

How to Develop Effective Internet Safety Plans with Adult Clients Who Have Sexually Abused

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Introductions



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What brings you in today?
r from
the topic



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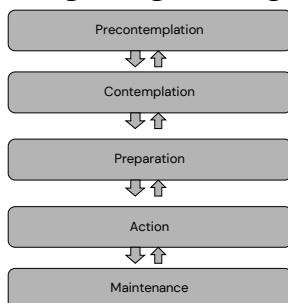
Learning Objectives:

- 1) Describe how to initiate and have conversations with clients in preparation of safety planning for internet use
- 2) Explain how internet safety planning contributes to stability for clients
- 3) Identify the essential components of an internet safety plan
- 4) Guide clients in their navigation of the sexually suggestive environments of media platforms and explain their subconscious influence



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Safety Planning Along the Stages of Change



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1. Pre-Contemplation

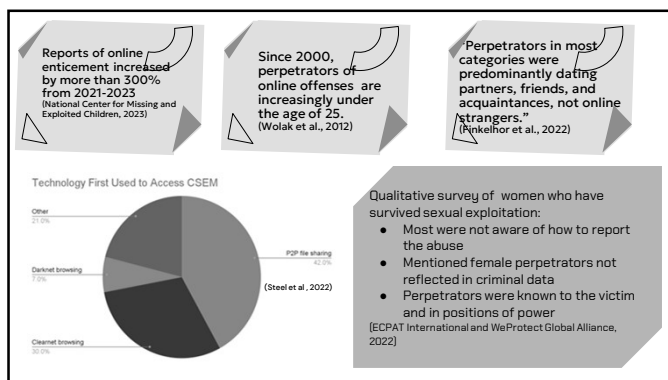
“Everyone looks at stuff online—it’s not like I’m hurting anyone.”

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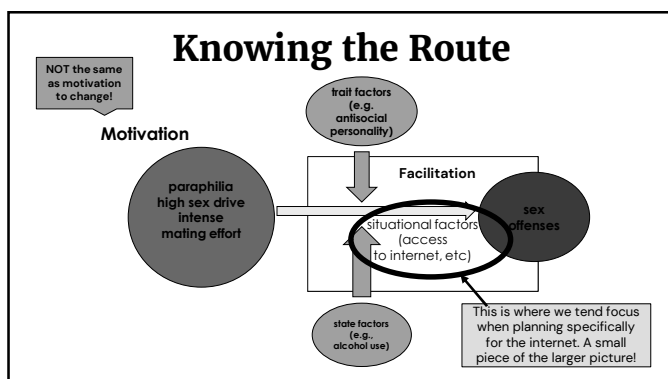
Internet Facilitated Offending

- Child Sexual Abuse Media
- Sextortion
- Online enticement
- Child Sex Trafficking
- AI-generated abuse imagery/Deep Fakes
- Non-consensual pornography/media sharing

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Online Disinhibition Effect

- Feeling anonymous
- Feeling invisible
- Ease of Disengagement/ Escape
- Blurred lines of reality and fantasy
- Real world rules and social norms don't apply
- Perception of equality

(Suler, 2004; Suler 2015)



Kevin finally gets to use what he learned in his online self-defense class.

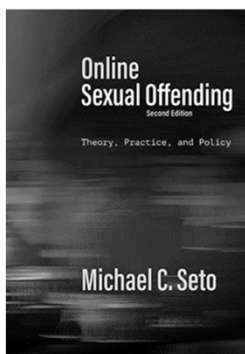
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Specific Risk Factors for Online Offending

From a 2023 Systematic Review (Steene et al., 2023):

1. Cognitive Distortions
 - a. Harm Minimisation and Wide Availability
 - b. Children as Sexual Agents
 - c. Fantasy Driven
 2. Difficulties with Relationships (both intimate and non-intimate)
 3. Managing Isolation, Loneliness and Boredom
 4. Low self-worth, poor psychological health, impulse challenges
 5. Interest in offense supportive sexual material
 6. Child Abuse Images as reinforcing for emotions
 - a. Removal of aversive emotional states
 - b. Supplementation of pleasurable states
 7. Hyper-sexuality/sexual preoccupation
- One more:
- Problematic General Internet Use

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2. Contemplation

"I want to stop some behaviors, but part of me still wants to keep doing them."

