

## 027 How Idiots Track Success

Hey, welcome to Pornfree Radio. This is Matt Dobschuetz. Today, we're talking about how idiots track success and more. Thanks for joining. It's a holiday week here in the United States. I have a couple of days off in a row and there's a lot of holiday time, family time. There's also a lot of unaccountable time. If you're struggling with porn addiction and kind of trying to get a handle on relapses and stuff like that, unaccountable time can really be dangerous.

I thought I would just share one thing that I'm doing this week to kind of help me plan my time and prevent any chance of a relapse. What I've done is something real simple. I've taken out the calendar and looked at every hour that's unaccountable time. So, for this week, my kids are in school, my wife is at work on Monday and Tuesday this week. I have looked at those days and basically taken one hour blocks and just applied them to many different things: exercise is one of them, doing the podcast is a couple hours, I have a doctor's appointment I have to go to, I'm setting up lunches with friends, I'm getting out of the house to go to coffee shops and things like that. So I'm not ever alone too much and there's always something to be done.

This is just really important when you are entering in a vacation or entering a period where you're out of rhythm or out of schedule. For me, it's really easy to stay porn free when I'm keeping to my schedule and keeping to my routines. And when I break routine, that's where I can get kind of isolated or that's where I can get a little entitled or get a little disconnected. So I highly recommend if you have any off time in the next couple of weeks, or as we get towards the end of the year with the Christmas and New Year's holidays, just take a look at your calendar and write it in.

I actually went into my Outlook calendar and blocked all these things as meetings. So every 15 minutes or 15 minutes before the end of every hour, I get a little buzz on my phone that tells me what the next hour is supposed to be doing, what I'm supposed to be doing. So I really recommend that because the holidays can just bring up different emotions and feelings, especially if we have to spend time with our families. Sometimes that can be a good thing. Other times when you are with extended family it can trigger you and just bring up negative emotions. So you want to have a plan going into the holidays.

Speaking of a plan, if you look at the end of Episode 5 which is at [pornfreeradio.com/5](http://pornfreeradio.com/5), I share a planning exercise that I have used going on trips. But it also can be good for holiday planning. It's called the T-UP plan. You can get that... the episode's called Pornfree Travel, Hotel Tips and Trip Planning, but it would be good if you're going to spend some time visiting your parents or going home or any of that type of holiday activity it's helpful to go through an exercise where you plan what your potential triggers are, what the unsafe places that you can't go to, and think about your trip ahead of time.

An example would be and you can listen to it in its entirety, but an example might be if you're going to your parents' house and they have unfiltered Internet and cable, then you might make a plan that you are not going to go on the computer when you're there or you're not going to go... you're not going to stay up late watching TV by yourself. That might be an example of an unsafe place or something that's unsafe for you.

If you're going back to your hometown and there's old friends there who may be could be triggers, you might not go to a bar to meet them, that type of thing. So you can listen to that in that episode and get some ideas for planning your holidays.

One other thing I wanted to mention before we get into today's topic is my good friend Craig Perra from The Mindful Habit is having a webinar, I believe it's December 3rd on a couple Wednesdays from now. If you're listening in the future, I'll have a link to Craig's site so you can find out more information about him. But if you go to [pornfreeradio.com/craig](http://pornfreeradio.com/craig), that'll take you to the webinar page and you can sign up. [Now link takes you to The Mindful Habit home page.]

Now, the reason I share this is he did a free webinar last month and I had a blast listening to it. He taught some ideas for... kind of a lifehack for porn addiction and he also taught some other great things. I had a great time. I was in the chat room, and there were about 250 people in the chat room talking to one another and kind of sharing stories and sharing things and it was all live. Super fun and there was no commitment, you didn't have to pay for anything. It wasn't a big sales pitch. But I just had a great time.

He's doing another one. I think he's committed to trying to do one a month or one every other month. So whenever they pop up I will definitely jump online and listen and be a part of the chat room. I welcome you to do it, too. So again, if you want to get information of his new webinar and it's coming up and it's called like 5 fundamentals. I'm sorry he called it the Fundamental Five: Five Things You Must Do to Create a Great Life and End Your Porn and Sex Addiction. Definitely check it out, [pornfreeradio.com/craig](http://pornfreeradio.com/craig).

I am an affiliate for Craig's coaching service. If you use that link and end up buying some of his services then I'll get a short commission, or small commission, but I've been a part of the program, I've been able to go through some of his modules and check it out and I really like what he's doing. And again, I had a blast being on the webinar. I kind of at the spur of the moment jumped on the webinar, and ended up having a great time last month. So, I definitely recommend that. Go to [pornfreeradio.com/craig](http://pornfreeradio.com/craig) for that.

