

Her Freedom Journey

A GUIDE OUT OF
PORN & SHAME TO
AUTHENTIC INTIMACY

dr. Juli Slattery
& dr. Joy Skarka

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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A Note from Fuli and Foy

Hi friend,

You might feel as though you are forging new ground by facilitating this study. Remember, God equips His people in every generation to be the light of the world in the darkness around them. When God sent His people into new territory and challenges, He told them, “Be strong and courageous, for I am with you.” Those words still apply to us today.

Others have found victory through this study. You’re not alone. Read their encouraging testimonies:

- “He used this book to break the chains I've held for 7.5 years. I'm free now. My prayers have been answered.”
- “This book gave me hope to believe that freedom from pornography is possible and it helped me to forgive, confess, and grieve my past.”
- “God used this book to show me that I am not alone in this struggle and that freedom is possible. It also helped me to see that my struggle is an intimacy issue and porn addiction is a sin issue. I was really helped and have been profoundly changed. Praise the Lord!”



As for leading this group on the topic of sexuality, you might be a bit intimidated. Here are some practical guidelines to help you keep the conversation on track and edifying:

- Keep the focus on God's Word. Everyone has different opinions related to sexual issues; some of those opinions are rooted in deep pain and conflicts. Remember the most important opinion is God's. That's whose we are seeking!
- Focus on what God is teaching each person rather than sharing intimate personal details.
- If you sense that someone is "oversharing" or has hit on something painful, be available to talk another time and encourage the individual to meet with a Christian counselor.
- Trust the Holy Spirit and allow everyone to go at their own pace. Don't feel pressure to convince someone to change their views.
- Present truth, dig into Scripture, be prayerful and ask God to use you.
- It's okay to say, "I don't know." Leading a group like this doesn't mean you have to be the expert. You are on a journey just like everyone else. Authentic Intimacy has a number of follow up resources, and can refer you to other ministries and resources to help you sort through questions and issues from a biblical perspective. All suggested Java with Juli podcast episodes mentioned in this resource can be found on AuthenticIntimacy.com.
- Remember that sexuality represents a spiritual battlefield. Spend time praying for wisdom and discernment.

All for Him,

Juli & Joy



PREPARING TO LEAD



Facilitator Checklists



GROUP DATES AND TIME: _____

READ FACILITATOR'S GUIDE	✓
A Note from Juli and Joy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group Facilitator Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group Facilitator Role & Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing & Advertising for Your Group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before the Group Begins	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Meeting Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparing Your Participants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before Each Group Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leading Meetings Syllabus & Schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tips When Facilitating	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly Sessions (Read as you go)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appendices	<input type="checkbox"/>

BEFORE FIRST GROUP	✓
Confirm group time and dates with your church or ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pray for participants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partake in any needed training	<input type="checkbox"/>
Market and advertise your group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send an introduction email to the group participants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare group covenant	<input type="checkbox"/>



Group Facilitator

REQUIREMENTS

While facilitating a group is an important responsibility, don't feel the pressure to be perfect. You will never be perfect on this side of Heaven.

Before we discuss what is required, let's look at what qualifications are not necessary.

What a group facilitator is not expected to be:

- Someone who has mastered sexuality
- Someone with a perfect sexual past
- Someone who has all of the answers
- Someone with professional training or experience

We are all sexually broken and still on the journey of sanctification as we follow the Lord. You are not expected to be an expert. Still, leading a small group is not a casual responsibility. There are a few requirements to be a group facilitator:

1. **A commitment that the Bible is the standard of truth**
2. **A heart for God's people**
3. **A humble spirit**
4. **An interest in and knowledge of the material**

This doesn't mean you have all of the answers, but that you can point out the major signposts along the way. A group facilitator must hold to the truth of Scripture as a foundation, while also ministering from a place of compassion and humility. Don't be concerned that you need complete knowledge of the material, but plan to bring a passion for what your group is learning.



Group Facilitator

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

Organize Group Meetings

Your group day and time will be set by you or your church or ministry. People will sign up for your group knowing this information, but you will also want to reiterate with your group all of the details of when, where, and how the meetings will take place. You will want to communicate with participants before the first meeting to welcome them, share details about the group, and prepare them for the first meeting.

Facilitate Discussion

While some groups will naturally fill the set time with their thoughts and questions, some may not. Most groups will need a bit of encouragement, at least as the study begins. Facilitating discussion is one of your most important roles, which includes pre-selecting discussion questions, engaging quieter members, rephrasing or clarifying questions when needed, and at times redirecting a group member who naturally dominates conversations.

Safeguard the Discussion

It's the group facilitator's job to monitor group discussion. This may include stepping in if someone becomes disrespectful or if the discussion becomes too explicit. You can bring up the group covenant to remind your group of the safeguards in place.

See Appendix: Sample Group Covenant.

