



## ***The Remarkable People Podcast S1E16***

### ***The Kirsten Samuel Story***

[00:00:00] **David Pasqualone:** [00:00:00] Hello friends. This is Dave Pasqualone. With the Remarkable People Podcast. Season one episode 16 the Kirsten Samuel story.

**RPP Intro/Outro Reel:** [00:00:10] the remarkable people podcast. Check it out, the remarkable people podcast. Listen, do repeat. For life.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:00:33] Kirsten, thanks for being here today.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:00:35] Thanks for having me on your show. David, it's a pleasure to be here.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:00:38] Oh, I'm excited to have you. I was thinking of this last night and this morning. I'm really excited cause this is a huge topic that people need.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:00:45] Yes, it is.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:00:46] Yeah, so if you haven't met Kirsten, you are going to be in for a treat. She is an author, a coach, a speaker, and we actually met through another one of our guests, April tribe, Duke, and she has not only a story, but she has, she has a ministry to help you that her and her husband do together. And well, I don't want to steal her thunder.

I want to give you a quick overview of what to expect. today in our society, we have an overwhelming amount of men and women getting addicted in a hook by pornography. Yes, we have the moral core and are, are just values are not only dropping, but our senses were being desensitized to what is modest and what is.

Right. So this episode, she's going to talk a lot about that now her focus will be on the women, correct? Correct. The effects of pornography on women. However, I want to make this aware up front. There's going to be value for men and women in this episode. The rate of women getting involved in porn is actually a faster statistically than men and the adultery rate women and men on both of us, men and women.

We're all need to be careful. We all have to be careful with this. We all have to keep ourselves clean and pure. But I don't want there to be this false sense of security that women today are actually being attacked more than the men and men. You know, we've had historically for years had this issue, but none of us are right?

So I'm looking so forward, to cursed into what you have to say, how we can all help each other and move forward and grow. so basically the format that shows, we know. Is we're going to go through your past obstacles that you had to face, how you overcame them, and practical steps so our listeners can succeed as well.

And then we'll go off into where you are today and where you're head in the future so we can help you.

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**Kristen Samuel:** [00:02:43] Awesome.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:02:44] All right, well, we'll take it away.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:02:45] All right. Well, my story doesn't start out that way. That's interesting. Really. I grew up in a small town, in Northern Minnesota. I grew up in a family of a very stable family and it had been stable for generations.

I was very blessed in that regard. I grew up with 35 different relatives within about a mile and a half of me. So I,

**David Pasqualone:** [00:03:10] I mean the country.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:03:13] So I, yeah, I was very blessed. I felt accepted. I was loved. I was told to, you know, that I could do whatever I wanted to do. I just grew up in this beautiful environment.

And, but I was hiding something that I will get to later. My husband and I met, at a, at a Christian college. We were both students there. We got married after my husband graduated from college, and he grew up in a stable home, a great environment. Again, you know, these idyllic backgrounds. And about 13 years ago, our world fell apart.

And the reason was that my husband was secretly addicted to pornography and, he was addicted to pornography on the internet. He had been exposed to pornography as a young child. So the statistics are true that most of us get exposed to pornography before the age of 11, and my husband fell in that category.

I also, when I think back to it, was exposed to pornography, right about that age. When this happened, he actually got caught at work. He was working for a major Christian organization. And, they, they saw his internet history and caught him and he came home one night for dinner, didn't look good, didn't eat much for dinner, and I couldn't figure out, he was very quiet.

And, and then all of a sudden he looked at me and he said, it's very likely that I will not have a job tomorrow. And I was just shocked, why, you know, what was going on? And he told me because of a moral failure. And my stomach dropped. I sat down very quickly and I said, what do you mean?  
[00:05:00] And he said, I'm addicted to pornography and I've been looking at porn at work.

And they caught me. He proceeded to tell me the whole story. And I sat there in shock. And in a nanosecond I went from shock to anger, to disbelief, to deep, deep pain, to believing. That I had no value, that there was something wrong with me. And then I believe it was David, the Holy Spirit who said to me, you need help and you need it now.

And the very next words I said, were, first of all, he needed to tell our children at the time, our youngest child was in college overseas. Our daughter had just gotten married, two months earlier and, our other son was getting ready to head off to college and I knew that they needed to hear this information from their dad.

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One of the reasons was that our daughter, worked at the same organization as my husband. And I didn't want her learning that her dad had lost his job by watching him be escorted out of the building the next day. And so he, he went and talked to our da, our son, first of all, who was home and getting ready to leave for college.

And then he called our daughter and our new son-in-law. And. God is so gracious. David, both of them, all, all three of them at the time, for gave them for, gave him immediately and said, we know that this is not the man that we grew up with and we're so sorry. How do we help? Wow. It was, it was truly amazing.

and then the next thing I said is, I think I need to make a call to, one of my coworkers. She and her husband are licensed counselors, and I knew we needed help immediately. And he said, go ahead and call them. So when I called them, I just said, we need to talk to you. We're in trouble. it's very, very serious.

And they agreed to meet us within 20 minutes. we couldn't call our other son at that time because of the time difference. But within the next, few days, my husband made a call to our youngest son who was overseas, and had to leave a message for him. but that's another part of the story. when we met with our friends, we received immediately one acceptance.

And when we blurted out our story, the very first thing I remember saying to them was, this is not fatal. And we needed to hear that because in my mind, my marriage was over. I was worth nothing. Who was this man I was in? I was in anger. I every lie that I had ever believed about myself came to the forefront and was screaming at me.

From that point on. The next day, my husband, also agreed to meet with a, a man that we had been in a small group with. He and his wife, a small group Bible study for many years, and I said, I think you need to call him because you need to talk to somebody. My husband had to come to, to work the next day with a plan of action of what was he going to do.

It was his only hope to keep his job

**David Pasqualone:** [00:08:07] no home before you go on. When Kirsten and I were talking last week, I actually had a stocker. I'm like, don't tell me more. Don't tell me more. I want to hear this on the show. So a lot of what she's going into, I haven't even heard yet, so I'm super excited. But for this part, the day he got dismissed, correct me if I'm wrong, they said, you know, basically think through this, come back tomorrow and give us.

The reason or reasons why we should not fire you.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:08:35] Yes. And a plan of why, of what you will do so that you're not going to do this anymore.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:08:39] So all of that stuff you just described, that the thoughts are going through your head. The thoughts are going through his skin, having to explain it to his child, your children, having to talk to them, having to him on the claim.

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This is all going on in a 12 hour period.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:08:53] Yes. Yeah. It's 12 hours.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:08:55] Yeah. Mental, spiritual, emotional chaos. Right. I just want to make sure that's clear to the audience. So now continuing.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:09:01] Yeah. So he did, he did go and after meeting with our friend, he had a, they did put together a plan of action and, went to his employer to present that plan of action.

the next day, my coworker and I had agreed to meet, to pray together, while he was meeting with his employer and the HR department because it was very likely that they were not going to accept the plan. Well as I was getting ready to walk to my coworker's office, my phone rang and I almost didn't answer it, but my, the receptionist at my office buzzed me and said, it's your husband and my heart just.

I mean, I was already devastated, but I don't, didn't think it could go any lower. But it did. And he got on the phone and he said, I've already had my meeting and I still have a job, and I couldn't believe it. And he proceeded to tell me some of what had happened in there. He said they. You know, I presented the plan that we talked about and [00:10:00] they've accepted it.

They've asked for a couple of extra things. and tonight we're going to go meet with our friend and his wife because we need to talk through what this plan of action looks like. Are you okay with that? And I just said yes. I, I was stunned. I hung up the phone. I walked to my coworker's office and burst into tears and told her what had happened.

Tears of gratitude and an utter panic at the same time. it was, it, I, there are not words for me to describe the emotions and the devastation that was going on within me. we did put this plan of action into place. it included that he had to see a counselor that they recommended. he did, and he had to do that within one week.

He did do that within, about, I think it was the first or second day after he was, after this was brought down, that counselor referred him out to another counselor in our area who specialized in sexual addiction. Meanwhile, we met with our friend and his wife, and we laid out a plan, for something that's called a restoration team.

And, it comes from the book redeeming the fallen. and as they laid this out, I remember walking into their home that night. Now keep in mind, this was 24 hours after the bombshell had been dropped in our world, had just literally shattered to pieces. I walked into their home and saw my friend, and the first thing she said to me was, you can cry if you want, and I burst into tears.

I didn't know you could cry as much as I had been crying. And I sat there as we talked through this plan and they laid out this plan of the whole restoration team, and it's called a spiritual care team, is another word for it. And the reason is, is that this is a group of people handpicked by the couple who is in crisis.

and one of the main criteria is David, is that they have to be, have a very strong relationship with the Lord and believe in the power of prayer. . they have to be able to walk with you for 18 to 36 months, so

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get that in. That's it. That's a huge commitment that they walk with you and basically they agree that they are going to go through the, the muck and the mire with you to get to a point where you are standing back on your feet.

Because at this point in time when this happened, I wasn't standing at all. I was a crumpled heap on the floor. My husband was not much better. I didn't believe at this point, I wasn't even sure my marriage would survive. I wasn't sure I wanted it to survive. Let's be honest. Yeah. I was wounded to the core, and yet, and yet there was a part of me that said, I hate divorce.

I hate divorce. I hate, I hate the thought of divorce item. I would be embarrassed to be divorced. What's going to happen to me if I divorce my husband, you know, is, does he really want to get over this? Will, could he even get over this? All of these questions that were throwing through my mind, the voices in this questions and the pain in my head was so loud.

I re I really couldn't hear much else. And when they asked me, you know, do you agree to this plan? I just nodded and I said, I guess so. I don't have anything better. And I, but I had no hope. Now I knew that I had been told this was not fatal, but I didn't have any hope at this point because I believed my marriage.

And at this point we had just celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. I believe that the last 25 years of my life had been a lie.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:13:47] Now let's ask, let me ask you a question. When you spoke with him, you were married 25 years, his bombs just dropped on you. You feel like everything's a lie. You don't know what to believe, and that's a normal, a normal response for an abnormal situation.

But sadly, it's a normal situation these days. You know what I mean? But when this was all happening and going on.

The emotion you're feeling, it's tearing you every direction. What did he admit at that point? How long the addiction was, or was it he was hard. It was hard for him to say, did he lie to you? What was his response in this?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:14:32] I could tell. The other thing that gave me hope is I knew I knew him well enough at this point to know.

That he really was broken. I mean, he, he was trying to do anything in everything he could to make it up to me at this point, but he hadn't fully grasped what he had done to me [00:15:00] because he had never acted out on the pornography. Thankfully, he hadn't gotten far enough in the progression of pornography addiction to begin to act it out.

In other words, he had not physically had an affair. He had not gone to, sleazy bars or strip joints or anything like this. It was all an online addiction. And, But that doesn't, doesn't negate the pain that the addiction causes. When he met with this new counselor that specialized in sexual addiction, one of the very first things the counselor asked him was, do you believe that your addiction has, you know, has wounded your wife?

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And he goes, well, yeah. And he goes, no. Do you believe that in your wife's eyes you've committed adultery? And my husband said. It stopped him in his tracks. And then the next question is the one that really got him to start thinking a different way. And that was what is it worth to you for your wife to be healthy?

And that's a key question. And when, when my husband Dave faced that. He came home and he, he had this very stunned look on his face and I, you know, we weren't talking a whole lot at this point. I was trying to, I was trying to be a good Christian wife. I was trying to forgive, but I had so much mess going on inside of me that it's amazing that I could have one concrete thought when he looked at me and he said, I have to ask you a question.

And he said. My counselor asked what it was worth to me or if you know, if, if I thought that this had really hurts you very deeply and what it was worth for me for you to be healthy. Then I said, well, how did you answer him? And Dave said, I want you to be healthy and it's worth everything in the world to me.