All right, let's get into today's topic. How idiots track success. OK, so you're probably wondering what's up with this title? Where I got how idiots track success from. And it comes from my other world. I'm in the world of Internet marketing and I work for a company and we run a couple websites. How idiots track success is actually an acronym for HITS. So when you're running websites a statistic that people throw around is how many hits the website had. It'll be used like last month we had 1.2 million hits. Now hits are usually page loads so they don't really tell you how many customers or subscribers or how many sessions you had from actual users.

Sometimes you'll hear people talk about unique visits. That's hits a little more refined into a unique visitor which is a little more helpful because it kind of tells you how many unique people came. But even that isn't that specific because if someone cleared their cookies or someone came a couple times but on different computers, they actually wouldn't be unique. So you think three people came to your website but actually one person came to your site three times. That's the basic idea – so even unique visitors is not very helpful to really measure the success of a website.

Now it's one measurement and as that grows, as hits grow or unique visits grow, that shows something. It shows more interest, it shows sometimes it can be equivalent to your sales growth. You might see... if you see a spike in interest to your pages you might see a spike in sales. There might be some not correlation but you might see some patterns that are similar.

But we would be foolish to measure just hits as our success. There's lots of other things that we can do to measure the success of our website. To measure what we like to focus is return on investment (ROI). We spend this much – how much are we making.

The way you start determining that is you start looking at other things. You look at how much sales do you have? How much time did people spend on your website? How many pages did they look at? Did they look at two pages? Did they look at three pages? Did they look at four pages? Did they go to a page that you really wanted them to look at? For example, if there was a promotion or a rebate did they get to that that week or that month that you were running it? Did they watch the video that explained something? Those are all different things that we look at.

Now with social media we look at did someone share this page? Did they share this rebate? Did they share this excitement? All those type of things go into measurements that we can look at to measure our success.

You know another way to look at it is have you ever been at a manufacturing company or a company that actually builds things and you go to the shop floor or the line floor and there's a sign that says, days without an accident? And it says like 117? Now when you see a sign that says, "117 days without an accident," that seems good relatively. I don't know, is that a good, is that good for a shop to go 117 days or a line to go 117 days without an accident? Sure.

But is it a good... have they been efficient? Have they had good production? Have they saved costs? Have they... what about the quality of the products they're manufacturing? Has it been good quality? Have they had any returns or defects or any recalls? The "days without an accident" number doesn't really tell you how well a plant is operating. It just basically tells you how well they're operating without making an accident.

So, you're probably wondering why... how this ties into porn addiction and it's simple. The measure a lot of people use to determine whether they're doing good or bad with porn addiction is the days they've had since a relapse. While this could be a powerful number, with the absence of any other data, with the absence of any other measures, it's kind of meaningless.

Now I'm coming up on 5 years which is a great number, I love telling people that. Of being porn and masturbation free and I'm real excited to get to that number. I believe it's January... gosh, I gotta look at the actual date, it's the middle of January that I'm going to get to 5 years and I'm super excited about that. But what does that tell you about my success? It says that I've done a lot of days and I've done this and I've done that but does it tell you what I've learned? Does it tell you what I'm doing to stay sober? Does it tell you the steps or... what are the other things that are making me successful?

So I wanted to give you five other ways to measure success when dealing with porn addiction. The first one comes from Shelley Hitz, that's H-I-T-Z, not like the acronym I just said. But Shelley Hitz wrote a book called [Christian Women and Porn](#). Shelley posted a [blog post](#) and I'll try to link to it in my show notes just about one thing that she did. What she did is tracked her victory days (V) and tracked her no victory days (NV).

So what she did is she printed out a calendar and it's like a 30 or 31 day calendar. It's just a blank kind of Outlook template or Word template. What she would do and she actually in this blog post shows like June of 2000 when she was really working on her own recovery. I'm sure she's still working on recovery, but that was kind of in the midst of the beginning, I think.

Anyway, what she did is every day that she went without porn or masturbation she would put a little V for victory in that day's calendar box. But if she fell, if she had a relapse or reset, she would write NV for no victory. But she just wouldn't stop there. She would actually track what the triggers were that day. So she would write down loneliness or she'd write down that she was sad or there was something going on. She was stressed out, she would write whatever the trigger was that day.

What she had at the end of the month and as she did this for several months in a row, what she started to have was she had this different way of measuring her success. She could first see that she was still having more victory than no victory. But even on the day that she had to write NV, she started to get other data. What were the triggers that were causing her to get off track? She started to see a pattern in her triggers, a certain type of trigger that was hitting her.