Pray for Group Members

Beyond the logistical or social details, each group facilitator should engage in spiritual preparation for his or her group. Praying for the group should be a regular habit, both during group meetings and outside of the meetings.

Share Responsibilities with Members (Optional)

A few weeks into the group you may want to assign roles to the group members. For example, encourage one person to be the prayer leader to encourage prayer throughout the week and perhaps another to provide snacks. The more group members contribute, the more they will feel like it is *their group*. Take notice of the people who step up to lead. These people could be future co-leaders or could branch out and lead their own groups.

Marketing & Advertising for Your Group

“Porn
isn’t just a
man’s issue.

Women
struggle
too.”



4 Week Promotional Strategy

Week 1

- Gather email addresses of those interested
- Download promotional images from [here](#)
- Click File, then Make a copy, edit, and then print these **flyers**
- Determine the last day for women to join your group
- Be as clear as you can on location, dates, and times. The more information you can give, the better your recruitment will go!

Week 2

Week 2

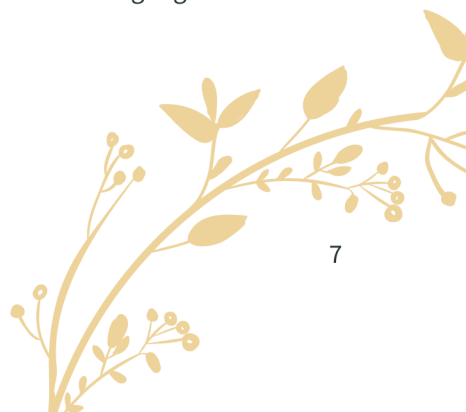
- Send out an interest email (sample email copy on the next page).
- If your church allows, make an announcement with this **slide** at church or small group. To use the slide: Click File, then Make a copy, and edit.

Week 3

- Send out a follow-up email
- Meet with people who are interested but have not committed to the group. This can be a phone call or even a coffee meet-up.
- Make sure to walk through their barriers and listen to their fears or concerns.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help discern if this is a good next step for them.
- For those who have committed, make sure they have ordered their books and let them know you are glad they are a part of the group.

Week 4

- Send a follow-up email (sample email copy on the next page) letting them know how to register and that this deadline is the last chance to sign up.
- Make sure committed members of the group have all the information they need for your first meeting together.



Marketing & Advertising for Your Group

Sample Email:

Dear Friend,

I am excited to share that I will be leading a small group through the book *Her Freedom Journey: A Guide Out of Porn and Shame to Authentic Intimacy* by Dr. Juli Slattery and Dr. Joy Skarka. The group will meet every _(day of the week)_ over the next 9-weeks. While together, we will engage in a discussion over the book. We would love for you to join us!

This 9-session small group will cover:

- Session 1: Introduction
- Session 2: Week 1: The Problem of Porn
- Session 3: Week 2: Can God's Love Really Be Enough?
- Session 4: Week 3: A New Vision for Sexual Wholeness
- Session 5: Week 4: Pursuing Sexual Integrity
- Session 6: Week 5: Ditching Lies and Embracing Truth
- Session 7: Week 6: Stop Trying So Hard!
- Session 8: Week 7: Getting Unstuck from Shame
- Session 9: Week 8: When Your Story Becomes a Weapon

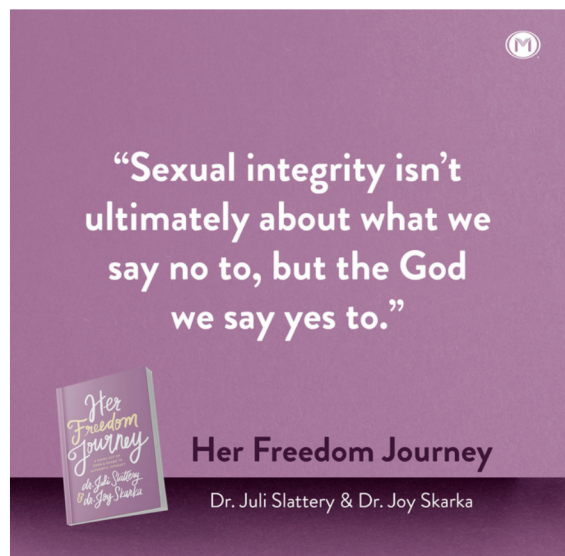
We hope to see you there! You can register by _____ or emailing me to let me know you are interested.

Sample Follow-up Email:

Hi Friend,

We wanted to let you know this is the **last week to register** for our small group based on the book *Her Freedom Journey* by Dr. Juli Slattery and Dr. Joy Skarka. We would love for you to join us! You can find more about the book [here](#). On that page you can also purchase the book.

You can register _____, or please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.



Before the Group Begins

1

Material Preparation: A few weeks before the first group meeting, become familiar with the content of the study. These tools will help ensure that you will have a good understanding of the material to be covered by the group and will prepare you for content questions as they arise.