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Who is the plan for, really?

WHAT CAN I DO DO GET YOU INTO
THIS INTERNET SAFETY PLAN TODAY?



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Therapist goals vs Client Goals



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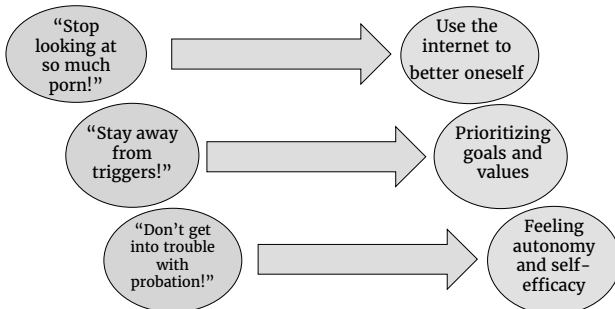
What is the plan for, really?



- Safety planning origins in relapse prevention models
- Relapse prevention limited by:
 - Motivation to change
 - Predictability of client pathway to the undesired behavior
- Enhancing effectiveness by:
 - Addressing trauma
 - Developing healthy lifestyle

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Avoidance Goals vs Approach goals



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For Adults: Protective Factors from the SAPROF-SO

1. Adaptive Schemas
2. Empathy
3. Coping
4. Self-Control
5. Attitudes towards rules and regulations
6. Sexual self-regulation
7. Prosocial sexual interests
8. Prosocial sexual identity
9. Intimate relationship
10. Goal-directed living
11. Work
12. Leisure activities
13. Social network
14. Emotional connection to adults



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Considering Developmental Stages: Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood



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Pornography as Sex Education?

TABLE 6. Teens who say they have learned the following from online pornography
(among teens who have ever viewed pornography)

By demographic	TOTAL	Age 13 to 14	Age 15 to 17	Cis Boy	Cis Girl	Transgender/ Nonbinary*	LGBTQ+	Non- LGBTQ+
How to have sex	79%	78%	79%	85%	72%	81%	86%	77%
How to talk with partners	48%	48%	48%	51%	43%	51%	54%	46%
What types of partners I find attractive	72%	71%	72%	80%	61%	76%	80%	69%
What sexual behaviors I am interested in trying	72%	69%	75%	82%	61%	77%	81%	69%
About human bodies and anatomy	79%	78%	81%	83%	74%	87%	85%	78%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to feel pleasurable to me	73%	70%	75%	82%	61%	78%	81%	70%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to NOT feel pleasurable to me	64%	64%	64%	71%	55%	76%	75%	60%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to feel pleasurable to a sexual partner	73%	70%	76%	82%	64%	78%	82%	71%
What types of sexual behaviors are likely to NOT feel pleasurable to a sexual partner	60%	60%	62%	68%	51%	72%	67%	60%

* Small base size. Interpret with caution.

Common Sense Media. (2023). *Teens and pornography*.

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For Adolescents and Emerging Adults: PROFESOR Risk and Protective Domains (Worling, 2017)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Hope regarding sexual future | 11. Self Regulation |
| 2. Respectful Sexual Environment | 12. Problem Solving |
| 3. Sexual Beliefs and Attitudes | 13. Responsivity to Guidance and Support |
| 4. Sexual Interests – Focus | 14. Self Esteem |
| 5. Sexual Interests – Frequency | 15. Intimacy and Friendship |
| 6. Knowledge of Laws and Procedures for Respeful Sexual Relationships | 16. Relationship with Caregiver |
| 7. Knowledge and Consequences of sexual offending | 17. Parent/Caregiver practices |
| 8. Strategies to Prevent Sexual Offending | 18. Engagement in School/Work |
| 9. Compassion for Others | 19. Engagement in organized leisure activities |
| 10. General Values and Attitudes | 20. Living Arrangement |