So what she ended up with was if she was just measuring hits like we normally do she would look at a 30 day period and I'm going to pull up her calendar right now so I can tell you exactly what it looked like. OK, so she didn't track the first two days of June, so she starts on June 3, 2000. She has a victory 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, looks like she has 8 days in a row. So if she's just tracking her days she gets to eight.

But then on the 11th day of the month, June 11th, she has a no victory. She mentions her triggers that day are loneliness and she was overwhelmed by some emotions and so she had a no victory day. OK, so then the next day she has a victory. So she gets to one day. But then, she has a tough five days where there was no victory every day. She was lonely, lonely, lonely, lonely, lonely. Five days in a row. So she's at zero.

Then, she finishes the rest of the month strong with 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, eight days. If she was just measuring hits, she would get to the end of the month and she'd feel like, I'm only at 8 days. You know, I'm at 8. I can't get past a week, or I can't get to two weeks. And she would feel bad about herself. Or any of us would whenever we are struggling and we're only getting 4 or 5 days in a row or we're only getting to 8 days.

The temptation is to look at ourselves as a failure. We are susceptible to the lie that says if I can't do this perfect, then I can't do it. And that's not true. Well, what's interesting about that phrase, if I can't do it perfect then I can't do it, the truth is, that's right. You can't do it perfect. But it's a complete lie that you can't do it, that you can't be pursuing recovery and in a healthy way.

The point of this is, is you want to track your victory days, and if you don't have a victory day, write down your biggest triggers that day and what you'll have is something more valuable at the end of the month. You won't just have a number. You'll have some real data about what happened.

So now if you look at her month, I'm going to count the days real quick and this is tedious, I apologize, I should have done this ahead of time, but let me count. So I'm going to just count victory days for this month: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. So out of... she tracked for about 4 weeks. Out of 4 weeks she got 17 days. So her percentage is pretty good. She's has more victory days than no victory days. Then on her no victory days, she still tracked what the triggers were. Consider doing that as a way to measure how you're doing.

Ideally over time those no victory days, if you're making changes and updating your plan a little bit and looking at your triggers and proactively thinking about your triggers... For example, if you keep seeing lonely every month like Shelley had on her list, maybe there's some planning you can do. When I feel lonely, I can do x. Or I noticed I get lonely every Tuesday. So what can I do on Tuesdays to counteract that loneliness? That type of thing, once you start doing that...

Ultimately, you should start getting to a point where you have less no victory days each month. So you can measure how you did each month. Did I do better in July than I did in June? That's one thing we measure a lot in marketing is we measure how we're doing month to month. An even more powerful measurement if you do this over time is year over year. So for example, when you factor in seasonality...

For example, I used to struggle a lot in January and February with porn relapses. I started looking at my relapses over a few year period and I noticed in particularly December, January, and February I had the most relapses. Now, I live in Chicago, Illinois which gets really dark in the winter and it's cold and rainy. Right now it's about 40 degrees and there's ice cold rain outside. It's just miserable. If I was just sitting around the house with nothing to do it would only be a matter of time before this weather would really start to affect my mood and then affect my feelings of being lonely and possibly trigger me.

So over time if you look at seasonality, that's another thing you can do. Did I do better this December than I did last December? And that's a long term perspective. But if you track and if you sort of start to measure this you can start to see trends and start to take action based on what you're seeing. So that's the first way you can track your success other than just your days. Track your victory days, track your triggers.

Here's another one. Track your check-ins. This is when you reach out either to an accountability person or a friend or if you're a person who goes to 12 step meetings like SA, track your meetings, track your connections with people where you're specifically getting together to talk about your addiction and talk about your recovery. Now as you go on... Now when you first start off, I mean I've heard of things of guys going to 90 meetings in 90 days, that kind of thing, something to really get a good foundation of connection when they first get into recovery.

So you might, that might be important for you to really just track every day am I reaching out, am I going to a meeting am I connecting with people? Because when you're first kind of getting out from under porn, you need that daily contact and feedback. But as you go on, that's not quite as necessary to get together every day. Now for some of you it might be, I don't want to make a unilateral statement.

But even for me when I look at my weeks and I'm not falling into porn but when I look at my emotions I usually do better if I have some meaningful connection time with a friend every week. So a week that I don't get that kind of connection time, you can see over time a pattern of where I feel more lonely or I feel more disconnected. So track your check-ins and your meaningful connections with other people. That can be really powerful in just seeing how you're doing.