2

Training: Another way for a group facilitator to prepare includes investing in training provided through Authentic Intimacy's leader platform, SexualDiscipleship.com

Participate in live
and recorded
training sessions

Engage in the
Sexual Discipleship
E-courses

Attend monthly
Office Hours with
Juli Slattery

3

Number of Group Participants: If your group is larger than 12 participants, we recommend you break into small groups for discussion time. In a large meeting space, we recommend using round tables to promote engagement and keeping the same participants in their discussion groups each week to build trust and consistency. You may also want to assign a mature leader to be in each small discussion group to ensure that the discussion stays on-track and constructive.

If your group meets online, use the breakout room feature to create more intimate groups during discussion time.



General Meeting Structure

We recommend following the same general structure within the recommended 90 minutes of group time. The time ranges are estimates, so feel free to edit them based on your group.

Topic & Time	Key Point
Welcome & Opening Prayer (10–15 min)	Allow for a little small talk or get-to-know-each-other conversations, and then pray to start the meeting officially.
Ice Breaker (5–10 min) (optional)	Ask a get-to-know-you question. As a group grows closer together, you may want to skip the standard icebreaker and instead spend a little time saying hello and catching up with each other.
Discussion (40–50 min)	This should be the bulk of the meeting. You are encouraged to highlight your favorite questions that you want to make sure you cover as there won't be enough time to cover them all. We have narrowed down the questions in the suggested session layouts below, but you still may need to narrow them down more.
Introduce the Material & Assign Homework (5 min)	Give a quick preview of the “homework” that each member should complete before the next meeting.
Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer (5–10 min)	Ask for any prayer requests. Then close in prayer by nominating one person to pray for the group, initiating “popcorn” style corporate prayer, or splitting the group into small groups to pray with each other.

Preparing Your Participants

Organization and communication are essential for making sure your group members feel comfortable and know what to expect.

Introduction Message: The introduction message is probably the most important tool for starting your group well. Here is a template to use for the introduction email. Feel free to personalize the email as you wish, but you'll want to ensure all of the following elements are present:

Hi Friends,

Welcome to the *Her Freedom Journey* small group! What a joy it will be to dive into His Word together as we work through this small group. My name is [FILL IN NAME], and it is my joy to lead this small group!

In our first meeting on [FILL IN DATE AND TIME], we will get to know each other and talk through how our time will be structured each week.

Please let me know if you have any questions before we gather together. We look forward to meeting you and are praying over each of you.

Many blessings,

Before Each Meeting: While the time of your meetings do not change week to week, it can be very helpful for members if you send an "agenda" or reminder message each week, including any special notes about your time together.

If your group meets online, it is helpful to send the meeting link weekly so the participants can easily find it in their emails.



Before Each

MEETING

As the group facilitator, you'll want to set aside a few hours each week to prepare for the group meeting. This time should include the following:

Complete the Material

1 Complete any homework from the group, including readings and response questions. Even if you have participated in the study before, it is essential to revisit the material to ensure you have a solid reference point for discussion during the meeting.

Choose an Icebreaker (optional)

2 Fun icebreakers are a great way to catch up after a week apart and get new groups more comfortable sharing. For a list of icebreaker ideas, see *Appendix: Extra Icebreakers*.

Identify Discussion Questions

3 We highly recommend that you stick to the discussion questions suggested for each week. This will keep your group focussed on the content of the course and prevent tangents that may take the group off course. We have prepared a list of suggested questions for each week. It's not important to finish all of the questions, but be prepared to use them as the structure of your conversation.

Beyond the group-specific preparation, you may want to dive into some referenced Scripture passages, setting aside a time of prayer, or listening to some related "Java with Juli" episodes.



Leading Meetings Syllabus & Schedule

Add Date for Group	Session	Chapters to Read
	1	Meet the Authors—An Introduction to This Book
	2	Week 1: The Problem of Porn
	3	Week 2: Can God’s Love Really Be Enough?
	4	Week 3: A New Vision for Sexual Wholeness
	5	Week 4: Pursuing Sexual Integrity
	6	Week 5: Ditching Lies and Embracing Truth
	7	Week 6: Stop Trying So Hard!
	8	Week 7: Getting Unstuck from Shame
	9	Week 8: When Your Story Becomes a Weapon and A Final Note from Joy and Juli

Important notes:

- If you would like to make the group 8-weeks instead of 9-weeks, you can remove the intro week and have the women read Week 1 before the first group meeting
- If you would like to extend the group, you could also add on a closing Session 10.
- The participants should read the chapters before that week's group discussion.

TIPS WHEN FACILITATING



Tips When Facilitating

Getting the Discussion Going:

Some groups may be naturally talkative, but others may need a little coaxing. To help kickstart discussion, choose a few open ended questions, especially any that speak more to a person's experience or perspective than right/wrong concepts. You can also ask for participants' reaction to the material or if anyone has had an experience like an example used.