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Motivation Barriers for Safety Planning

- "I learned my lesson, I'll never do XYZ again!"
- "My computer is monitored, I'd have to be an idiot to do something illegal on there"
- "I don't need to do this, I haven't had a sexual thought since I got arrested"
- "I don't have a problem with the internet"
- "I always viewed porn on my computer and now I only have a smartphone"
- Perceived threat to self agency
- Responsivity issues - why might this task be too challenging?
- Trauma and nervous system dysregulation



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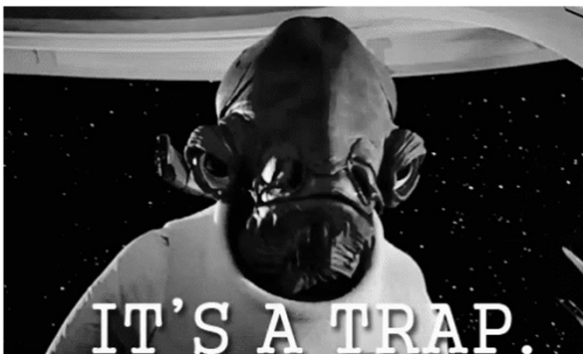
Motivational Interviewing Refresh

- OARS
 - Open ended questions
 - Affirmations
 - Reflections
 - Summaries
- Developing discrepancy
- Rolling with resistance
- Prioritizing self-agency and autonomy

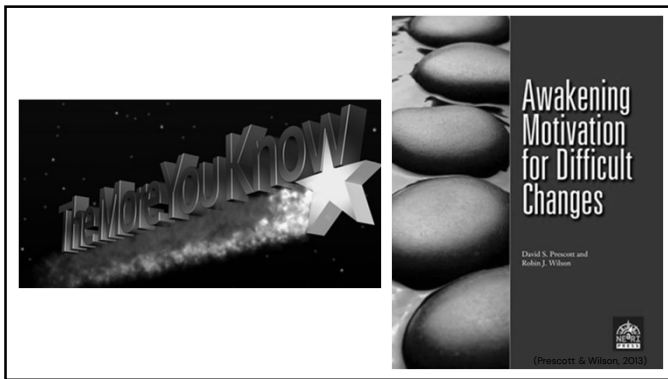


The "Spirit of Motivational Interviewing" as imagined by AI (more on that later)

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Your client is ready to change, but is he ready to plan?

- Insight into risk
 - Patterns of Behavior
 - Problematic websites/platforms
 - Risk factors at the time of the offense behavior
- Insight into goals
 - How to meet needs
 - Values behind online behavior

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3. Preparation

“I know I need to be mindful when I go online, but how do I actually plan?”

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Is formal planning specific to the internet right for everyone?



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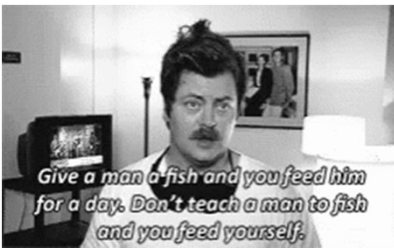
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Chat: What is the goal of an Internet Safety Plan?



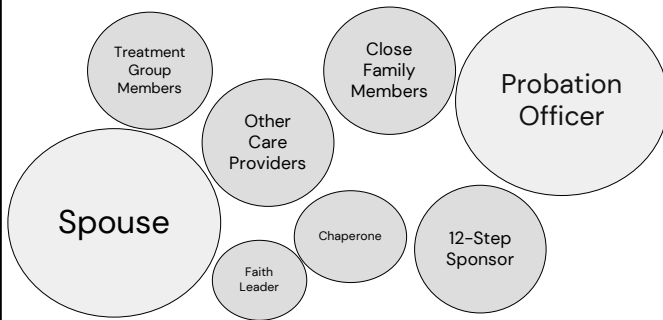
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Setting Intentions