And then he said, do you feel betrayed? Do you feel. You know, has, how, how wounded are you? And I said, you've committed adultery in my eyes and you have cut me to the deepest part of my being and destroyed me in a way that no one else could destroy me. And that was the beginning of the honesty between the two of us.

You see, up until this point, David, we were living a lie. Because as we progressed and the result of this was we, we ended up going through what's called an intensive marriage counseling. Okay. and we did this in conjunction with his group of, of six people that we handpicked who became the spiritual care team.

And they, they coached us. we had in there, we had the, the, the couple that we originally met with, the very first couple that were counselors, they were part of this team. They're the initial couple, that we contacted who, who told us about this concept. And then we had another couple that were, friends of ours.

We didn't know them very well, but we knew their faith in God. And we knew that we needed somebody that we could both agree on. That would be strong and would pray. And we knew that about this couple. And so we were meeting with them and then we went through our intensive counseling. and when we got to the intensive counseling, we had to take a whole battery of tests within the first day.

And the, you know, the first time we sat down in the counselor's office, I don't know about you, but sometimes you have, you hear the term and you have an image of someone in your mind what they kind of look like when you're going to go meet with them. And I had this image in my mind of this counselor, and when I met our counselor, he didn't look anything like my image.

In fact, he completely took me off guard. He looked to me like an English professor at Oxford. Okay. And, it was, it was just, it was just an a so told me, took me completely off guard. Well, in our very first

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meeting with him, we had to go through a battery of tests. We had to take them home. we were told that we went through four hours a day, five days a week.

We could watch no television. We couldn't. We did not, we took time off from work.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:19:18] How long was this intensive?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:19:20] It was a week long,

**David Pasqualone:** [00:19:21] one week long,

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:19:22] one week long. And we had homework to do every night. and it, it really was intense. but we came home that night. We had this battery of tests, and so, you know, they were those, the ones that I was hated for school, where you have to fill in the blank, you have to fill in the circles.

All right. You know,

**David Pasqualone:** [00:19:38] and

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:19:39] you have to kill into all these, you know, and you have to fill in the circles. And if you don't feel them right then to the test doesn't work and yada, yada, yada. You know, all of that. I hated those things. Well, I sat down and I, and, and at this point in my mind, I was still, I was still really in the anger stage.

And I was like, this is, this is my husband's problem. He has done this to us. He has basically thrown me away, thrown [00:20:00] away my marriage, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I'm just going to finish this test. I can make it say whatever I want it to say, and it doesn't really matter cause this is not about me. This is all about him.

Now, before I go any further, there is one, there was one thing that happened just before this that. Made me make the decision to stick this out. Okay. And that was that we had gotten through to our youngest son that was overseas in school, and he'd finally called back and my husband had told him what was going on.

and our son's response was pretty much like our other kids. He was very gracious. He said, dad, I'm so sorry. I forgive you. You know, how's mom? He talked to me and then got off the phone. Well. A week or two later, we were, working, at a conference, which was part of what my husband did. And, I got a phone call and it was my son from overseas, which was quite unusual.

and as I'm talking to him and he was asking me some more questions, all of a sudden he came out and asked a question that stopped me in my tracks. And really made me make a decision about what I was going to do moving forward. It had nothing to do with my husband, but had everything to do with me.

And that was, mom, do you love my dad?

And I couldn't answer that right away. but in that moment, David, it w I felt the Holy spirit nudge me. And remind me that love is not a feeling. Love is a choice. It is a decision. It is an act of the will. And in

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that moment, I knew that God had not given me permission to walk away from my marriage. And at that moment I'd had to tell my son, I do not like your dad right now.

I don't like being around him. I don't trust him. He has broken my heart. He has wounded me to the core. But to answer your question, I love him because I am choosing to love him and I was choosing to trust God. That was a pivotal point for me, which becomes very important when I go back to the story of the counseling session, because two days later, as we get into the counseling session and we get the reports back, Oh, that was about a day and a half later.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:22:39] Can you actually pause? Sure. I'm going to have you pause, and this is why you're unpacking a lot, and as the listener. There's some really, really huge statements you've made that I want to go back on before you go forward. I don't want to stop your flow, but already like that. What you said, love is not a feeling.

It's a choice. It's an act of the will. Talk a little bit more about that because that is true, and that's something that our societies abandoned even within the walls of

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:23:10] the church.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:23:11] Right? It's not a feeling. It's, it's a choice. It's. I mean, the basic most true is God is love, right? And he chose to love us and he made that act of the will.

But for the every day T please talk about that. And I know it's painful, but you're in pain. You feel betrayed, you feel all these just conflicting emotions into the point of hate. I'm sure. Talk about how despite someone harming you, the person that should be closest to you, that you can trust blindly. How do you love them?

Talk about

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:23:46] that, please. Well, they want to make a distinction here and be very, very crystal clear on this distinction. I was not suffering from any kind of physical, emotional abuse. I want to be clear on that. My husband too, one of the questions that I asked initially was why didn't I know. Because my husband was one of the most tender.

He still is one of the most tender, compassionate, gentle, considerate men I have ever met in my life. He never treated me, you know, in a way that would indicate there was an addiction. Now there were warning signs. And on my website, there's a free book that's called the 10 warning signs. Your gut already knows some of that was written, or the majority of that was written from the signs I blew over.

Okay.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:24:44] And we'll put a link to that in the show notes. They can click on the right to your website. Download it.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:24:49] Yep. It's right there. and I encourage people to get that because there's subtle and though that's why I miss them. so. [00:25:00] Love is a choice. In our society, we talk a lot about romantic love, and that's in my, in my, my mind, that's not a true description.

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It's the, it's the either the file O if you want to use the Greek or the arrow's love. It's the fluttery butterfly feelings we get in our stomach. It's the, Oh, he makes me feel so good. You know, it's what the movies tell us love looks like. You know, it's, you know, they fill your world. They make everything right.

They, you know, if you can figure out every, every ideal dream, whether you're a man or a woman of how that other person is going to treat you and make you feel and you wrap it all up. That's called romantic love. God's love is sacrificial. God's love says, I am going to treat you. I am going to care for you.

I am going to honor you, respect you, and treat you tenderly no matter what you do. Now again, we do not ever cross the line into abuse. Doesn't, God does not give us permission, does not expect us to do that. He does not expect you. If you are in a position where you are being physically approved, abused, you are afraid for your life.

No, you get out of there, you get safe. But the kind, what the reason I was not released was because my husband did love me. Now there's an interesting way that God has created men and women that are very different, okay? Men have this ability to compartmentalize their lives into some respect where if you're, if you're doing your job, you're, you're 110% and you're on your job.

You're not thinking about what's going on at home. You're not thinking about if the kids are sick, you're not thinking about anything else. You're your 110%. Fully invested in what you are doing. It's one of the reasons why some of the best player, you know, basketball player, any kind of a sports player or chef, pianist, musicians, artists, something that can be so they're men because they had this intense focus.

Now women, I've heard this described is that women's life is like a bowl of spaghetti. Okay. It's all intertwined and you can't untangle it. And so for a woman, I don't get to turn that off. I don't get to just say, well, that's that and this is this. I can't do it. I mean, if I'm, when I met when I was at work and my kids were sick.

I was constantly processing, are they doing okay? Have I heard from them, you know, every couple hours I would stop to check in on them. My husband ever did that once during the day to check in on one of the kids if they were sick and we were both at work. It's just the difference in the way God has created us.

And it's a beautiful difference because it allows us to play to our strengths, the nurturing part of a woman and the strong part of a man that, that is the protector. And so as I learned, as I had to make the choice that I was first of all going to love my husband out of a sheer act of the will at this point.

Because what I said was true. I did not like him. I didn't want to be around him. I didn't trust a word that came out of his mouth at this point, but I knew that I knew that he was broken. And the only way you can know that is you know the person you're living with.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:28:40] Yeah. And that's huge because we both know people who've gone through this or physical adultery, and that early is such a big deal when you know they're broken.

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True biblical brokenness, it just makes it not easy, but easier to expect and to forgive. Because you know they're actually truly sorry.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:29:02] Right? Not just words. Don't confuse forgiveness and trust. That's another big issue.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:29:08] Yeah, that's what I'm saying. You're unpacking so much. Everything here, and I don't want to miss anything.

So if you're listening there, again, if someone raped a child, that doesn't mean you don't forgive them, but you also don't hire them to be your babysitter.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:29:19] No. And, and there are consequences of the action. Okay. That's another thing that, there's a wonderful book written by Mary Demuth called . and it is an, it is a, a book written from her own experience and from study and from a deep passion to unpack the fact that whenever there is a crime committed believer, unbeliever within the church, not.

There are consequences to our actions. That's why Jesus had to come and die on the cross. David, because we were sinful, we committed. We turned away from God, and God made the way [00:30:00] for us to come back to him through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We weren't even looking for it and yet out of his love.

For us, his unconditional love, his love that reached toward us when we were pushing him away. He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins, to redeem us, to make a way for us to be back in community with him. So forgiveness is one thing, and forgiveness again is another choice is another act of the will.

It's a decision to say, I'm giving up my right to exact punishment from you for what you have done to me. But trust is a whole different matter. you, you have to earn trust and trust is earned. One word, one action. One thought, one kept promise at a time. You can lose trust in an instant, which is what happened in, in our relationship, in our marriage.

The trust was shattered. It was. Gone, if you'd think of trust as a bank account, that withdrawal had gone into a deficit. He had overdrawn the account. It was done. Yup. So, and it wasn't like I could say, okay, I forgive you and then I'm going to trust you. No, I forgave him. But everything he said and did was suspect

**David Pasqualone:** [00:31:24] now and again, man, let's stop there because people, okay, forgiveness.

You forgave him, right? Trust wasn't there right. So your forgiveness, it's a onetime process, right? You just forgive him one time and you're done or talk about that because that's a huge frustrating that like you can see my veins popping out of my technic Emre. But when people say that, Oh, if you forgave me, you wouldn't be bringing this up.

I just want to smack him in the head because that you broke the trust. This is a result of your sin. Yes. Talk about that because I'm obviously sometimes, you know, we all have an image in our head or we

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have. They're understanding our head with the communicate. It's different. How would you explain to people how you forgive, but then the pain comes back and then you've got to re forgive and re forgive.

How do you do that?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:32:10] I told him that I forgave him because he asked me very, within that first 24 hour period, would you, can you excuse me? Can you forgive me? And again, I believe it was the Holy spirit who spoke through me at that point. and said, yes, I will forgive you. And then I quickly followed it up with, but I don't like you and I'm mad at you.

So there's the Holy spirit speaking, I forgive you. And then there's Kirsten coming out and saying, but this is who I am. These are the very real consequences of the actions. Think about your children. You know, and think about when you have done something to someone and you know that you're wrong and you come to them and you say, I am so sorry.

Please forgive me. And, and that person extends and says, I forgive you. Is there an, an immediate from the other person and in, and even within yourself, if you're honest, do you immediately go, whew, that's done in the end. Let's just move on. Sometimes you can, but when there are huge issues in the way, when there are ramifications of whatever that action is, let's say, let's say you've got a child who stole something from a store, okay?

It could be a small child who saw a piece of cake, saw a candy bar and one of the candy bar, and they knew, get home and don't end in realize that they had stuck it in their pocket. Okay. What are you going to do? Are you going to say to that child, Oh, that's okay. I forgive. I forgive you. That's okay. And let it go.

Or, or are you going to use this as an opportunity to teach your children about honesty and respect and what it, you know, that we don't steal things that that is wrong because it's those moments that we learn what it means to live with integrity. So there are consequences even when there's, when forgiveness is extended.

