and red phosphorous. These are the typical ingredients in the street drug known as Krokodil, a highly addictive toxic cocktail that is three times as cheap to produce as heroin but 8 – 10 times stronger than morphine. Krokodil is a Desomorphine (derived from morphine), with powerful, fast-acting sedative and numbing effects.

Desomorphine was first formulated in 1932 as a derivative of morphine in Switzerland. It was patented under the brand name Permonid. Krokodil emerged around 2002 from rural Russia as a cheap heroin substitute that anyone with access to codeine pills and a few other ingredients could make in their kitchen. Over the past ten years, it spread across the poorest communities, picking up an estimated three million addicts. It is also known as "the poor man's heroin". Krokodil is attractive primarily to those who are already addicted to opioids but who cannot get it due to cost or supply issues.

The high and euphoria associated with Krokodil is parallel to that of heroin, but lasts for a much shorter period. The effects do not extend past one and a half hours, with the symptoms of withdrawal setting in soon after. Krokodil addicts exist in a never-ending cycle of drug consumption and drug preparation (cooking up) due to the fact that Krokodil is so highly addictive and the effects so short-lasting. Withdrawal pain can last up to a month or even more, and it's excruciating. Krokodil users have to be injected with extremely strong tranquilisers just to keep them from passing out from the withdrawal pain.

The name "Krokodil" derives from the severe tissue damage incurred by chronic users. The drug causes blood vessels to break open and nearby tissue to die. At the site where the person injects themselves, the skin takes on a hardened, scale-like appearance. The person's flesh is eaten away right down to the bone. It literally destroys the user's body from within. If a vein is missed, the chemical is then injected directly into the muscle. The poisonous nature of this drug causes the muscle and surrounding tissue to develop abscesses and literally rot while on the body. Users can die of infection and gangrene or require amputations. Krokodil users are also instantly identifiable because of the iodine smell that infuses all their clothes. Meth comes closest to Krokodil in terms of physical damage, with the infamous "meth mouth" dental destruction and prevalent skin lesions that meth users get after chronic abuse of the drug.

Meth, better known as Tik in South Africa, is a stimulant drug. But even meth, as destructive as it is, doesn't measure up to the suicide high of the flesh-eating narcotic. Doctors dealing with addicts, states that if a person does manage to get clean from Krokodil, they may be left with permanent brain damage, a speech impediment, vacant gaze and erratic movements.

It seems as if the drug is beginning to make its way around the world, but unfortunately the statistics on cases reported are still limited. One can only hope that information and education will prevent anyone who wants to experiment, from doing so. And the message from Krokodil users is very clear – "not even once. One time will be one time too many and a thousand times will never be enough."

**Should you or a loved one need help with addiction, please contact Elim Clinic immediately on 011 975 2951.**

#### Sources:

- [www.valleyhope.org/drug-rehab/drug-rehab-crocodile.aspx](http://www.valleyhope.org/drug-rehab/drug-rehab-crocodile.aspx)
- <http://www.forbes.com>
- <http://www.drugrehab.us>
- [www.narconon.org](http://www.narconon.org)
- <http://www.independent.co.uk>



Suzanne Jacobs



## Support group for supporters

Every first Wednesday of the month at 17:00 at Elim Clinic we run a support group for those who support others. This is an open invitation to any family member or friend of someone who struggles with addiction. It is free of charge and aims to give information about addiction and teach supporters how to take care of themselves.

**For more information please contact Cheryl Easterbrook, Psychologist at Elim Clinic on 011 975 2951.**

*at the soccer stadium where I met Action Ramaboea and the Elim Clinic Athletics Club team members. Action invited me to train with them and a few weeks later I was part of the team."*

Paulos looks back with gratitude on the day he met Action and the Elim Clinic Athletics Club. He says it gives him a sense of belonging and he likes the athletes' camaraderie. Paulos is routinely winning prizes and he gets top 3 positions about twice a month. The Clover race and the SA 10km Championship races, both run in

September 2013, were his fastest with completion times of 37 and 29 minutes, respectively. He wants to continue running the 10 km races until he becomes a South African champion in that category. He plans to move to the 21 & 31km races and make a smooth transition into the Comrades' in three years time.

His role model is Johannes Kekana who runs for Bonitas and is also Paulos' coach. He is also inspired by his fellow team mates Action Ramaboea, Shoki Lechaba and Mokento Galane.

But none of this came without effort and Paulos trains daily for 2 hours. And in true Elim Clinic spirit, he "pays it forward" by coaching the 16-30 year old group of athletes. On average he coaches between 15 to 20 people daily and participates in up to 4 races per month. Paulos is that example of someone who was given an opportunity and chose to grab it with all he has. And the outcome changed his life.