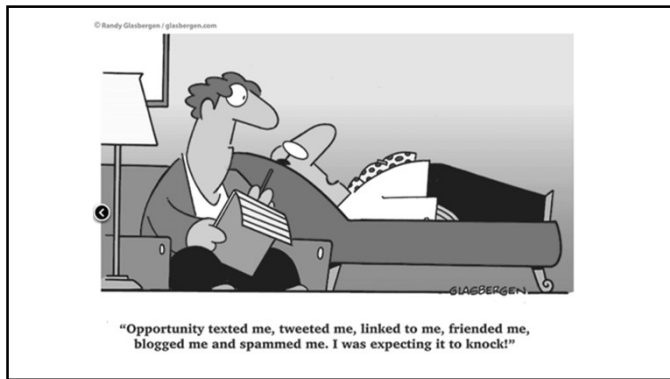


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Collaboration Considerations



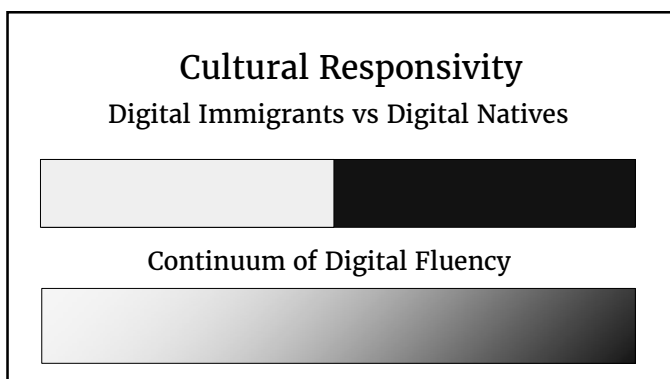
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How does internet use vary?					
Internet Purpose	Culture	Devices Used	Age	Socio-economic background	Cognitive Abilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -News and information -Communication and Social Engagement -Education and Learning -Entertainment -Shopping -Accessing Services -Work and Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Country of Origin -Religion -Family Influence -Social norms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mobile Phones -Laptops -Desktops -Tablets -Gaming Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Varied digital literacy -Perception of online relationships -Normative Balance online vs offline differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Access to reliable internet -Shared devices vs individual devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Varied digital literacy (again) -Internet or personal device access

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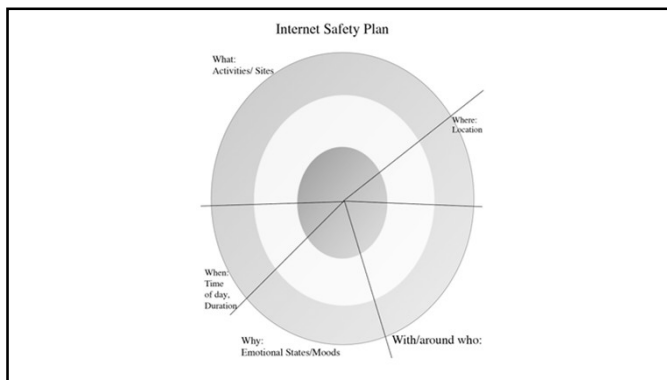


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“The price of anything is the amount
of life you exchange for it.”
- Henry David Thoreau

“the cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run”

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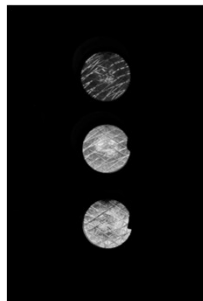


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Red: Unacceptable, unhealthy,
harmful behaviors/sites, moves
the clients away from their goals

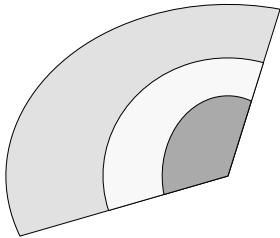
Yellow: It depends, proceed with
caution

Green: Acceptable, healthy
behaviors/sites - moves client in
the direction of their goals



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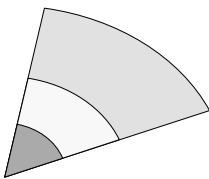
WHAT are you doing online?