Questions where the answers are obvious can sometimes stifle discussion, while too abstract questions can confuse group members. If no group members are responding to a question, resist the urge to answer it yourself. Instead, try to restate the question using different words, or allow for some silence. Group members may just be formulating their thoughts, so allow for a little time. If "How is the gospel revealed in sexuality?" is receiving blank stares, try, "What were you taught about the purpose of sexuality growing up?" Referring to the past can often be a safe way to get topics started if people still aren't sure what to make of the material.

If you know group members well, you may consider calling on someone for an answer, but be very careful that you aren't pressuring someone to share something they aren't comfortable sharing.

A discussion dominated by one person isn't healthy, even if it is more active than silence. If a few people tend to dominate the conversation, you may want to ask for a response from someone who hasn't spoken yet or ask a quiet person if there are any topics or questions they'd like to discuss. You could say something like, "We want to be sure that everyone who wishes to speak has the opportunity to do so," or "Would anyone on this side of the room like to share?" If necessary, speak to the person who is dominating the conversation after the group. Let them know that you appreciate their participation, but that it is also important to give others the opportunity to share their thoughts. Affirm them, but it must be clear that everyone must be given an opportunity to share.

Tips When Facilitating

Continued

When Group Members Disagree:

There is no guarantee that group members will agree on issues of sexuality or that their beliefs will be rooted in the Bible. When group members disagree, don't panic. Sometimes a difference of perspective can lead to great discussion.

If someone leads with a very different perspective on sexuality, do not think you need to immediately prove them wrong. Ask questions. How did they come to that conclusion? You can point back to specific Scriptures or to content in the resource. (Let the authors take the heat, in a sense.)

The key is to approach with humility. This is not a matter of being right or developing the best theological defense. Often, contradictory opinions are born out of pain. Be sensitive that your group members may have sexual pain from their past, and never let the goal of your group be to "fix" someone.

If a group member becomes verbally forceful, it's time to redirect. You could even take a moment to pray with the group, that God would reveal the truth of that matter, and that you will work together to find it. If verbal aggression around disagreements becomes a reoccurring issue, it may be time to speak to the instigating member.

If a group member is making sexual choices that are contradictory to Biblical standards of sexuality, which may look like a man in an "open marriage" or an unmarried couple living together, it's important to remember you do not need to be the Holy Spirit for them, convince them why they are wrong, or convict them. Instead, love them and pray for them. Don't be afraid to ask honest questions, but remember to show love and grace, which begins with humility. Be careful to not let a blatant untruth be treated as truth. If someone makes a proclamation to the group that affirms or approves of sin, gently provide the Biblical perspective in response. Return to Scripture when needed to provide a foundation for truth.

When Pain or Brokenness is Revealed:

Sexuality may represent the darkest, most shameful and painful part of your group members' lives. At some point, someone may share a past experience or a current struggle that leaves you speechless.

Here are some tips for wading through the brokenness:

Weep with those who weep.

When faced with the damage of evil and sin, sometimes your best option is just to grieve with the hurting person. Don't think you need to have a solution or provide some key piece of advice. Depending on where the person is on their journey, advice may be well received, but they may just need to lament and no longer feel alone in the pain. "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15).

Care for the rest of your group.

A raw display of pain or brokenness can knit a group together. You may not have had similar experiences, but someone else in your group may have walked that path before and be able to offer insight and encouragement. If your group is rallying around the hurting group member, embrace the messiness and lean in. However, if the display of pain or brokenness is making the rest of your group uncomfortable, or if the details being shared are infringing on the discussion guidelines, you may need to find an opportunity to speak privately with the hurting group member. Don't be worried if the honesty redirects discussion for a short time. But, if the hurting member is repeatedly derailing your time together or preventing discussion on the material at hand, you may need suggest that they seek outside help for what they are walking through.

Follow up.

Sharing something painful takes courage, so thank the group member for his or her honesty and authenticity. If the hurting group member is still in the depths of pain, it may be good to send them an encouraging note after the meeting or follow up a few days later to see how they are doing and processing.

Here are some tips for wading through the brokenness:

Ask for help.

Part of a good leader's job is recognizing when an issue goes beyond the scope of the group or your expertise. You may encounter situations that involve past abuse and trauma, sexual or substance addiction, possible domestic violence, an active affair or mental illness. It is not your job to diagnose or to provide counsel in such situations. This group is intended to be for encouragement and education, not therapy. Offering advice on difficult and sensitive issues may end up doing more harm than good, even if you are well intentioned. It is wise to be aware of respected Christian counselors in your area to which you can refer when necessary.

Here are links to ministries we trust and often refer people to:

- [BeBroken](#)
- [Pure Desire](#)
- [HopeQuest](#)
- [MyCounselorOnline](#)
- [Focus on the Family Counseling](#)

DO YOU NEED
MORE HELP?