In my case, in this one, I did extend forgiveness and then the next day I had to extend forgiveness. I had to make the choice again to forgive and not dwell on the anger. That didn't mean I'd had to have to deal with the anger in. It didn't mean that I immediately embraced him and said, everything's okay because everything was not okay.

We had a lot to recover from and we had to recover from each part of the wound. Separately and each part had to be dealt with. And each aspect of walking out that forgiveness, I guess, would be a way that I would say it had to happen one step at a time. And sometimes it honestly felt like we took two steps forward and 10 steps [00:35:00] back.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:35:01] Yes. And so anyone who's dealing with this or who has the, and you have unresolved pain . Listen to Kirsten, what she's saying is you are forgiving, but each day little tiny things may pop up that are triggers. And that trigger can literally what seems you could have a room of 20 people and they all think what's the big deal?

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But that is something key to you and that burns you up. So Kirsten talked to us about, the Bible says, be angry and sing. Not right. I've had instances where people have greatly hurt me. And then other people from the outside are like, you're angry, so you're in sin.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:35:42] No,

**David Pasqualone:** [00:35:43] exactly. I know we're talking biblical common sense here, but there's talk about the balance between be angry and sin, not because if you go through something this traumatic and you're not angry, you're in denial.

You're, you're not in a good place.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:35:58] You're basically emotionally dead.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:36:00] Yes. So talk to those people. Cause there's people listening now who have done it to their spouse, male or female. There's people who've had it done to them, male or female. And there's people who are secretly right now looking at porn and they know it's wrong and they feel guilty and they know, okay, I this would hurt my spouse, but they don't really understand the intensity in the future because they're blinded by sin.

Me, you, any sin, we're involved and we're going to be blinded ourselves. But talk about that right

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:36:28] now. the way that I learned to process that verse in your anger do not sin, is how another translation says it.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:36:37] yeah, sorry, I'm old. I know King. I'm not like King James only, but I love the King James cause that's what I, that's when I got saved.

That's what I use. So all my verses that I memorize is that

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:36:46] it's kind of weird to try to memorize them in other translations. But

**David Pasqualone:** [00:36:49] yeah, it is.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:36:50] But in your anger, do not sin. Anger is an emotion. Just like every other emotion. It's an emotion, like, like happiness, joy, sadness. All of that. Those are all emotions and emotions are just that they're, you know, I call them relief valves to whatever's going on in your body because sometimes you're so excited you have to jump up and down.

Well, the jumping up and down isn't the emotion. It's the emotion that drove the jumping up and down. Your anger is, is coming as a result of a couple of things. One, you didn't get, something didn't happen that you wanted to happen and expectation didn't get met. Something like that. That's just the, it's just a human response to what happened or did not happen.

The key in that verse is, like I said, in your anger, do not sin. So it's how do you respond out of that emotion? Now, if you're angry and you walk up to somebody and you double up your fist and you pummel them, you're wrong, and there's consequences of your actions. That's sin. But if in your anger, you look at the other person and you say, you know, right now I'm angry.

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I'm angry with you. I'm not angry at you. You did not make me angry. I am angry again. Change your language. I am angry. I am using at this moment. This is the emotion that is going through me at this point. I am angry. Here's why I am angry. And if you can learn to identify the cause, your anger, and this is hard, this is hard, and this is something that both of us have had to walk through, is learning to process our anger in a healthy manner.

But once I could learn to process the anger and I didn't take that anger and use it to cause harm to another person, that's where I felt like I was not violating that verse. Otherwise, if I took my anger and I used it to browbeat my husband to beat him down as a person, to speak about him to other people negatively, which I did do, and that was wrong, that was sin.

then I was crossing that line into sin. I don't know if that made sense or not.

It

**David Pasqualone:** [00:39:18] makes it 100% to me. Hopefully it's making it to the listeners. But again, in the show notes, I'm gonna put contact info to you. my contact info is always in there. So you, if listeners, friends, if you're out there and you have questions and this isn't clicking or making sense, reach out to us and we'll do our best to help you.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:39:37] One of the, one of the things that this relates into, and this was part of my recovery, was learning to establish healthy boundaries. and we hear a lot about boundaries today. But one of the things I love is what, Dr. Henry cloud and, and dr towns and say about boundaries and boundaries are like, boundaries are emotional fences for us.

[00:40:00] They protect us. The boundary is for you. It's not for the other person. But what it says is, I love you enough that I'm going to behave in this manner. And part of dealing with anger in a healthy way is to establish healthy boundaries. there were some nights that, that we were unpacking something from the counseling or we were unpacking something beyond the counseling, working with this coaching team and on all of that, that would bring up emotions that were so intense that they, they did cross into anger and, and we would have to look at each other and just say, I'm not at a point that I can process this with you yet.

And we would go to bed because again, the Bible says in your age, do not go to bed angry. Right? well, what we did was at that point, we had to agree that we knew we were going to resolve this issue. We had to resolve this issue, but we were not at a point, either one of us in an emotionally stable place to be able to deal with it.

At that time. That didn't mean we were, I was lashing out at him or he at me, but it did mean that we had to table it. To table the discussion until the next day. But again, we dealt with it, but we had to table it to get healthy

**David Pasqualone:** [00:41:20] point and you weren't kicking the can down the road. Let's hope he or she forgets and Oh, maybe a month or five weeks.

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You knew this needs to be resolved. This needs to be brought to the light. This needs to have healing cause what happens if we don't resolve something?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:41:37] You get in a mess like I was in.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:41:40] And we'll get there. I swear you just brought up so much. We could do like three episodes easily. do me a favor, before we go on, give us some practical steps.

Okay. You said right there you could identify the cause of the anger. You said how difficult that is. You got to learn. You're always learning and growing, right? You, you're to learn to process anger in a healthy manner, right? Give it two or three tips or steps or tricks that we can use. Sure. To re wire our brain.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:42:09] The first thing is to change your language. Instead of saying, you make me so angry and let me ask you a question, can someone else make you angry? Do, are they coming up and saying, you're going to be angry now.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:42:23] It's a response.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:42:24] It's a response. So switch the language. I am angry. Own it. I'm angry. Then you and this takes, this takes a, a bit of time.

You have to stop. You have to stop and you have to say, why am I angry? Now when you first start to do this, it doesn't happen. Right away. It's going to take time to process this, but the first thing is to switch your language. If you hear yourself start to say, you stop it and say, I'm really angry with you right now, you're owning it.

You're saying what's going on, and that's okay, but you did not accuse the other person of doing something to you that they cannot do. Do not give that other person that kind of control. You have the autonomy to control your own emotions and to identify them. Yeah. And

**David Pasqualone:** [00:43:13] even if that person is 100% wrong, which it's hugely , you're just literally not you.

Like, hold on, I'm going to be careful when I say it is you and I think are on the same path here, but I don't want to listen to her who's a little confused or not as like in touch with what we're talking about. You know, it'd be great if people listening never experienced this and they have no idea what we're talking about.

But the truth is a lot of the listeners understand exactly what we're talking about. They felt the pain, but, Even if somebody is 100% wrong, the pride kicks in when you accuse them and point out their sin,

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:43:46] right? You're just, Oh

**David Pasqualone:** [00:43:49] yeah. It's like beating a dead horse, and I'm not going to lie. This is one of my major communication flaws.

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I'm a passionate, let's take care of this now guy, and I'll be like. Boom, right there. This is what you did. Yup. Cause I want somebody, I really do like when people treat me like that, I'm too stupid. I want to know exactly what I did, so I know how to fix it. But when I treat other people that way, it's usually a terrible, horrible disaster.

So a what Kirsten saying? I completely agree. So number one is change your language.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:44:18] Number two is take a step back and take a deep breath. like I said, you could, so you need to acknowledge the anger, but then you need to figure out the source of the anger. And like I said earlier, and like I learned in this healing process was my anger was rooted in something else other than probably what was happening in front of me.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:44:40] That's to come

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:44:43] there is, there's a false expectation. There's an unmet need. There's, You know, maybe even a goal that's getting forwarded. You're heading in a certain direction and somebody intercepts your path and it makes you angry because they, they're diverting you [00:45:00] from where you wanted to go. That in a, in an interpersonal thing could be, in my situation here, I was angry because he destroyed my concept of my marriage.

He destroyed my concept of who I was as a person. I was angry

**David Pasqualone:** [00:45:19] at 25 years. Three kids. Yeah. It just all changed in a moment.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:45:24] It changed in a moment. So that's the second thing. The third thing is, if you're a person of faith, you've got to be praying about this and that pray might be, God, I am so angry right now.

Would you please call me down? That might be what you can get out of your mouth. And there were times that I literally stopped. And said it out loud. God, I am so angry. There were be times I was driving down the road, David and and something would come to my mind and the anger would, will well up so greatly that I was literally yelling at God as I was driving down the road.

And when I think back about it, I thought, you know, when you stop at a stop sign and you see somebody kind of going crazy, don't you kind of wonder what that person is doing? I thought there were probably a whole bunch of people who thought that woman over there is crazy. Okay. And I was, I was at that moment.

But what I learned in that process was God could handle my anger. I think that's a lie that we've been fed today, is that you can't yell at God. You can't tell him how you really feel. Well, I got news for you. You already knows, right? Yeah. He already knows if he created you. If he is your loving father, then he already knows every thought that's going through your head, you might as well say it and get it out instead of stuffing it, because the stuffing, it only makes it worse.

Yeah. Yup. And then, so that's the third step. And they all happened pretty quickly, honestly. And then the fourth step is. Decide to resolve the issue. Okay. You can, you can have people tell you in all until

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they're blue in the face. You've got to resolve it, but it's your decision. No one, again, can come force you to resolve it.

How well does it work when we tell our kids, go tell so-and-so you're sorry. How well does that work? Yeah. What did they, you know, what do they usually say? I'm sorry. You know, it's not a heartfelt, but if you make the decision to resolve. Then it's on you. Cause if you don't do it, who, who, who broke their word?

I did. I made that decision and then I decided not to do it. I blew it off. So as you work toward healing, as you work toward living authentically with each other, which we were not doing, these are the things that start coming up and they don't come up one at a time. But you have to learn in each moment to stop.

And that's what makes this part of the healing and this part of the story so painful and so difficult. But the good news is I want to give you the, I want to give you the hint at the end, the spoiler at the end, God is greater. And he's the one who is the God who restores and redeems and rejuvenates. He is the one who rewrites the story.

So that's the spoiler.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:48:30] All right, well let's do this. Let's take a break there. As a listener, we're going to do a quick commercial break and then we'll come back and when we get back, Kirsten's going to tell us the rest of her story and start off with that day to a counseling that I have totally distracted her from, but I think it had great value.

So thanks for listening. A check on our sponsors and we will be right back. Hello, ladies and gentlemen, this is Dave Paskal, lone hosted the remarkable people podcast, and I am excited to introduce you to today's sponsor. The episode you're about to listen to is brought to us by Pam Heinold, realtor and broker associate with better homes and gardens real estate, Pensacola, Florida.

When my wife and I moved to Pensacola years ago. We were looking for a qualified real estate professional to help us find our new home. We had two kids, a new career, and not a lot of time. And having moved eight times in 10 years, all over the country, we've experienced many, many realtors buying and selling homes at this point.

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That's P a M H E I N O L d.com or call her office at (850) 232-2332 and when you call, make sure you tell her, Dave said, hi. Now let's get back to the show. All right. Welcome back. Kirsten, you've been such a lovely guest and so much information. I literally have probably 12 questions. I'm going to stop asking you from that section, but let's pick up.

On that day two of counseling. That's where we, we rudely interrupted, but I think with purpose, right?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:51:19] Well, it was actually day three because we were just starting day three. We had completed day through it too, and we were walking in that morning and we knew we were going to get our test results from all of this battery of tests.