I mentioned in an [episode](#) [22] a couple weeks ago that isolation is one of the main, biggest reasons for a trigger or for a failure is getting isolated. So if you are staying connected with people, if you are keeping that communication open if you're being honest about what's going on with you, what's coming up in your head, then you can be proactive about getting isolated and getting disconnected which can be a big trigger.

So, track your victory days, track your triggers, track your check-ins. Now you don't have to do all these things, but those are two different kinds of things.

Here's another one. Work on accomplishing a goal that takes time. So for example, when I was kind of in the middle of recovery, about 5 or 6 years ago, I set a goal to run a 5k. So I did one of those couch to 5k programs where you would run a little bit every day and you had breaks and you had a schedule to follow. That was really helpful. It was something else to focus on.

I think about a quote that Craig Perra from [Mindful Habit](#) said on the show. It's like focus 50% of the time on traditional recovery so that would be your check-ins and your tracking, reading and that kind of thing. Then spend 50% of your time kicking ass in life, finding those activities that are life giving and going after them. When you think about quitting porn, find something that you can start to focus on as something to help.

Something that can be life giving and something that kind of can take some time to accomplish: so run a 5k, or take up a new language, or give yourself a reading goal, join a book club. I mean there's all sorts of things you can do. Teach yourself how to program a computer. If you can think of things that help your career, do those things cause at the end of the day, you'll be giving up porn, a bad habit and then you'll be making new habits which could potentially become profitable for you.

I mean if you spent the amount of time that, if you moved the amount of time that you spent masturbating and looking at porn into learning a new skill for your work or your company or your business, you could potentially be making more money by that certification or that learning and you would actually be profitable. You'd actually be making money by channeling your emotions and your addiction into something that's life giving. So accomplish a goal. Focus on that. Track that.

Another thing that kind of goes along with this is track self care. What are the things that help you stay porn free? Is it those meaningful connections with people? Is it running or exercise? Is it getting a massage every once in a while that's just a non sexual massage that just helps you relax and experience healthy touch. Is it going to church or something with your spiritual life? You know, what are the things that are helpful for you? Is it going to a therapist? Is it going to a group, a support group? What are the things that you're doing in your life that are good self care things?

So again, if you were tracking self care if you had Shelley's calendar and maybe you're writing a little S in each box when you do something good for yourself that's healthy each day. If you don't have any S's at the end of month in your boxes well that's a problem. I'd be curious to see what the correlation is between no victory days and when you have done something good for yourself when you've practiced self care. So that's another thing that you can track.

If you came to me, let's say I was coaching you and you came to me and I said give me your calendar and show me all of your self care days. Show me all the things that you're trying to accomplish goal wise and show me your victory and your no victory days. And if all you came to me with is a calendar that just said that just had a whole bunch of no victories and everything else was blank. You know there were no check-ins, there was no self care. You know what I'd say is like well, there's nothing that is helping you. There's no planning that's going into place that's going to prevent these no victory days.

Because if you're getting triggered through being isolated or lonely, that type of thing is mitigated, is actually proactively dealt with by your goals, by your check-ins, by your connection with others, by your self care. So if you're not doing any of those things, well of course you're acting out, of course you're not having victory days.

All right, one last way to measure success and this is kind of something that's more of a long term type of thing. But measure the time between relapse and getting your plan fully back in place. Here's the way I describe this is back when I was struggling a lot with relapsing. I would relapse for a day or two and kind of binge and then I would immediately stop the behavior but I would not tell anybody. And I would just sit with the shame and the sort of defeatedness for a couple of days.



Then I'd finally tell my wife, or I'd tell a men's group, and then, but I wouldn't have a plan put together, I'd just sort of blurt it out, kind of vomit my confession and then it would take another week of sort of feeling slightly better with a little more victory, and feeling a little more open. Then like two weeks would go by and then I'd kind of set up a consequence or I would set up a plan or I'd start doing something a little differently so I wouldn't fall back into it. So it would literally be three weeks, four weeks before I really had everything in place to help me stay porn free.

And what I noticed over the years as I got better at sort of recovery as doing all these things that we've been talking about: checking in, setting goals, looking at what happened in terms of what my triggers were, finding out what self care really helped me. What I realized is I can put things back together a lot faster. So even today, if I relapsed today, I'd say by Wednesday of this week, so it's Monday right now, I'd say by Wednesday of this week I would have a full plan put together and to be back on track.