Schedule a call with our Authentic Intimacy Program Manager!
Email: info@authenticintimacy.com

Tips When Facilitating

Continued

Meeting Follow-Up:

After each meeting, you may want to consider sending out the list of prayer requests, links to any referenced resources, or a brief summary of the time you spent together.

If the homework for each week is not self-explanatory, it is very helpful to post or email the homework so that anyone who missed the meeting can be prepared for the next week.

Ending a Group:

Every group must come to an end. Here are some tips for handling the end of your group:

- Set aside some time at the end of the group for reflection. Ask about takeaways from the group, what was surprising, or what members want to know more about.
- Set aside time in your last meeting to pray together.
- Send an email to members with next steps and how they can continue to engage with materials when the group ends.

Caring for Members Who Miss Meetings:

It's unlikely that all of the members who sign up will attend every single week. There may also be members who miss a few meetings in a row without an explanation. If you find that any members have stopped interacting or attending, you may want to send a quick email or text asking how you can be praying for them or whether they need any help getting caught up. Some people may leave and never respond, but reaching out after someone misses a meeting or two can help people stay engaged and feel valued.

WEEKLY SESSIONS



Introduction



CHECKPOINT ► MEET THE AUTHORS—AN INTRODUCTION

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Group Member Introductions:** The first meeting for each group is set aside as an introduction meeting. In this meeting you'll introduce yourself, get to know the group members, and cover introductory information for the group and the material. Having a positive and engaging first meeting will encourage group members to be honest in following weeks.
- **Group Covenant:** Email the group covenant in advance. Mention it on the call and briefly explain some of the reasoning behind it. (See Appendix). Focus on the importance of respecting one another, being honest and authentic, and only sharing your own story.
- **Introduce Group Material:** During this time, you may want to share why you chose to facilitate this book. You may share how the content impacted you or why you think this topic is important.
- **Explain the Weekly Meeting Structure:** There are a few things you can cover during this time: (You can also wait and do this at the end if you prefer.)
 - Briefly explain the time structure for the group. Look at the "General Meeting Structure" page.
 - A common question will be what to read before the group sessions. There are 4-days of content for each week. Don't wait until the day before group to read. You can use this book during your daily time with God.
 - If you're leading an Online Book Study with Authentic Intimacy, talk about Zoom etiquette and show how to find the group discussion board.



Discussion Questions

- What do you hope to get out of this group?
- We found that few people were talking about women struggling with unwanted sexual behaviors. Have you heard this topic addressed before? If so, what were the messages?
- Do you have any hesitations or fears about being in this group?
- What if anything has been a part of your freedom journey so far? How did that impact your journey?
- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Give a quick preview of the “homework” that each member should complete before the next meeting.
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

***After the first meeting, we encourage you to follow-up and thank the group members for coming and participating via email or text.**

This Week's Homework:

Week 1: The Problem of Porn

Recommended Resources:

You can find additional resources related to freedom from sexual sin by scanning the QR code below or visiting:
<https://www.authenticintimacy.com/freedom-from-sexual-sin/>



Discuss Week 1



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 1: THE PROBLEM OF PORN

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** What is a good thing happening in your life right now, something you are grateful for?



Discussion Questions

1. Joy shared that she can tell her story because “someone else went first.” Talk about your experience of feeling alone in your sexual struggles.
2. How does it feel to know that you are not alone in your struggle with sexual sin?
3. How is pornography, or other sexual sin, affecting your relationship with God right now? How is pornography affecting your relationships with others: friends, family, coworkers, significant others, etc.?
4. How does pornography, or other sexual sin, help you deal with the hard things in your current life or in your past?
5. In Day 2, we looked at reasons why porn isn’t your biggest problem. Which of the following reasons did you most relate to? You need relationships. You need comfort. You need to be “spent.” You need healing.
6. What do you think about your sexual sin issues being intimacy issues? Do you feel like you’re lacking intimacy with God and others?



Discussion Questions

7. What do you think are some of the deeper heart issues of women who struggle with pornography, erotica, or sexual sin?
8. What are some of your hopes and fears as you begin the freedom journey within this group?

Bonus Activity: Have the group members write down the answers to Question 8 above and then share together. You can play a worship song while they are writing.

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 2: Can God's Love Really Be Enough?
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 2: Can God's Love Really Be Enough?

Recommended Resources:

Do you struggle with erotica? Read this blog, "Confessions of a Former Erotica Author," by scanning the QR code below or visiting:

<https://www.authenticintimacy.com/confessions-of-a-former-erotica-author/>



SESSION THREE

Discuss Week 2



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 2: CAN GOD'S LOVE REALLY BE ENOUGH?

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** What is your favorite thing to do for fun with friends?