And one of the things that we were looking for was, was my husband's pornography addiction. Did it have a rut in something more serious? Okay. Was there, narcissism was there, you know, D was there, you know, was he, I can't think of it now, but buddies, you bipolar was what was going on. And, and so I honestly was quite nervous because I thought, boy, if he's got something like this, this is a whole other ball game, God, and you're telling me that I don't have permission to walk away.

And, and now keep in mind my mindset is still in the counseling. even though our counselor had started really peeling back the layers pretty quickly and kind of getting to the, to my pride and my stubbornness and my attitudes that were less than desirable at the moment.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:52:21] Oh, you know, wait, let's stop there.

Because you are legitimately harmed. You were legitimately hurt. But you're, you're saying how the counselor was calling you out on your stand. Talk a little bit of what that, I mean, I'm not trying to put you on the spot, but that goes back to that balance in that, what was the counselor doing to get to the heart of you both?

Cause that's the key. It's getting to our hearts, to God, pointing us to God and each other. How did they do that? As much

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:52:47] as you can share? he very quickly saw through my smoke screen. You know, when you walk into an office and when you walk in and you sit down with someone and you lean back and you fold your arms, what are you telling that person?

**David Pasqualone:** [00:53:02] This interest? It's interest cold. You don't want to be there. You're angry. All

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:53:06] sorts of negative for me. Right. You know, I'm just here, right? Well, you started asking me questions about, well, what did this feel like? You know, how are you interpreting

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this? How do you feel towards your husband? And he started, you know, and I'd say, well, you know, it's his fault.

Well, yes, but how do you feel about it? You know, because you have, you are reacting somehow. And he started poking at that anger. He started poking at that hurt and at, not in a, not in a malicious way, but in a way to get my mind to start opening up. And sometimes we need someone, most of the time we need someone who is willing.

To make us mad enough to confront what we have to confront, right?

**David Pasqualone:** [00:53:53] Oh, absolutely. Jesus even did that. He came and he asked questions and he did it in love. He did in firmness. Sometimes he was straight up righteous anger. Right. But Jesus wasn't there to give you a like, you know, Hey, let's give everybody a hug.

It's all okay. No, it's not this clear, black and white.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:54:11] And, and what I was going through was not okay. And he was getting me to the point of saying, I have to deal with the emotions. I have to deal with how I'm feeling in order for us to have any hope of recovery. I had to be honest, and I wasn't being honest.

I was hiding. Let's just put it up there. I was beaten up. I was hiding. Cause you were

**David Pasqualone:** [00:54:34] in pain.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:54:35] I was in pain.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:54:35] Human reaction is to hide, but what do we all need to do in every area is go truth.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:54:40] Go to truth. Well, and I was also afraid, and this came out after I tell you what the results of the test were. I was afraid that if I opened up in any way that I would never recover.

That was, that was what was holding me back. That if I really knew that and to [00:55:00] know how I thought and what I was thinking and how I felt and the deep, the depth of the wound and the depth of the anger that I would be utterly and completely rejected and I would never ever be accepted by anyone again.

There was no hope of recovery.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:55:18] Yeah. And would you say it was almost like a self defense mechanism? Like you're trying to shut up, you're trying, like if you had a wound on your chest, but what are you going to be? You're going to cover your chest and get out of the battle. You're going to get out, cover and run.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:55:29] Yup. And that's what I wanted to do. I wanted to tuck and run. Let's just, let's just put it on there. That fight and flight syndrome was kicking big time and I was, I wasn't ready to fight. I didn't have anything to fight, but I was ready to run. So we get to go ahead and ask a question

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**David Pasqualone:** [00:55:45] before a run. I believe these are hopefully good questions or helping people during this time, this all happened so fast for you from the time you found out what happened to the time you go to the intensive, what was that?

Timeframe

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:56:01] is three a three and a half months?

**David Pasqualone:** [00:56:04] Three and a half months. Okay. During that three and a half months. You had super supportive people, which is awesome to have godly, supportive people. It's, it's an essential, it's a gift that's essential. But let's take a second because I'm sure we haven't talked about this, but were there people who are not supportive, who are not understanding who we're not giving you godly advice?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:56:30] Oh yeah.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:56:32] I'm talk about that because that's a temptation in itself for . Empowering you to sin, to leave the marriage. And also just to be flat out furious at them. So talk a little bit about that, cause that's a real, real struggle that people go through your early and tragedy and trauma and now these morons are adding to it with their sin.

How do you, how did you do on that?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:56:54] Well, we had a lot of people who wanted to give us the quick answer. And I have been that person. Where I've wanted to give the quick answer. I have come to learn that the reason we want to give the quick answer is because we can't deal with the pain. We can't deal with the fact that everything is not good.

The other thing was, honestly, David, we didn't tell many people. We very, we withdrew from everything. other than this group of six people. They were the ones that we could tell the truth to. And thankfully they were the type of people that didn't say the stupid things to us that didn't give us Pat answers that didn't say it's going to, you know, they did say it's going to be okay, but you got a long road ahead of you and we're going to walk with you every step of the way.

There were people who would, you know, look at us and say. Make comments about, Oh, you know, you and Dave have such a great marriage during this three and a half months. Okay. And I would look at them like, you are clueless. You have no idea. You know? I did have, I did have one person, no, I'm not going to say that yet.

there was, there was, there were people that. Would kind of look at us like something's not right, but they didn't ask us anything, and that was okay. That was okay. But the people who would, would try to just brush it off and like, they didn't even really know the whole story. They didn't take time to even ask the questions about the story.

They just knew that at our church, for instance, we stepped down from all positions that we were both in positions of leadership. We stepped down from that. I actually left my job that I was at during that

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time, and part of the reason that I left my job during that time was, There. There had been some things that had been said to me.

There was an issue that came up and when I, when confronted with it and when I was talking it through, the result, the response from my boss at the time was not a healthy response. And because of what I was going through in that moment, I walked out. Hmm. Now,

**David Pasqualone:** [00:59:21] no. As much as you can define not a healthy response.

Was it unbiblical? Was it not mentally healthy? What? Define that?

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:59:29] It was a, I asked a direct question I had, I had done something. there had been, there had been some issues that had gone on in the job and there had been a miscommunication between my, my boss and me. and it happened within 30 days of when my world fell apart.

**David Pasqualone:** [00:59:47] Okay. So this was a professional, separate, not related to what was going on, right. Person. Okay. Okay. Okay.

**Kristen Samuel:** [00:59:53] So when I had, an evaluation, my annual evaluation with my boss, [01:00:00] this came up and, you know, I apologize, I said, you're right. By this time, my boss knew what was going on in my personal life. And, I, I said.

I did not. I dropped the ball. I, you know, I didn't do it. And, I'm very sorry. And I, and there were some other statements that were mermaid that, that were red flags to me as far as something else is going on here. And I began to feel unsafe. And so I asked a question and that was, do you want me to continue in this role?

And the answer that came back to me was, I don't know.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:00:40] Gotcha.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:00:41] And in the state that I was in at the time, that in effect told me I was fired. That's how I interpreted that response. I left work, I went home, I F I fell apart as soon as I walked out of the office and I drove home sobbing. I don't honestly know how I got home.

I, I, I told my husband when I got home what had happened and I, his advice was that I call the women on our, in our team and our spiritual support group and talk it through with them because I didn't have the mental space to deal with it. Or the emotional space. I didn't have capacity. It was, there was nothing there.

And they all gave me excellent advice that I did not listen to. Okay. Because again, I, the emotional space, when I look back on it, and when I tell you the rest of the story, there's another piece that fits into this. That response from my boss at the time was less than helpful for the situation we were in.

And it was probably one of the more devastating comments that would made to me. After I confronted it, I went back in, I basically, I resigned and, I wrote the letter out. I explained to them why I was

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resigning, and my boss came back to me and said, you know why? You know. Why are you choosing to leave?

And I said, because when I asked you a point blank question asking if you wanted me to stay in this position or not, you said I don't know. And to me that means no. Gotcha. Cause I didn't get the affirmation I needed at that point. So it was one more failure that I chalked up in, in the wound that was gaping at this point.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:02:36] And to you it was just like you had your professional life, which at certain points in our life that's like a, almost like an ease from what's going on at home. Right? But now you had this double where your home life was in chaos and now you go to work. And that's in chaos. And it's like anything else, there's always overlap and they all work together.

So now you've got two areas of your life out of whack, right? Right. It's really breaking you down with a purpose. So,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:03:05] okay. So we get, we get, we're sitting there and we're getting the results, and our counselor looks at Dave and my husband and says, well, there's good news. You have extremely low self esteem.

Okay? And your pornography addiction is medication of choice. To deal with with how low your self esteem is. We can work on that. There's hope and I'm really relieved. There was no sign of narcissism. There was no sign of any of these other things that we were very, very concerned about. This simply was a matter of helping him re and understand who he is in Jesus Christ, and I have to tell you at that point, it was the first time, I think I exhaled in three and a half months and I went, Oh, thank you, God.

You know? And so I, at this point I'm like, ah, woo, we're home free. You know? Yes, there's hope and we can do this. And so I just, at that point, I sat back and I just relaxed. I mean, I just completely relaxed and I, and I, and Dave did too. And then the counselor turned to me and I can still see his face to this day.

His whole demeanor changed and he leaned forward in his chair and he looked at me and he said, I have to ask you a question. Have you ever or now considered taking your own life? And I S I gasped and I couldn't believe what I was hearing and I said, no, why would you ask me that? And he said, because you are suicidally depressed, you have an anxiety disorder and you have PTSD and you need immediate help.

Wow. And that's when I call it my divine two by four. That's when God smacked me upside the head and he knocked me down and he pinned me and he said, okay, are you ready to deal with what you've been hiding all these years?

[01:05:00] And at that point, David, I realized that my husband's pornography addiction saved my life. That's a harsh way to say it. Yeah, but it's true because I was running and see what I was hiding was I had been sexually abused as a child. Okay. Now, it's been a long time for me to be able to say that because it was a single incident, but I was young enough and I was a compliant child.

And so when my abuser said to me. Don't tell anybody. This is just between us. I kept the secret.

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**David Pasqualone:** [01:05:46] no, it was this friend family,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:05:49] so, okay. Yeah. And the details are not important.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:05:53] no, no, no, no. The only other question I have for you, I think would be sort of important. How old were you?

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:05:58] I was nine years

**David Pasqualone:** [01:05:59] old.

Nine years old. So you were old enough to know, but still nobody can grasp that at 50 let alone at nine

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:06:06] right. Yeah. Okay.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:06:08] So that's, that's where your mind and emotions shut down.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:06:11] I literally was stunted emotionally at nine years old.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:06:16] Yeah. And for the listeners, if you've had something traumatic in your life and you haven't talked about it, and you might not even realize it right now, what Kirsten saying is medically psychologically a fact, it's not she's making it up or she's thinking this when we have something truly traumatic happened to us as a child.

Even as an adult if we don't deal with it at that point or in the future, we were stunted and almost like paused, like the rest of our life will grow. But that part of our brain and mind and behaviors stays right. So this is really interesting. And like, you know, you said. Yeah. The Bible says, again, in the version I use, all things work together for good to those that love God.

So it's a horrible, painful situation. But without this, you may never have opened up to what you needed to. So,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:07:05] so again, our God prepares the way for us and we took a break. After we started unpacking this and, and the counselor continued to talk to me about what, what he was, what he was describing as far as the suicidal depression, the PTSD, and I went, how in the world do I have PTSD?

I've never been in combat, you know,

**David Pasqualone:** [01:07:31] and that's where I thought, I thought PTSD was only for severe trauma, like war.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:07:36] It is not, I have learned a lot about PTSD in the, in the years since I've been in recovery, and as I studied. PTSD, all usually comes from a traumatic event and most of us are healthy enough that we can process that traumatic event.