- Activities
- Specific Websites (assumptions about "safe sites")
- Patterns of computer use
- Compulsive Research
- Media Multitasking

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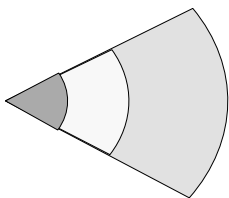
WHERE are you when you access the internet?



- In a bedroom? Door open or closed?
- Basement Office?
- In your car? Bus?
- Bathroom? At work?
- Living area where others congregate?

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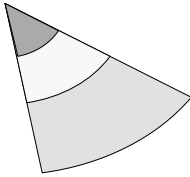
WHO are you around/with when you're online?



- Alone? In the house or in the room with you?
- Friends?
- Family?
- Is this person supportive?
- Are you hiding anything you're doing from anyone?
- Has anyone ever

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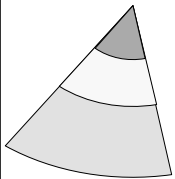
WHY are you going online?



- Using the internet to cope?
- What thoughts do you have?
- What is your emotional state right now?
- How do you feel when you're done?
- HALT

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WHEN are you going online?



- Time of Day
- Length of time? How many hours?
- Frequency of use?
- Timing within your routine? Ie. after work, before anxiety provoking events?

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Using the Internet for Sexual Gratification



Pros?

Cons?

What questions would you ask to determine if this could be done in a healthy way?

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Cybersex Map Worksheet

[illegible]

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1. Does my fantasy, tool for stimulation, or sexual behavior hurt me (emotionally or physically)?
2. Does my fantasy, tool for stimulation, or sexual behavior hurt another person?
3. Is my fantasy, tool or behavior within the conditions of my supervision/treatment?
4. Does my fantasy, tool, or behavior reinforce unhealthy sexual interests, distortions, or illegal behavior?
5. Does my fantasy, tool for stimulation, or sexual behavior interfere with my functioning/ ability to meet needs in other areas?
6. Am I using my fantasies or sexual behavior to cope with negative emotions or maintain positive feelings?
7. Am I hiding my fantasies, tools or behaviors from others?
8. Is my fantasy, tool or behavior consensual in nature (age, capacity, intent)?
9. Have I attempted and struggled to stop this using this tool or engaging in this behavior in the past?
10. If the tool is media based, who is the intended audience?
11. Does this behavior or tool move me in the direction of my goals or away from my goals?

[illegible]

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Escape Toolkit:

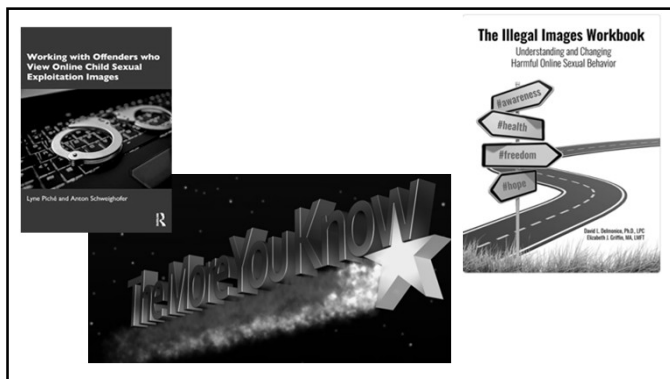
Short-Term Distress Tolerance Strategies (DBT)



Activities – The more variety of options the better! Exercise, hobbies	Pushing away– Distractions, thought stopping strategies
Contributing- Opposite action, doing something positive	Thoughts- Thought exercises, urge surfing, logging urges
Comparisons – Comparing current to past distress, gratitude	Sensations – Soothing with the 5 senses. Cold water
Emotions – Emotional film/music, journaling, art	Other- Meditation, breathing exercises,

[illegible]

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4. Action

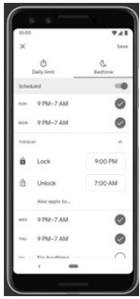
“I’m using my safety plan to guide my daily routines—when I go online, where, and for how long. It’s helping me feel more in control.”