Paulos Radebe

# Internet Pornography Addiction

By: Sorika de Swardt, Addiction Consultant

## From Innocence to Obsession

Only 12 years old and innocently browsing through hundreds of free downloadable games, books, videos, and applications. *Click, click, click* and "oops", without any warning the wallpaper picture of a naked girl appears. The first of many openly pornographic materials you can download from the internet for free. You don't need to be 18 years old or have a credit card. You just need to be connected to the internet on your phone, tablet, iPad or computer.

"At that moment, I wanted more," said Jason, now 18 years old. "I downloaded it and watched it over and over again. It felt good." Jason had no idea how deep he would get into the x-rated world of online pornography and cyber sex. Neither did he know how difficult it is to leave this world or how it would damage his perception of relationships, woman and intimacy. "My love affair with porn stole the past 6 years of my life and I can never get it back," says Jason.

Experts say that the age of first exposure is continuing to fall and is currently around 11 or 12 years old. Not every teenager or adult who are exposed to pornography will become addicted, but Pam Hall, an expert in the field of sex addiction explains, "Porn is like a gateway drug. Just like with cannabis, many people will use the gateway drug and never become addicted, but others most definitely will."

## Impact on teenagers

Even if you don't become addicted to pornography, the damage is far-reaching especially on children and teenagers. (1) Research on 13 - 14 year-old males who watched Internet pornography, X-rated videos and read pornographic magazines, evidenced that these teens were nearly 10 times more likely than their non-viewing peers to have engaged in sex. (2) Teens who watched violent pornography were six times more likely to engage in sexually aggressive behaviour compared to non-viewers. Teenagers are at great risk for pornography addiction because they are not biologically mature enough to exert the cognitive control they need to suppress the sexual cravings, thoughts and behaviours that were elicited by the pornographic content they saw. They cannot always connect their behaviour to a possible consequence that may occur should they try out in real life what they see on the internet. The internet also doesn't teach a teenager to ask the other person's consent for sexual engagement, or to respect it when they say "no".

When one looks at pornography, you only see two people having sex and there is no context. There is no reference to the romantic process of dating and courting that we should go through before getting onto a serious relationship. There's no warning about sexually transmitted diseases and no talk about the importance of mutual consent and respect for your own and another person's body. And most of all, it does not allude to the fact that sex should not be the starting point but rather the expression of love that follows a very deep and intimate emotional connection between two people in a committed relationship. Adults normally already experience and learn these important facts, but teenage years are the prime time for learning this.

## Warning signs

There are some red flags that should concern a parent. Anyone of these on their own does not mean a child is watching porn, but it is reason to probe

further. Things like:

- Any shift in attitude (like a calm child becoming one ridden with anxiety or aggression)
- Any shift in behaviour (a social child who now prefers to be alone all the time)
- Being extremely guarded of personal property especially of devices that can connect to the internet.
- Locking doors for long periods of time.
- Hiding phone screens or changing web pages when you enter the room.

## What can you do to prevent your child from seeing pornography in the first place?

The use of filters on networks and individual devices can successfully block many of the x-rated material, but not everything. When filters don't work and pornography pops up, or when it's sought out intentionally, you no longer find static images only. Today's Internet porn is high-speed, high-definition and increasingly filled with violent acts. So young Internet users should be told of the dangers and should know enough not to click on unidentified links or email. Programmes like "CovenantEyes" can assist parents with internet accountability and filtering. They also have software available to stop temptation from knocking on the adults own doors.

Licensed clinical social worker Matthew Bulkley spends his days helping children and teenagers who got hooked on pornography to work past feelings of guilt and shame, and then teaches them how to manage negative emotions in positive ways — without turning to pornography. "No longer can we do the 'birds and bees' talk at age 12 and then not talk about it again," says Bulkley. Parents



Sorika de Swardt

should be engaging in deep and potentially difficult conversations with their children about healthy sexuality and teach them that the inability to say "no" can have life-long impacts.

## Recovery and behaviour change

Recovery from pornography addiction means retraining the brain by creating new non-pornography related pathways, and then staying on those new paths. While it's difficult, it is possible, thanks to the regenerative abilities of the human brain. But like with all addictions, the addict can very seldom do it on their own and professional help should be sought.

The best remedy against the damage of pornography and sex addiction remains education and prevention.

## Resources

1. Jane Brown: 2009 "Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors Associated With U.S. Early Adolescents' Exposure to Sexually Explicit Media,"
2. Center for Innovative Public Health Research (CiPHR), San Clemente, California
3. Bertha K. Madras. Department of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School
4. [www.covenanteyes.com](http://www.covenanteyes.com)



## Donations

We thank you for your continued support

- Mr Robyn Davey



## Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

Facebook: Elim Clinic Professional Addiction Treatment Centre



Twitter: @ElimClinic



LinkedIn: Elim Clinic Professional Addiction Treatment Centre

Website: [www.elimclin.co.za](http://www.elimclin.co.za)



133 Plane Road, Kempton Park  
PO Box 88, Kempton Park  
Email: [info@elimclin.co.za](mailto:info@elimclin.co.za)  
Tel: 011 975 2951  
Fax: 011 970 2720