But when you do, like I did as a child and you bury this and you don't reach out for help. because a child doesn't at this point know how to reach out for help. No. My mother, when I told my mom about this,

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she said, why didn't you tell me? I, I mean, I told my mom everything. Like I said, remember I had this idyllic childhood.

I mean, I have no complaints about my childhood growing up because I knew I was loved. I knew I could tell my mom and dad everything. I, this is the one thing I didn't tell. It's the one thing I did not tell. This is the one thing I could never process with anyone. The first person I told was my husband and before

**David Pasqualone:** [01:08:39] this incident, yes.

Did he know? Oh, so it didn't unpack and counseling you've, you've talked to him,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:08:44] called him. Cause the counselor asked me has, have you told any, is this the first time you've said this? And I said, no. I told Dave. And, when we

**David Pasqualone:** [01:08:52] rescore you were married over when your first marriage,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:08:54] before we got married, I told him about the, you know, that this had happened

**David Pasqualone:** [01:08:59] and talk about the psychology that, cause a lot of people need to understand that you were saying it cause you felt like you did something wrong and guilt and you had to get that unpack before you went into marriage.

Is that what you're thinking?

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:09:12] I wanted him. I wanted him to know. I just said, you know, I've never told anyone, and I, and I wanted to know how he would respond. I think it was, I think I almost used it as a test, you know, would he accept me? and he did. He told me he was so sorry that, that, that had happened to me.

And he said, you know, it doesn't change how I view you again. Remember, I didn't think I had any value. this is one of the lies that, that I can tie back to that. and yet he, he validated me at that point. And so believing that, because I had said it, that I was okay, that, but I didn't process it. I said it.

And I, you know, I S but at the, even at the time that I told him, I said, well, you know, here's what happened. And it was only one time. It wasn't [01:10:00] that big a deal, you know? Well, no, it was a big deal. I'm a nine year old, little girl cannot process this. No, no child can process this. And I didn't seek help even at that point.

And he didn't know enough at that point to encourage me to seek help to begin to on process it. Cause it was the break. I said the first time I'd ever voiced it. And now you

**David Pasqualone:** [01:10:22] fast forward 25 years in your marriage and you really didn't talk about it again throughout the marriage. Nope.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:10:27] Never. Okay. so as you know, as I've learned the PTSD now, remember in my response to the boss situation, the reason I ran was PTSD.

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I got into a fight or flight situation and I took off because I couldn't confront the pain. I didn't know how to, I didn't have the tools to quit, but I wasn't emotionally healthy enough to confront that pain and to, to unpack what was going to have to be unpacked. So now

**David Pasqualone:** [01:11:02] in that pain, define that pain.

That was like I dropped the ball. Rejection,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:11:07] rejection. It was, I'm not good enough again. I have failed again. I've screwed up again. See, I can't do anything right. Again,

that is not God.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:11:24] Yeah. Just for the listeners, we all hear that, right? All hear those? And that's just saying, get out of your head.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:11:29] Yep. So here we are in counseling for my husband's pornography addiction, which he, you know, we did have to work. We did have to work through, but for the very first time in our marriage, 25 plus now, 25 almost six months into our marriage.

We were being completely honest with each other for the very first time sitting in this counselor's office, and like I said, God has God per goes ahead of us. He prepares the way. Not only did he prepare, the counselor for us, not only did he prepare the spiritual recovery team, the spiritual care team for us, he at it, it was 10, 15 in the morning.

We took a break. And the thing that I had to do was call my doctor because my counselor said I needed to be on medication. It was that severe and I called my doctor. Now how, how long does it normally take it to get into a doctor's office these days?

**David Pasqualone:** [01:12:23] Yeah, exactly.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:12:24] I called

**David Pasqualone:** [01:12:24] my doctor, right? Yeah.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:12:26] Call my doctor.

And they said, well, you know, why do you need to see him? And I said, they said, can you see a PA? And I said, no, I need to see the doctor. And they said, okay, well, what's this about? And I choked over the word suicidal depression, but I managed to get it out. And they said, well, could you be here at one o'clock today?

And I just, my eyes flew open and I said, yes, I, I can do that. We got done with counseling at 1230 and it wasn't very

**David Pasqualone:** [01:12:56] far. This was a counselor near the, this was a physician near the counseling, not where you lived or were all of them together?

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**Kristen Samuel:** [01:13:03] We were, we were within our same hometown. our counselor happened to be local.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:13:08] and you've got such a blessing

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:13:10] that God went completely before us in this whole thing. So literally, I was. across the freeway from my doctor's office. And so when they said, you know, can you be here at one o'clock? I said, yes, I will do that. And I, you know, hung up the phone. We went back into our session and I told the counselor what had happened and he said, okay, that doesn't happen.

That's a God thing. And when I walked into the doctor's office that afternoon. I sat down in the corner on the floor in that room with my head down and my knees pulled up. I was in a fetal position, and when the doctor walked in, he sat down in the chair and he looked at me and he said, what's happening?

Tell me what's going on. And I started to choke it out. And he looked at Dave and Dave filled in some of the information and he looked at me and he said, you're going to be okay. And I'm not surprised. I've been suspicious. And I just cried. And he said, but you're going to be okay. We're going to go through this together.

Now you see how God had prepared the way,

**David Pasqualone:** [01:14:15] Oh yeah,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:14:16] this is, this is, I can't make this stuff up. I mean, you know, and I began at that point, we finished our, we finished our counseling, our, Our spiritual care team met with our counselor. We had given permission for our counselor to share absolutely everything that he just discovered with our care team.

And, we then proceeded for the next 18 months to work with this group of people to, they became Jesus with skin on in our lives. They formed a cocoon around us that allowed us to, to heal. To, to bear everything that needed to come out. We literally talked over every subject in the world with them.

[01:15:00] There was not one part of our life that was not revealed to them, and we began to learn to trust. I began to trust Dave. One little step at a time. Remember I said that in the beginning, that trust is built. One word, one action, one step at a time.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:15:19] I don't want, it's shaken. If he failed again, I don't know if he did feel along the way, but it's rips the rug out from under you and you're almost restarting, right?

And it makes it hard

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:15:28] and you are going to fail again. And we did fail again. Both of us. I had, I had a very suicidal episode about six months into this. And, I, it scared me enough that I came clean immediately about it. And he called one of the, part of one of the couples from our, our team. And they were at our house immediately and they, they had me, they were supporting me.

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They didn't leave us alone. They, they were praying over me. I knew what was going on. I, and I, and it scared me. Like I said, Dave, Dave had ups. And, and they walked through him, walked through all of this with us. They also walked through this with our children. And that was a gift I didn't know we were going to get, but they communicated with our children as much as they were able to without violating confidences.

And they encouraged us as part of our healing process. We had to learn to live a different way. We had to learn to communicate a different way. We had to quit hiding and be willing to be 100% who we were, the good, bad, and the ugly. And right now the bad and the ugly, we're winning, with each other because that's what built our trust.

Every time we shared, this is how I'm feeling and this is my thoughts right now. And the other person didn't reject us. It built trust. And one of the things I kept that I struggled with as a mother was I didn't want my children to be harmed by what we were going through. You know, as parents, we want to protect our kids from the ugly parts of the world.

Right. And I remember, in our care team, they said to us. Why is it not important? You know, it's very, let me, let me rephrase that. It's very important that we teach our children to fail. Well,

and I said, I looked at him and I said, I don't want my children to fail, to go through this. I don't want them to see this. And it was, your children need to watch you walk through this. Well, you know, and you're not going to tell them all the nitty gritty, but to answer their questions honestly and with integrity so that they, when they encounter similar situations, they know how to walk through it in a godly manner.

That was hard. That was hard, but I will tell you today, David, we are reaping the benefits and the consequences of that level of authenticity with our children and as they've begun to walk through because they're all in their twenties and thirties as they've, as they walk through this and they're starting to hit those things in life that we all hit.

They come and they're willing to talk and they know that if they tell us one, I'm not going to react, and I'm going to say, well, how could you, you know, that's stupid. I'm going to be praying because I know the God who will get them through it. I may not have the answer. I probably don't have the answer, but I do know who does and I will be the one praying and it has enriched our relationship with our children and I am eternally grateful for that.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:19:04] Now. What about your order talking about this from your perspective and your husband? That could be a whole other episode on his side, but talk briefly about your children. It sounds like they took it very well and then your support group was reaching out to them and constantly interacting. did they have any, did they look at their father different?

Did they treat them differently? Were there things they needed to deal with to adjust. Because sadly a pornography addiction 100% wrong. No, I'm not justifying it, but it's sadly too calming. So people are actually getting desensitizing and what everybody does it look, even the pastor did it and what's like, shouldn't be a pastor.

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He's doing it right, but I'm sorry I made the comment. I mean that just like you said, when you had that issue in your life, you guys stepped down from leadership roles until you can get that balance back and then you can leave. You know, I've had episodes like that in my life where I'm like, Nope. It doesn't matter if it's me and my wife or [01:20:00] anybody else close to me.

If there's huge balance, gone down from leadership, take care of the family first. She goes, God, family and everybody else. So how did your kids react? Was there ever any. Adjustments or any kind of bumps in the road there.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:20:15] There was, they did ask questions when we gave, when we finally got to the point where we gave them freedom to ask those questions, they did have questions.

We began to have real honest, communication, to the point that, and when our sons, were, you know, had found their, their life mate. God-willing they. Well, we had the conversation with our daughters in law and we talked with them. We said, you need to know our story. You need to know what has happened within our family because we will not have any secrets any longer in our family, and we are not.

This is, we're not telling you this in a bragging manner. We're telling you this because God was gracious enough to save us from this. And this is, this is a constant struggle and this is a, it's a daily choice to choose to live with integrity and authenticity. It's a daily choice to turn away from those things that so easily bring us down, whether it's pornography, addiction.

One of the things that, that I have done in the last few years, David, is I have had to deal with the fact that I am a food addict. And I have every symptom of addiction and it's related to food.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:21:34] Okay. Let's again, let's talk about this. You mentioned something back before the break and I picked up on it, but I didn't want to stop you for the 37th time, but you talked about your husband when the results came in, it was he was medicating the pain.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:21:50] Yes, I was medicating the pain with, with food.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:21:55] Talk about what that fuel, because listen, if you're medicating with food and he's medicating with porn in someone else's Medicaid with heroin, what's the real problem? See what I mean? Talk to the audience about that.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:22:07] The real problem is that we're trying to fill the hole that only God can fill with something else.

And you know the, the Bible talks to us about that there is only one God and that we are not to put any idol in front of God. Well. I want to, I don't know about anybody else, but I always want to think of an idol as a statue sitting on a shelf. Well, guess what? God taught me anything that I put in place of God to too, that I put my expectations into meet what only God can meet in my life is an idol.

And when I finally got that concept and I realized that I was using food when I was hurt, when I was upset, when I was angry, when I was listless, when I was fighting depression, when I was, didn't know

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what to do with myself. as an excuse to, celebrate. Something. and you have to, you know, I grew up in, I grew up in a, in a culture where food was a big part of every celebration, really, really good food.

You know, I'm not talking about junk, I'm talking about the kind of food that makes your mouth water really good food, you know,

**David Pasqualone:** [01:23:31] and all your friends. Yes.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:23:33] And joy and laughter and just this, this incredible love among people who cared for each other and appreciate each other. So food for me goes into my culture.

It goes into my heritage. It goes into, how I believe that I'm showing love to people. Which is fine, that's all fine. But when you in the Bible talks about the sin of gluttony, when you eat beyond what your body needs, that's when it turns into the addiction. And in my case, I was using it to medicate, just like my husband was using pornography to medicate the pain and not deal with it, but it didn't make me feel any better.