Chapter 2 Discussion Questions

1. What was your relationship like with your dad? In what ways did he represent God's love well for you? In what ways did he represent God's love poorly for you?
2. Why do you think people doubt that God's love can really be enough when struggling with sexual sin and shame?
3. Do you believe God's love is enough to set you free from sexual sin and shame? Why or why not?
4. Do you believe you can have an actual friendship with God? Why or why not?
5. Share examples of friendships in your life that are good reflections of God as a friend.
6. After reading the story about Leah, could you relate with her? Share a time when you felt rejected or overlooked.

7. Share about a time when you felt too dirty to approach God. What would change in your life if you truly believed all you needed to do was run into His arms right now (as opposed to clean up first and then run to Him)?
8. On Day 4 you read about practical ways to nurture your relationship with God. Which one can you intentionally pursue this week?

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 3: A New Vision for Sexual Wholeness
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 3: A New Vision for Sexual Wholeness

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, “Three Things To Remember About Sexual Sin & Grace” by scanning the QR code below or visiting: <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/three-things-to-remember-about-sexual-sin-grace/>



SESSION FOUR

Discuss Week 3



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 3: A NEW VISION FOR SEXUAL WHOLENESS

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** What is a unique skill that you have?



Discussion Questions

**You're about a third of the way through the group. This would be a good time to do a check-in and ask the members how are things going, how are they liking the group and book, etc.*

1. What why questions do you have about God and sex? How have your why questions been ignored rather than explored or encouraged?
2. Do you believe God cares about your sexuality? Why or why not?
3. How are you allowing your past sexual sin or current struggle to continue to define you?
4. How would you describe the difference between seeking sexual purity and sexual integrity?
5. Why is it so important to understand that purity comes from God and not our own works?
6. Do you believe it is possible to be sexually whole as a single Christian? Why or why not?



Discussion Questions

7. Have you ever felt like you were more sexually broken than someone else? If so, how has believing this lie influenced your friendships and relationships?
8. Share your colored-in heart images with your group. How much of your heart is wholly surrendered to the Lord? Which parts are surrendered? Which parts are you holding back from Him?

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 4: Pursuing Sexual Integrity
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 4: Pursuing Sexual Integrity

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, ““God Doesn’t Care” and 3 Other Lies You Might Believe About Sex” by scanning the QR code below or visiting: <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/god-doesnt-care-and-3-other-lies-you-might-believe-about-sex/>



Discuss Week 4



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 4: PURSUING SEXUAL INTEGRITY

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** Best/Worst: Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. (Feel free to skip the icebreaker as the group continues.)



Discussion Questions

1. How do you hope sharing with a group can help you come out of hiding?
2. What are some ways sexual sin can affect our real-life relationships with others and with God?
3. On a scale of 0–100 percent, how much do you believe that God cares about your struggles, cries, and pains? How would your sexual struggles look different if you truly believed that God cared 100 percent about your pain and suffering?
4. Share about a time when you chose to hide in God instead of running away from Him. If you've never hidden in God, what would look different if you took this step?
5. What does it look like practically for you to have an accountability partner?
6. Which of the HALT items in the past have made you feel more vulnerable to sexual temptation?

7. Share the items in your Toolbox with the other group members. Brainstorm ideas together. How realistic is it for you to turn to your Toolbox in moments of temptation and do one of the listed activities?

8. Read Philippians 4:8 out loud. What are things you can think about in moments of temptation that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy?

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 5: Ditching Lies and Embracing Truth (Prepare the women that this next week may be challenging. Encourage them to reach out to a friend in or out of the group often for prayer.)
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 5: Ditching Lies and Embracing Truth

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, “Why You Still Need Boundaries As You Pursue Sexual Integrity” by scanning the QR code below or visiting: <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/why-you-still-need-boundaries-as-you-pursue-sexual-integrity/>



Discuss Week 5



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 5: DITCHING LIES AND EMBRACING TRUTH

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** This is usually a more challenging week. We recommend starting with a worship song.



Discussion Questions

1. In the moments before watching porn or reading erotica, what are the thoughts and lies that play in your mind? For example:
 - What's the big deal? At least I'm not sleeping around.
 - I'm so good in every other area of life. This is just my one issue.
 - No one is going to know.
 - I deserve this. I've had a really tough week.
 - I'm unmarried. I'll stop when I get engaged.
2. How does acknowledging that these thoughts are lies help with your struggles?
3. Share the lies you believe and the Scripture you found to counter the lies on your chart from Day 4. If you were unable to find Scripture passages, brainstorm verse ideas together.
4. Believing lies are often the root issue to our problems. Believing one lie can create a chain reaction or snowball effect. How are the lies you just shared impacting your sexual strongholds?



Discussion Questions

5. What are practical ways to address lies when they enter your brain? (Turn back to your Toolbox for ideas.)
6. Satan wants us to think our plans are better than God's plans. He wants us to act like God. What ways in your life do you claim to be like God? Or in what ways do you feel the need to have control over an area of your life?
7. How does doubting God's goodness increase your desire to look at porn or act out sexually?