Because basically I would relapse today and I probably wouldn't get through the end of today without checking in with someone. I'd probably call my partner, accountability partner, or I have kind of a back up person that I can call. I'd probably have a hard conversation with my wife. And then by tomorrow, I would be putting together my plan about whether I needed to go to a group or what kind of consequence I might want to put in place just to help me continue to make good choices. I would probably tomorrow be reaching out to some of my overseers in ministry and my pastor. And so you know by Wednesday, I would be implementing the plan.

And you can do that. You can just, when you do have a relapse, take a look at your planning and your response to it. Does the response time get faster? Do you stop acting out before it becomes a binge? For example, is it just a one time thing that you quickly get under control and bring into the light or are you allowing yourself to binge for a whole weekend?

I've found that some of my biggest failures have taught me the most about recovery. I have had some relapses that have helped me figure out where I'm weak, what still triggers me? What are unsafe places? I think I mentioned this, I had been doing pretty well for a year or two and I was goofing around with a this is an old, this is going to date me a bit, I was goofing around with a modded Xbox that had Internet and some video stuff on it. I can't say that I was completely innocent in this. I was kind of trolling through some video type boards and I found some porn.

I don't think I had ever planned that my Xbox was an unsafe place or that there was something dangerous about it. But after I acted out with it and told everybody about it, all of a sudden, the Xbox had to be put under the plan. That the Xbox couldn't be connected to the Internet, or that the Xbox couldn't be used

without a parental password that my wife set up. So you learn that this is a vulnerable place that using the TV or using the Xbox is vulnerable and is an unsafe place for me to do without any sort of oversight or any sort of accountability. So you learn that thing.

So measure the time between relapse and putting your plan back in place. So yeah, just to reiterate, so track your victory days, track your triggers. That's one way to measure success. Track your check-ins or your meaningful connections with others related to recovery. That's another way. Set a goal and accomplish it. Measure...

One thing I forgot to mention is... maybe make yourself a goal to read a book on your struggle this month. If you get to the end of the month and you have 6 or 7 no victory days but you read a powerful book about recovery that would be a successful month. That you'd be learning stuff and becoming more aware about what you're struggling with at the same time and it's not just about the number of days that you get.

Accomplish a goal. Track your self care, then measure the time between relapse and plan in place. So that's it. That's the five ways that you can track success, other than just the days.

One last thing I wanted to mention is when you can, celebrate big wins. This could be getting to a one year mark. This could be getting to the 90 day mark. But it could also be hey, I've read 6 books on porn addiction. Or I've... I had a night where I was getting really triggered and I made a phone call late at night and stopped acting out.

Sometimes you see this on reddit or some of the boards. People will post something about a close call in which they made a good choice. Really celebrate those things because those things are significant. They point that you are really committed to change and that you're committed to doing things differently. So celebrate those things when you do accomplish something, when you have a big win, share it. Don't just share the failures with your accountability partner or with your small group. Share the wins because that builds hope in others.

You know I'm going to finish with one last comment that's tied into this. We, a lot of times in the groups that I run, I'll ask someone how was your week? And they'll say good. And good means that they didn't act out with porn or masturbation. But that's all it is. They didn't act out. The good doesn't imply they did anything beneficial, it doesn't imply that they accomplished any goals, it doesn't imply that they reached out or weren't isolated. It just basically says they didn't act out. It was like I went 7 days without an accident. And then, of course if they do have a failure, then it's a horrible week. And that really ties into that thinking if I can't do this perfect, then I can't do it. Both of those things are... well, that kind of thinking

is not helpful. You're never going to be able to do this perfect, but you can do it. They're not tied together. You can walk this out.

If I ask you if you're having a good week, or how was your week, what I want to hear is the bad things that happened, I want to hear the good things that happened. I want to hear the full picture. I don't just want to hear your days. I don't want to track success just by the amount of days that you were porn free.

All right, well we're going to finish there. And I want you, if you're in the US, to have a great holiday week. I hope you get a chance to listen to this before Thanksgiving and if you're outside the US, well I thank you for listening and I'm thankful for you. One of the things we do here is we kind of talk about things we're thankful for. I'm thankful for you listening. Have a great week and we'll talk to you soon. The show notes for this show will be at [pornfreeradio.com/27](http://pornfreeradio.com/27). That's [pornfreeradio.com/27](http://pornfreeradio.com/27).

All right, if you need to reach me this week you can reach me at matt at [pornfreeradio.com](mailto:matt@pornfreeradio.com). That's a secure email that only I read. I would love to connect with you if you have any questions, if you have any suggestions for the show, feel free to reach me there. You can always check out [pornfreeradio.com](http://pornfreeradio.com) for past episodes and you can see how to follow me on [Twitter](#) or check out our [Facebook](#) page.

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