In fact, it made me feel worse. So as we're unpacking, as we're becoming healthy, and as we're talking with our children, we have to start admitting this is what I'm doing. And this is why. And this is what God says. All of this is not of God. This is what God says. God says, I have given you everything you need for your life, and I will be there with you always.

To the ends of the earth. I will never leave you or forsake you. And he goes on and on. He says, I have called you by name. You are [01:25:00] mine. I am the good shepherd who takes care of his sheep and I will not lose one of you, not one if you get lost, I'm coming to look for you. He's given me everything I need.

And this became, remember, my trust was shattered. So this became a trust issue with God. Do I trust him? Do I trust him that even if my marriage for some reason to this day would fall apart? Would God take care of me? Would I be enough in God's eyes? And the answer to all of that is yes, because of Jesus Christ.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:25:46] Yeah. And is it a crazy, the most love and the simplest thing is what we have the hardest time with,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:25:50] right? Yeah. So that was, we are 13 years past, past this point, and every, every year we get to our anniversary, we look each other and we say, thank you, Jesus. We made it another year and I will tell you right now.

And, Because your listeners can't see me because your listeners don't know me there. They may, may have a hard time believing this, but God did not just give me back my marriage. God remade it. It is brand new. I do not want the marriage I had the first 25 years. I don't ever want to see it again because it wasn't real.

It wasn't authentic. I wasn't real. I was hiding. I was covering up who I am in Jesus Christ because I was afraid that if anybody knew who I really was, that I would be completely rejected. Part of what I did in

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my recovery as I continued on with counseling, I, I began journaling. And what I had to do every day was answer a series of five questions every day because I, like I said, my emotions had stopped at nine years old.

I was basically a walking dead woman. I was emotionally dead, and because I, God speaks to me in nature and through color, I described my world at that point as gray. There was no color. It was just gray. Everything was gray. And as God began to heal the layers, as I began to unpack the wound and and clean it out, and I describe it as, you know, a surgeon, we go into a surge to surgery because there's, there's something that needs to be cut out.

There's something that needs to be repaired, healed, cauterized clean. God did that with his surgical knife and he started to clean those areas out of my mind and in my heart, these lies that I had believed I had been believing. And as he did that, I started to see color. I started notice that the trees were green.

I would see flowers, I would pick up a newborn grandchild of mine, and I would smell them and just weep at the beauty of what God had put it in my life. And when he had given me back, and now I could see it. I didn't see it before. My husband and I, as we've learned to, to choose purity in our marriage, purity and our relationship with each other, to keep ourselves only to each other.

The joy that we experience in this relationship cannot be described. It is precious beyond words. We both look at each other and say, I don't want to be that other person ever again. That does not mean that we don't stumble every day. We do. There are days, but we have learned how to recognize the fight, to recognize that the trigger and call it what it is and then get help and sometimes that is, sometimes that is as simple as Jesus, I need you right now.

Right now, I need you right now. Sometimes that is, having to go to the other person. And and talk about it sometimes that is calling back those, the people on our team that we still are in contact with and saying, we need help right now. Would you please? Can we meet you someplace? Could you pray for us?

Here's what's going on. When my husband has gotten trapped again in the pornography, for whatever reason, the three guys on that team, he knows he can call any one of them and they will be there with him and they will walk through it with him and they will unpack what happened. Why, what triggered? And let's deal with the trigger.

Let's start calling it what it is. Let's unpack the [01:30:00] unhealthiness behind it, the lie that's behind it, and let's choose a different path. Let's go forward. And there's, there's so much in this process of healing. but I know that I know you can heal. And as the wife of, of a spouse of an addicted spouse, I know that you can learn to trust him again.

And like I said, this has not been, you know, a forward, forward motion. This has been fits and starts. Thankfully, we're at a point now where we get more starts than we have fits. But I will also tell you as part of this recovery, we fight more.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:30:42] Okay. That's true. Cause you're being honest.

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**Kristen Samuel:** [01:30:44] We're being honest.

When you're on the first 25 years in marriage, we rarely fought.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:30:50] Yeah. That's something that pupil like what? Listen, if you're two humans and you're being real with each other, you both have your will. There's gonna be conflict. And if you're, if you're in a conflict list, marriage. One or both, you're probably in denial or a doormat.

Yup. And that's not healthy.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:31:10] Right. And the thing that I learned was when I challenged my husband on something and I didn't tell him he was stupid. You know, you have to learn again, change your language, change how you think, realize your

**David Pasqualone:** [01:31:23] soldier tongue.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:31:26] but you also have to realize you're fighting on the same side.

You're not fighting against each other. You're on the same side. You may be looking at the same situation from two different perspectives, and probably the resolution is somewhere in the middle. but there have been times that my husband has come to me and said, look, I did this. You know, I got, I went and I S I was online and something popped up and I looked at it and I shouldn't have done it.

He comes to me anytime and we talk about it. And what I've learned is when he does that, believe it or not, that's yes, it hurts. Okay, let's acknowledge it. It hurts that that he got there again, but he told me right away and he tell it and then he tells me what he's doing to not get in that situation again.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:32:17] That's interesting because I know there's some women. And, okay, I gotta be careful. I says, there's some women who don't want to discuss it with their husbands. They don't want to hear about it. They literally shut that down to like, you heal and I'll heal and we're good. Now, to me, that's a sign of still need for, there's still an issue, right?

There needs to be some unpacking done, but how would you advise a husband who wants help. And a woman who wants nothing to do with it cause it's discus or makes her sick and makes her feel bad, like she's not good enough. How do they bridge that gap? Because that's a serious issue. Once it comes out to the light, their shame, there's pain, but you can have guys or girls with this addiction who won't help.

But the other person is like stiff arms, like I don't want to talk about it. Let's forget it ever happened and move on. Talk to those listeners.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:33:09] The only way that you can deal and truly heal from an addiction. First of all, you've got to have Jesus in the middle of it. you've got to be running to him.

But secondly, you have to, you have to call it what it is and you have to face it. Head on. Denial is not going to make it go away. It just pushes it under the rug and then it just makes a bigger hole. And that makes a bigger lump and you're going to keep tripping over it. So let's bring it out in the open.

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Let's deal with it. Let's talk about it. Honestly, get help. That's one of the things that I do as a coach is I talk with women who, whose husbands are addicted to porn and they don't know how to process this. I will process this with you. I will go through this with you. I go through, you know, some steps to, to process.

If the both the husband and wife want to come to us, then my husband and I do this together. I will not ever coach a man on my own, especially a man who's been struggling with a pornography addiction. That's dangerous.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:34:10] Oh yeah. 100% if you're listening to this, even if you're, would you agree or disagree?

If you're a woman. Who was it like you just had this betrayal by her husband. You shouldn't be going to a man for counsel. No, it's way too vulnerable. Way too much danger, and likewise, a guy shouldn't be going to war,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:34:28] right? You need to, you need to go. You need to find your accountability group. And I, and this is one of the key things in recovery.

My husband has an accountability group of some men, one who are spiritually strong, two who are not going to get snowed. We all know people that we can hang around and we can tell them whatever we want to tell them, and they're going to believe us, right? They'd never hold our feet to the fire on anything.

You need people in an accountability group who that's not going to happen. They're, they're willing. I, they're called truth tellers. They're going to look you in [01:35:00] the face and they're going to say, that's a bunch of bull. Yeah. Okay. When are you going to, you know, I just, I just had, this happened to me this morning.

I was meeting with one of my, an accountability, a business accountability group, and one of my accountability partners called me out on something. She was dead, right? But she cares about me enough that she's willing to look me in the eye and say, you're not telling me the truth. I'm going to push back on you and we're gonna, we're gonna back up and we're going to look at this again, and then you tell me what's going on, what's really behind this?

Those are the kind of people you need in an accountability group. I needed those and they had to be women. My husband needs those and they have to be men, and those are the people we cannot go through as Americans. We want to go through life believing that the lone ranger was the way to go. Well, I'm sorry, the lone ranger had Tonto.

He was not lone. He just, he had Tonto. He didn't even go it alone. We cannot go it alone. The, the, the danger of isolation is that you are, we all know this from watching, you know, national geographic and all these other things, which animal gets picked off?

**David Pasqualone:** [01:36:13] The one that leaves

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**Kristen Samuel:** [01:36:14] the one that leaves the pack.

So we have to be surrounded by a community that loves us enough to hold us accountable and will tell us the truth even when it hurts. Because they're willing to go through the process with us. So who do you have in your life? That's that way. Yeah.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:36:35] You know?

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:36:37] You know, if you don't have someone in your life, why not?

**David Pasqualone:** [01:36:42] Yeah. There's that saying, a friend tells you what you want to hear. A real friend tells you what you need to hear. And the, some people are listening right now and they're thinking, why I have these friends? I need to be honest with them. You gotta be careful who you share with. But if Kirsten like what she's describing as someone who is a godly influence, she's going to point you to God.

Who's who, you know, is not going to judge you. It's going to help you deal with this. Those are the people you need to share with. And when you don't have that, that's when you know counselors are the right step because counselors are the right step. Even with the friends, if you get a good godly counselor, but to have someone, you know.

We always talk about the great commission. Go ye therefore and teach all nations. It's not called the great mission. It's the great comb express to the apostles had each other. We have each other. It's exactly what curse in San. It's togetherness. It's as a group for Christ with one goal and purpose.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:37:39] What I tell couples today, especially women who contact me because they have some suspicions, I asked them, who do you have.

Friends wise as a couple. Now that sounds like maybe a crazy question to ask a woman who's coming to me about problems, but what I've, what I have identified and what we identified in our lives is a warning sign is isolation. If you do not as a couple, have good friends around you, people who do life with you.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:38:15] Not just

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:38:15] fun. No life or life with you. You are getting separated and you are going to get picked off. The enemy likes nothing better than to get you separated and to think, Oh, we're doing okay and we're fine. When we had to go pick those six people for this soul, you know this, this spiritual care team, we had a terrible time.

We, the first couple was easy. Because like I said, we had been in a small group study with them for years. They, we had done life with them. Our kids were the same age we had. We had been through parent deaths. We had been through kid accidents, you know, all sorts of messy stuff with them. You know, teenage, you know, stupid mistakes that we all made and our kids made.

we'd been through marriages. We'd been, I mean, we had just been through life together. We knew we could trust them. They were safe people. And that's, that's a key here. You need people who are safe

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when you're going to talk about something like this. But picking the other two couples were not easy because we were isolated.

He would be friends with the husband, but I didn't have a relationship with the wife, or I didn't feel like, you know, one or the other of them had the spiritual strength that we knew they were going to have. So when we finally decided on this group of six people, we were almost, we were desperate. Because we literally had eliminated just about everyone that we knew and we realized we didn't know that many people.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:39:47] And that's actually, you don't realize it's even happening or you surround yourself as you get isolated. Sometimes it's not even alone, but you surround yourself with really shallow people, like people who are fun. People are there for the [01:40:00] party. People were there on the good times, but when the proverbial crap hits the

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:40:04] fan, nobody's

**David Pasqualone:** [01:40:05] there for you.

Right. So that's, that's important.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:40:09] That's one thing to identify. If you see that happening, that's a warning sign that you are not in a healthy place. and you need to, you need to cultivate. You need to be praying for and cultivating people who will be this way in your life. It's not a frightening thing.

It's one of the most freeing things you can ever experience. We get together with, with these friends now that we have identified and. There is nothing that we can't talk about with them. If we're struggling with something, we can just be, we can just be very clean with them. Now, I'm not going to say that to everybody, but I can say it to them because I know one, they're going to tell me the truth, and two, they're going to pray for me, and three, they're going to love me no matter what, and that's that unconditional.

I accept you as you are love and I've been there with you and I'm not walking away. I'm going there with you. Those are the friendships that you want and you're not going to have a lot of those. You shouldn't have a lot of those. You can't have a lot of those. They take a lot of energy

**David Pasqualone:** [01:41:12] and let's take, I'm going to take another break and this is a crazy break cause Kirsten and I, I want to explain what I'm about to do.