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 6: Stop Trying So Hard!
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 6: Stop Trying So Hard!

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, "A Road Map to Sexual Integrity in the Midst of Sexual Brokenness" by scanning the QR code below or visiting: <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/a-road-map-to-sexual-integrity-in-the-midst-of-sexual-brokenness/>



Discuss Week 6



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 6: STOP TRYING SO HARD!

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** Start with discussion question #1 below.



Discussion Questions

1. Right now in your recovery journey, do you feel burdened or hopeful? If burdened and weighed down, how can Christ give you hope?
2. If in the past you've tried to earn freedom on your own by doing more and trying harder yet you didn't find freedom, what do you think happened? Why didn't it work?
3. In Day 2 you practiced confession in three parts: confessing to the Lord your sin, asking for God's grace and mercy, and resolving to trust in God's strength and grace and not in your own promise to avoid sin. In your small group, share how that process went for you.
4. Share an example of how you have tried to negotiate with God or justify your behaviors instead of surrendering to Him.
5. How does knowing God change the way you view sexuality, your past sexual sin, and what it means to be "free"?



Discussion Questions

6. How does knowing that the Holy Spirit connects us to God in the most intimate way possible impact your relationship with God?
7. Do you believe that God's grace can run out for you? If so, how would your life look different if you truly believed that God's grace never runs out?
8. What is God asking you to surrender to Him that seems difficult to obey right now? What would surrender look like?

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 7: Getting Unstuck from Shame (Prepare the women that this next week may be challenging as they read Joy's story of sexual assault. Encourage them to reach out for help to a counselor and to pray for one another.)
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 7: Getting Unstuck from Shame

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, "If I'm Free, Why Can't I Do What I Want? And Other Ways We Misunderstand Freedom" by scanning the QR code below or visiting:
<https://www.authenticintimacy.com/if-im-free-why-cant-i-do-what-i-want-and-other-ways-we-misunderstand-freedom/>



SESSION EIGHT

Discuss Week 7



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 7: GETTING UNSTUCK FROM SHAME

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** Share a highlight from your week. (You might also want to start with a worship song as this is a difficult week.)



Chapter 8 Discussion Questions

1. In your own words, explain the difference between guilt and shame. How does knowing the difference between guilt and shame impact your freedom journey?
2. In what ways have you felt sexual shame for who you are, what you've done, or what's been done to you?
3. What would change in your freedom journey if you fully believed that you don't have to run and hide from God, and that God loves you for who you are?
4. What "fig leaves" are you hiding behind, attempting to cover your shame? How does hiding make you feel?
5. Has shame ever kept you away from Christian community? If so, how could your life be different if you pursued relationships even amid shame?
6. How have events that happened to you caused you to believe lies about your worth and value?

7. In what ways have those lies and shame made your struggle with pornography more difficult?

8. Thinking back to the story of the woman in Luke, what does it mean for you personally to be transformed from an identity of sinner to the identity of the one who loves, just like she was forgiven and transformed?

- **Introduce the Material & Assign Homework:** Week 8: When Your Story Becomes a Weapon and A Final Note from Joy and Juli
- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**

This Week's Homework:

Week 8: When Your Story Becomes a Weapon and A Final Note from Joy and Juli

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, "Why Is Healing So Hard?" by scanning the QR code below or visiting: <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/why-is-healing-so-hard/>



SESSION NINE

Discuss Week 8



CHECKPOINT ► WEEK 8: WHEN YOUR STORY BECOMES A WEAPON

- **Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- **Icebreaker:** How have you seen yourself grow spiritually during the study?



Discussion Questions

1. Take a few minutes to talk about how sharing parts of each other's stories during the group has encouraged you.
2. Share about a time when you've told someone a secret part of your story. What was their reaction and what was yours? Were you met with love or judgment?
3. On Day 3, you started writing out your story. How was that experience?
4. What are some "pieces" of your story that have started to fit together as you've begun to process your story?
5. How would you describe your view of sexual sin and struggles when you first started this book? How did your view change?
6. Share about an "Aha!" moment during group time or while reading the book that powerfully impacted you.
7. What are a few practical tools you gained from this book that you can take with you into daily life?



Discussion Questions

8. What is one next step in your freedom journey? Share your next step with your group.

- **Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer**
- **Every group must come to an end. Here are some tips for handling the end of your group:**
 - Set aside some time at the end of the group for reflection. Ask about takeaways from the group, what was surprising, or what members want to know more about.
 - Set aside time in your last meeting to pray together.
 - Send an email to members with next steps and how they can continue to engage with materials when the group ends.