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Don’t forget...

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Additional tools to use with internet safety plan:



- 1 Computer/Internet monitoring
- 2 Time out/tracking apps
- 3 Timers/alarms
- 4 Journaling/logging
- 5 Ad blockers
- 6 Safe Search Filters

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Digital Fluency is a moving target...



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2025 considerations

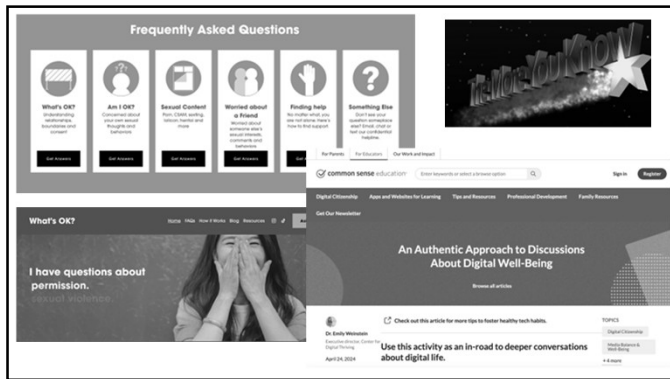
Intended and unintended technology affordances facilitate behavior

- Short form video and content suggestions
- Amplifying effects
- Anonymity and social reach
- Offending because it's "easy"



(Roberts & David, 2025; Seto 2025)

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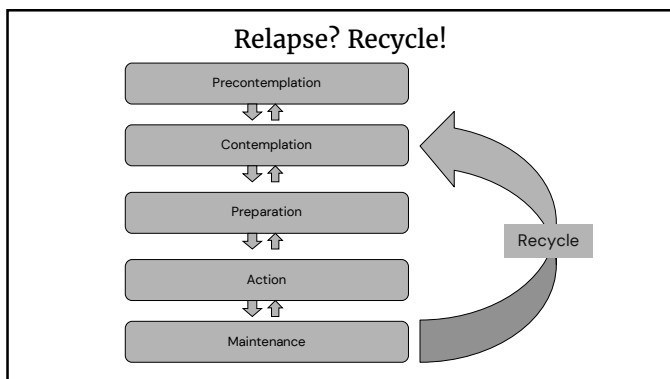


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5. Maintenance

“I can tell when I’m slipping toward risky behaviors, and I know how to respond.”

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Steps to Take After a Lapse

Pause & Reflect – Breathe, avoid shame, journal

Reach Out – Contact your therapist, group, or accountability partner

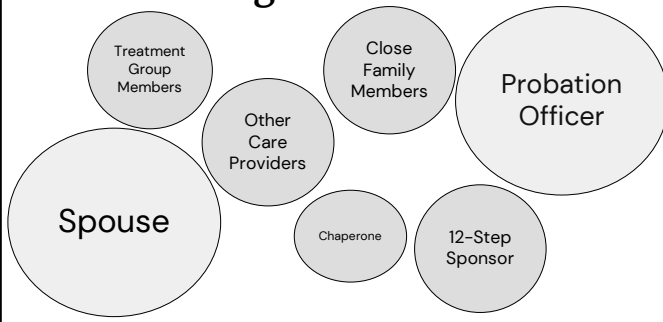
Re-engage with Supports – Update your safety plan, attend meetings, explore deeper triggers

Rebuild Boundaries – Block triggers, reinstall filters, set device limits

Recommit Daily – Practice grounding, journal, track progress, remember your approach goals

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So we meet again...



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A reminder about time...



Sexual reoffending rates are highest during the first few years after release and reduce by about half for each 5-year period of sex offense-free time in the community.

(Hanson et al., 2014))

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Thank you!