I'm about to take another commercial break for someone who I don't know who it's going to be, and this is what I mean by that. I believe that right now there's men and women listening to this. Now women, you have a great resource and Kirsten and her information is in the show notes. Get ahold of her. At least start your journey where you can begin the healing process and get direction.

But I want to put. I got to find somebody who, again, I'm not God, I don't know all the ins and outs. You can think somebody good and they're really evil, but we're going to try to find somebody, maybe even

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the intensive, that Kirsten went to and her husband and put just a resource for you, a commercial resource for where you can go and get help.

So we're going to do a quick break and then we come back. Kirsten, you've told us where you've been. Thank you. Some of the real obstacles you had to face. And then when we get back, we're going to pick up anything we've missed, anything we missed, you want to talk about, and then where you're at today and where you're going so we can help you for your time today.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:42:19] Okay.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:42:20] Awesome. Hello, friends. This is Dave Pascual alone, and two weeks ago when I had the privilege of recording the Kirsten Samuel story, we took a break and we pause because I just felt that there was a resource we needed to put out there. For families and specifically men. Kirsten and her husband are amazing, and you can see where God's brought them and you're about to see where they're going.

And she's an amazing resource for women, but I don't want to leave the men out and the families. So I was able to contact the counselor that helped David and Kirsten. Recover and become the powerful family that they are today. 13 years ago, they on the brink of disaster, and now they're writing books, speaking publicly, and God's using them to change thousands of lives.

So the man that he used to act as a catalyst in their life was a man named Rob Jackson. Rob Jackson has a brief intensive that you and your loved one can go to. You spend a weekend and you unpack everything that's not just bothering you, but what's driving the behavior? It's Christ centered, integrated care with someone who's experienced, someone who is Christ centered, loves you, and only wants what's best to help glorify God and unite you and your family together.

And he deals with individuals. He deals with families, he deals with couples. But what you're hearing, Kirsten talk about is the exact program that he offers today. So check out [iceberg model.com](http://icebergmodel.com) you can find the link in the show notes, and if you are struggling with a sexual addiction, if you're in a marriage that's been wrecked by adultery.

If you are hiding a life that you've never told anybody about, talk to Rob. He can do video sessions. He hosts regular webinars over the weekend, and there's so many resources available. So again, this is Dave Paskal alone with a remarkable people podcast. And this whole episode is about the victorious Christian life that Kirsten and her husband, David, are now living.

The man that God used to help them get there is Rob Jackson. So if you're out there listening today, [01:45:00] don't wait. Check out the [iceberg, model.com](http://icebergmodel.com) give Rob a call and get moving forward on that spiritual victory you're hearing Kirsten and her husband talk about, we can all have that. It is possible. Don't believe the lie.

We already have victory through Christ. Now's the time to claim it. This is Dave with the remarkable people podcast. We love you. You can do this. God wants you to do this. You make the choice. Now let's get back to the show. All right, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to the show. And Kirsten, thank you again so much for being on today.

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Thank you for your time and thank you for your transparency. This is hugely important and especially in our society, so thank

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:45:46] you. Thank you for the opportunity.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:45:49] All right, so before we went to our second break, which was unusual for us, we were saying, is there anything else that to this point we haven't covered yet that you think is important or it's impressed upon your heart to share with the audience?

And then we're going to transition into where you're at today, your husband, and where you guys are going and how we can help you get there.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:46:07] One of the things that. I mentioned early on as we were talking was my husband believed, and I actually did as well, that we could deal with this ourselves. well we proved we couldn't, and my husband had been dealing with it.

and, and I tell this in my, in my book, choosing a way out, I tell this part of the story. You know, he had been exposed, like I said before, 11 years old. He was a young child and he had repeated exposures throughout his growing up years and into his early adulthood before we were married. And, he believed that when he, when we got married, that, that, that he would no longer be tempted.

The addiction would be gone. At that point. He probably wouldn't have even called it an addiction. But today we have these little. Computers that we hold in our hands that we call smart phones. We have laptops, we have iPads, we have iPods, you name it. We have internet connected devices, and without even trying, you can become exposed to pornography on the internet.

It is the fastest growing industry faster than Google. Microsoft. You start naming them and put them all together, the, the pornography industry online is growing faster than that, than all of those combined. Yup.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:47:30] Absolutely. It has its own web, the whole arc web, and there's a whole alternative of extensions instead of dot-coms.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:47:36] It's just, it is, it is incredibly easy to become exposed and then to become entrapped. So this is not something that you can just say, well, I, you know, we'll deal with it and he's not gonna do it anymore. I'm not going to do it anymore and go your own way and think you're going to survive. You're not.

you need people. You need a coach, you need a counselor. You probably need both. You need an accountability group. You need support. Do you need help? So that you can break the, the hold on you. There are, there are studies you can go to covenant eyes.com. They've got a lot of studies on what pornography addiction does to the brain.

and it, it, it is, it does. You have to rewire your brain. I mean, and, and some people don't like that term, but I think about it this way. If I have done something for many years and I'm doing it in a way that

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injures myself, let's say that I've been walking wrong, and because of that, you know, I've, I've worn out the cartilage in my knee for some reason because I am not, my gait is off.

Well, I go to a physical therapist, maybe I have to have surgery, but I go to a physical therapist at the bare minimum and they have to teach me a new way to walk. Correct. When did you say that's true?

**David Pasqualone:** [01:48:58] Oh yes. Absolutely. My, I might change my mind, so I was not not agreeing with you. Yeah,

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:49:04] but you, you, you do that in effect.

You're rewiring your brain. You're having to learn a new way. Well, that's the same thing with addiction. With pornography addiction. We have to learn a new way. We have to do what we've done in order to move forward. That's not negative. That's a part of being human. And we have to blow this stigma and we have to start talking honestly about what's happening.

The statistics, you know, I, I, you know, a lot of your listeners may, may claim to be Christians. and they may believe, like, I believed that, well, you know, this couldn't happen in a good Christian home. Well, it does. If the statistics are the same, whether you claim a profess, a belief in Jesus Christ or whether you don't, one of the recent stats I saw was that the highest pornography usage is on Sunday nights.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:49:59] Beef [01:50:00] on, you know what? I bet that has, I'm spit balling here. But I guess Sunday nights is before Monday. People are most depressed with their Medicaid medicating with porn before they have to go back to work on Monday.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:50:09] But you know, there's, and you're right, right now, the statistics are that women are being sucked into pornography as an addict, much higher, you know, at a faster rate than still, I mean, the men still outpaced the women,

**David Pasqualone:** [01:50:25] considered what percentage of gross

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:50:28] energy of growth right.

The other statistic that just breaks my heart is that pornography addiction, people who are in pornography addiction are 300% more likely to be, to be, commit infidelity in their marriage. 300%

**David Pasqualone:** [01:50:48] because they're acting out, they're

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:50:48] acting out. It's a progressive addiction.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:50:52] I think are all, I mean I, I believe all of these things are progressing.

Cause if you go on Medicaid, everything's going to get worse. Things don't get better.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:50:59] So the, the, the issue is like I tell, like I tell women who, who call me and talk to me, there's not a thing you can tell me that's going to shock me and I'm not going to think less of you because you're telling me the truth because the Bible tells us that the truth sets us free.

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The lie that Satan wants us to believe is that if you tell it, then nobody's going to want either. Nobody's going to believe you or two, you're going to be rejected. Well, in my experience, the exact thing happened. I was believed and I was accepted with open arms. Yes. Things had to be changed. My husband experienced the same thing.

Every woman that I talked to. That's what I want to give you, is I want you to know that I will accept you. I will believe you. I will talk truth to you, but it'll always be done from a point of I've been there and I feel your pain and I love you because of Jesus. And I will tell you right now that I do not know any other way to recover.

From the wounds of pornography addiction other than Jesus Christ. He has to be the basis. He's the only one that has the answers. I can only point you to him and I can tell you, and that's when I say only point you to him. That's the, that's the best place I can point you honestly, because he is the one that is going to meet that deep need that you're medicating with something else.

And so we have to find out who you are. In Jesus. Who does God say you are? Like you mentioned earlier, David, those lies those things that were flying through my mind. That wasn't God, that was not God, that was safe, and he was twisting God's words. He is not creative. He started with Eve in the garden when he said, did God really say when God had said it?

And then he caused her to pause and wondered, had she heard correctly? He still does the same thing today. He is not creative, but he's good. But he's not creative. He's good at it.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:53:11] I agree. Anytime I see adultery, it's the same playbook over and over

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:53:19] again.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:53:20] When you start listening to people's stories of infidelity, again, it doesn't matter man or woman.

It's the same freaking playbook. These men don't know each other. These women don't know each other, but seeing in hooks, him tricks him, brings him to the same evil path. And it's, it's just crazy to watch. It's seriously say, and the thing is, it's like you said, he's not creative. He's sitting back, laughing, running the same play.

We can watch, observe, and we're still doing it and me and you can fall into it. Any listener can fall into it. We got to guard ourselves and help each other.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:53:56] We do. And we have to. We have to admit that we are that vulnerable that we had that easily tripped up.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:54:06] Yeah. And parents listening, don't be stupid.

Sorry for the Greek there, right? Don't be stupid. I mean, your kids have a cell phone. Would you take a magazine, a porn magazine, and in their pocket, tap them on the chest and say, don't look at that. Right? If they got a cell phone, if they have apps, they have access to everything, and sadly, they're probably looking at it not because they're not a quote unquote good kid

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**Kristen Samuel:** [01:54:27] because they're human.

They're human, they're human.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:54:29] And. Covenant eyes. You mentioned that earlier. Curse. I've used coming in eyes for years. I love covenant Heights because if you're saying, well, we don't have a problem, my family, well don't be a dummy. Use covenant eyes. So you continue not to have a problem. Put some safeguards in place.

Right. And they're not a sponsor. I'm just saying it cause I'm eating it. Yeah.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:54:47] I mean to cut you off. Covenant eyes, we've got on all internet enabled devices in our home. And when I say all internet enabled devices, I mean it. The other thing that, that we have done to be completely transparent with [01:55:00] each other is I have access to every internet account he has.

He has access to every internet account I have. And I want to tell you a funny story. Kind of a kind of a tough topic, but I have to tell you a funny story, Dave. because of coming and I's, one of the things you set up is you can set up to have an accountability reports sent weekly to anyone you want.

Well. As a, as a wife of an addict, I am not his accountability partner. That is not a good situation at all.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:55:29] No. I highly recommend advise a. Great.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:55:32] So the, we've, he, we've identified and I agreed to these men that get a copy of days or accountability report. Now, I just told you that all internet enabled devices in our home have covenant eyes installed on them.

So they're tracking all of everything that's going on right. Well, I'm researching pornography recovery. I'm researching the stats about pornography. I'm researching depression recovery as part of of my recovery. I'm researching all of these things. So lately, guess who's flagging my husband's report. So I'm the one having to go to his accountability partners going, Hey guys, this is what I was doing.

This was not Dave, and it's really, it's a joke now between us because he looks back at me. He goes, I am guilt-free. I didn't do any of this. This is my wife, and we just laugh about it. The guys laugh about it there. They've gotten to a point now where if I haven't already fessed up, you know, said, Hey, this is what I was doing.

This is the research. This is why they'll contact both of us and say, what were you doing. And then we can tell them, but there's no guilt. There's this freedom, there's this laughter because we know what's going on. Now, another service that you can, and I've, I've, I'm not used this one, but I've heard about it from some others that trusted is net nanny, especially for younger children.

That's got some more stringent controls on it from my understanding, but it's worth checking out. Net nanny. Do not think your kids are not getting exposed. They are. Yeah.

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**David Pasqualone:** [01:57:10] And they're getting hooked and they're getting pulled in. And even if it's not necessarily the culture's like have premarital sex or who doesn't have premarital sex, and Oh, this is okay to talk this way, and boys and girls can be friends and you can talk alone.

No, let's all bullcrap in a lie. And these kids are getting hooked and pulled in and addicted and brought into premarital sex at early ages. And it's really sad. It's destroying them.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:57:36] You're not being approved. You're not, you're not being anti-cultural. Well, you are being anti-cultural, but this is a good one.

Okay. why would you not protect your home, your family, the people that you love the most? Why would you not? Would you give them a little bit of arsenic and co.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:58:00] That's

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:58:00] strychnine. Would you just put a drop of strychnine in your kid's bottle and hand it to them or in their, in their water or whatever? No.

Then why are you saying this is okay? It's not a little bit of toxic poison is still poison and, and God told us about this from the beginning of time and he didn't do it because he's a killjoy. God invented sex. Okay. It was his idea. He thinks it's a great thing he created it. But he also said to protect it because it is the greatest gift, one of the greatest gifts that we have.

It is the greatest expression of intimacy. And so I just encourage you, don't be blind. Put some of these things in place, not because you're trying to be, you know, the mommy and, and, and all of this. And that's one other thing that, that whole thing about being the mom when you are the wife, you're not the mom.

And that's a key distinction when it comes to your husband. You are not his mother. You are his wife. You are his helper, his help meet. That's the way God set it up. You are equal. You are to be, to be pulling together on the same team. And if you're treating your husband like he's your child, we need to talk.

There's something going on.

**David Pasqualone:** [01:59:19] Yeah, know something's out of whack there.

**Kristen Samuel:** [01:59:22] And it's the same thing with, with men. Men, your, your wife is not the little woman. She is not your property. She is not your child to be spoken down to. She is your equal in God's eyes and she is supposed to be treated with the utmost respect and care.

That's how God designed it. That's how Jesus treated women. If you look at how Jesus treated women, he was so anti-cultural and he raised them to a level of honor. Because God says that we are all created in him at his image and we have value because we are [02:00:00] created in his image. And that's that whole, you know, that whole valuing life, this is a, this is, this is all part of devaluing life.

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When when we get sucked into any kind of pornography or sexual addiction, we look at the other person as property or an object instead of someone created in God's image. And that just breaks my heart,

**David Pasqualone:** [02:00:25] man. Again, we could just keep on packing this. I really appreciate you. all right, well talk about this.

Where are you today? Where's Dave today and where are you guys headed?

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:00:36] Well, we are still married. Praise God. Amen. Because of what God did. Like I said, he's remade our marriage. He is my best friend. I am his. There is nothing that I cannot tell him. And we have had some extremely awkward conversations even recently.

And, And so I'm really grateful that we are at this position. we are, we mentioned, David, you mentioned at the beginning that I'm an author and a coach and a speaker. my heart is to help women. and to encourage them to bring them hope when, when they discover that their husband is addicted to pornography, I call it act aftershock recovery coaching because it is a shock.

And when you're in shock, you know that you don't do things. You don't, you can't process, like I described at the beginning, the, the, the gamut of emotions that you run through initially are just overwhelming. And if you don't know where to turn. To get some help, you're going to just try to brush it off. I did.

When I discovered it, I thought at first I was gonna run, but thankfully God had already put people in place. So if you find yourself even suspicious, go to my website. Get that, that free ebook. 10 warning signs. Your gut already knows the gut is our second brain. That is a scientific fact. And some of us play a pay better attention to our gut.

We listen better to our gut, but if your gut is telling you something is not right, listen, and then you can call me. Then there's a free consultation button right there on the phone page of my website. You can give me a call and let's talk. I'm, I'm not gonna tell you I will heal everything. But I will walk the process with you and I want you to hear this.

There is hope. Just like we were told within the, within the first two hours of Dave revealing this to me, there is hope. This does not have to be fatal, but you do have to take action. You cannot ignore it. It's time. The, the statistics are from the, the psych. The psychology today reveals that the average couple who faces a crisis like this, like pornography addiction, waits six years, six years before they reach out for help.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:03:01] Wow, that's terrible.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:03:02] Imagine what damage is done in six years.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:03:06] Yeah. I think a lot of us know what kind of damage is done in six years.

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**Kristen Samuel:** [02:03:10] If you would reach out today, yes. It's going to be hard. Yes, you're going to have to confront the issues. I will not guarantee you your marriage will survive. I can't guarantee that because you have choices to make.

Your husband has choices to make. Whichever one of you is addicted. There are choices that have to be made, but I can show you some principles that will help you move forward, that will help you heal and at the, at the bare minimum, you will be in a better place than you are today. You don't have to reach out.

But if you don't, where are you going to be?

**David Pasqualone:** [02:03:47] Yeah. And for Kirsten, her and her husband, you've heard through this whole episode, they took immediate, drastic action and they had a support team surrounding them. And because of that, they're here 13 years past the incident and helping people, you know, pointing people to God, helping you heal and moving forward.

If they didn't take immediate action, they should. This interview probably wouldn't be happening today. No, I, it's all because of God. But Kirsten and David, Kirsten and David, they took the steps and they made it a priority. So nobody wants to face this. Nobody wants to talk about it. Nobody wants to deal with it.

It's painful, but you got to do it.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:04:28] It's just like if you broke your leg, would you sit? Would you just keep walking on it?

**David Pasqualone:** [02:04:35] Yeah, you're asking the wrong guy. I have a tear in my shoulder for like a couple of years now and I just won't get served. No, you're right. But it hurts me. You know what? That's actually a great point.

I'm in pain every day. It limits my activity. I avoid things I should do or even want to do because I have a tear

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:04:54] in my shoulder. And how's it affecting your family life?

**David Pasqualone:** [02:04:57] Yeah. It impacts what I do with my kids. It impacts what I do with my wife. [02:05:00] And it, if I'm in pain, I'm grumpy. And that affects us, right?

So the porns the same way. If we're not dealing with this, it's trickling over into air. There are aspects, even though we don't see it right, but

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:05:10] it's called dealing with chronic pain or choosing to deal with the acute pain so that the pain goes away, that you heal. So you have to make a choice. And we have these choices all the time in our lives.

We make them a, you know, the, like I said, we want to qualify. Sin will in God's eyes, God says, sin is sin. There's no, there's no greater sin than any other sin because sin is always disobeying God and turning

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our back on him and saying, no, I'm going to do it my way because my way's better. But see, God in his love said, I loved you enough that I died on a cross.

I suffered a brutal, excruciating death for you when you didn't even ask me. And then three days later I, I burst out of that tomb and I crushed sin. I've already paid the penalty. All you have to do is come to me. You don't have to get better. You just come to me as you are because I've already paid the cost.

Now why would you not take that gift. Why not? Why would you not come to Jesus and say, I know you already know this, but I gotta tell you, and I guarantee you, when I hit the bottom, yeah. When I liked the subtitle of my book says when the bottom isn't the bottom, when I crashed through the bottom and I went down again and I went down again and I finally hit bottom, I turned around and Jesus was standing there with his arms open wide and I met love in a way I had never known.

Jesus is the answer, and I would love to show you how I would love to point you to him because he alone is the hope for everything that's going on in your life. He alone.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:07:11] Amen. Well, Kirsten, thank you so much for being here today. Thank

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:07:16] you, David. It's been a privilege.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:07:18] And again, as the listeners, we're going to put a bunch of links in the show notes, reach out to Kirsten and David and get help, and put some other resources hopefully up there too for you and you know, if we can help you in any way, please let us know.

And then, Kirsten, are there any final thoughts or anything you want to share before we cut this off?

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:07:37] I just want to say, I know we've talked about a really tough subject today and we've talked about a subject that the culture doesn't want to address

**David Pasqualone:** [02:07:47] but too much money on it. Why would culture want to address

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:07:49] it?

Well, and it feels good, right? Yeah. But temporarily, yes. But put yourself in the, in the shoes of those that are being forced to produce that pornography. These are real, these are real women, real children, real men whose are enslaved. Human trafficking is not. A nice thing that you hear and know it's over off on the side.

No, no. It's in your communities,

**David Pasqualone:** [02:08:19] so you're not seeing the majority of porn is made by willing people who enjoy it. I'm being sarcastic. The majority of porn out there is not willing people who enjoy it. That's the fantasy. That's not the reality.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:08:32] That's what the pornographers wants you to believe that it's consensual, that everything is, you know, that these.

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You know, they even have gone as far in some reports that I've read where they say that this is just like a family. No, it is not. It is dehumanizing. It is dangerous and it is someone's daughter or someone's son, please do not feed this industry. Please get help. You, you are not stuck. You are not stuck.

There is hope. There is a way out. And I hope that you'll choose it today because you can choose to deny it or you can choose to overcome. Yeah, and

**David Pasqualone:** [02:09:21] for the people out there listening right now who are in pornography, we're not saying you're a horrible human and there's no hope for you either. You have sin, we have sin, we all have sin.

But what we're saying is, you need help. I need help. We all need help. And I personally know a couple of people who have been involved in pornography in the sense of actually acting on strain. And those individuals, male and female, all had pain in their past that they were just like I have. They were gorgeous people, men and women.

But they're like, I hate myself. I'm a piece of crap. And they had serious baggage and

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:09:56] that's where we go back to Jesus. Yup.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:09:59] Yup. [02:10:00] And there's people I know, and I'm sure you know that it looks on the outside, like everything is great in their life. And man, why would love to have that life? They got money, they got fame, they got good looks, but then at the end of the day, man, they're horribly, horribly in pain.

And yes,

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:10:17] so.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:10:18] The one and not the one. A great value. The great thing about God and love is there's no limits. He loves everybody. There was one race, the human race, there is no, in this case, there's no, there's male and female, but he loves every one of us equally young, old, rich, poor, sick, healthy.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:10:36] Yup. My pastor, Brady Boyd puts it this way and I love this, that we swim in oceans of grace.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:10:42] It's beautiful.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:10:43] We cannot plumb the depths. We cannot reach the shore. We will never out grace God, but it's not a cheap grace because it cost Jesus everything.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:11:00] well, Kirsten, thank you for sharing your story and truly are remarkable. I thank God for you and I'm looking forward to continuing our conversation privately and in person, you know, continue to be friends. and for the listeners out there, if you've heard this, share it. Tell your friends, tell your family, people you don't even consider would have an issue with this.

# REMARKABLE PEOPLE PODCAST

Listen. Do. Repeat... for Life.

They do. They do. Do them a favor. I'm not, this isn't a shameless plug to get the podcast to grow. Remember, look at episode one our whole purpose is to glorify God and we're glorifying God by helping you. So my goal is to help you. That's going to glorify you and God. So share these, share these episodes, get people on board, be blunt.

You can say, Hey, I don't have this problem, but I know a lot of you do, right? Or be honest. I have this problem. This episode really helped me. But, take that step. Get out of the darkness. Go into the light that starts the healing,

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:11:52] right? It says that there is no condemnation that has come upon you that God will not set free.

So please. Please listen to what God has to say. You are dearly loved. You are adored. You are a wonderful person because you've been created in God's image and you have value. Don't ever forget that.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:12:17] And then with that message, on that note, we're going to end this episode. We'll see you next week. And again, reach out to Kirsten, reach out to her husband, me, whoever you need to, but the number one lifelines.

God, we love you. Have a great day and we'll see you soon.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:12:34] The remarkable people podcast,

**David Pasqualone:** [02:12:37] check it out.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:12:45] the remarkable people

**David Pasqualone:** [02:12:47] podcast.

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:12:49] Listen, do.

**David Pasqualone:** [02:12:54] For

**Kristen Samuel:** [02:12:54] life.