**If you wanted to add a closer session onto your group, you could make it a 10-week group. During the last session, we suggest discussing the reflection questions on page 206 in “A Final Note from Joy and Juli.”*

Recommended Resources:

Read this blog, “Overcoming Addiction: The Crucial Element You Might Be Missing” by scanning the QR code below or visiting: <https://www.authenticintimacy.com/overcoming-addiction-the-crucial-element-you-might-be-missing/>



APPENDICES



Appendix A:

Sample Group Covenant

Group Facilitators:

1. Copy and paste the covenant below into a new document.
2. Customize it to fit the details of your study.
3. Share the covenant with your group on or before the first day you meet.
4. During your first meeting together, read through the covenant with your group.
5. Ask each participant to affirm their agreement to these standards for your time together.
6. Record everyone's name who affirmed the covenant on this document.

Small Group Covenant:

Our group will be studying *Her Freedom Journey*.

We will be meeting from _(Date)_ through _(Date)_ on _(Day of week)_ from _(Time)_.

To get the most out of this study and ensure the best experience possible, we agree together to live by the following standards throughout our time together doing this study:

- We agree to be on time in order to respect others.
- We agree to keep things said in group confidential.
- We agree to attend group as faithfully as possible making it a priority.
- We agree to participate in group, while being careful not to dominate.
- We agree to treat one another with respect at all times, especially in times of disagreement or conflict.
- We agree to pray and support one another throughout our time meeting together.
- We agree to give our full attention to the group and study (as much as we are able) during the meeting time, and limit distractions in our surroundings.

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” -Hebrews 10:24-25

I am in agreement with this Group Covenant:



Appendix B: Extra Icebreakers

- Best/Worst: Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week.
- Most Unique: Have each person share something that makes him or her unique, such as “I’ve never left the state I was born in” or “I am one of 10 kids.”
- Two Truths and a Lie: Have each person make three statements about him or herself: two true statements and one lie. For example: “*I’ve never broken a bone. I have five sisters. I was born in Yugoslavia.*” The group tries to guess which statement is the lie.
- What do you do for fun?
- What would be your ideal vacation?
- What is the most memorable activity you did with your family as a child?
- What quality do you appreciate most in a friend?
- What is one characteristic you received from your parents that you want to keep and one you wish you could change?
- What is a good thing happening in your life right now? What makes it good?
- If you knew you couldn’t fail and money was no object, what would you like to do in the next five years?
- What would you like said at your funeral?
- When, if ever, did God become more than a word to you, and how did it happen?
- If you could talk to anyone in the world (alive or dead), who would it be? Why?
- Deserted Island: Ask: “You’ve been exiled to a deserted island for a year. You are told you may take three things you want, apart from the essentials. What would you take and why?”
- Heroes: Ask each member to name three people, past or present, he or she admires. Why?
- What was a typical dinner growing up? Or what meal makes you think of home?
- Describe your week in terms of weather (metaphorically).
- If you could keep any animal as a pet (regardless of whether it is tamed or not and assuming you could care for it effectively), what animal would you pick?
- If you could have dinner with anyone, past or present, who would it be?
- If you could travel anywhere in the world, all expenses paid, where would you go?
- How have you seen Jesus show up in the last few weeks?
- If you know it, what’s your spiritual gift?

Appendix C: Bonus Content and Resources

Some of our Java with Juli episodes will be locked as member-only resources and others will be open to the public. You can become an Authentic Intimacy member [here](#) to have access to all of the content below.

Java with Juli Episodes:

- [#117 How Your Sex Life Is Connected to Your Spiritual Life](#)
- [#139 “Why Your Story Matters”](#)
- [#146 “All You Need is Jesus... and Your Therapist”](#)
- [#160: “Why God Created You to be Sexual”](#)
- [#166 “We Are All Sexually Broken”](#)
- [#192 “Engaging in Restorative Relationships”](#)
- [#203 “Navigating Different Views on Sexuality”](#)
- [#211 Understanding Pornography Addiction](#)
- [#236 “Pursue Wholeness, Not Purity”](#)
- [#273 “Tell Someone You’re Broken”](#)
- [#297 “Finding Freedom in the Midst of Brokenness”](#)
- [#369: Changing the Way We Talk About Porn \(Because Women Struggle Too\)](#)

Authentic Intimacy Blogs:

- [“The ‘Why’ for Every Sexual Question”](#)
- [“Why your Story Matters”](#)
- [“You Can be Single and Sexual”](#)
- [“What Do You Do When the Person You’re Dating Struggles With Porn?”](#)
- [“7 Reasons Kids Turn To Porn & What You Can Do About It”](#)
- [“Purity Culture: Lose the Lies, Keep Your Faith”](#)
- [“Why Promise Rings and Purity Talks Fall Short”](#)
- [“Masturbation: Is It Wrong?”](#)
- [“You Can Be Single & Sexual”](#)
- [“Sexual Boundaries for Singles”](#)
- [“Should You Tell Your Partner About Your Sexual Past?”](#)

Other Ministries and Book Recommendations:

- [MyCounselor.Online](#)
- [7 Myths About Singleness - Sam Allberry](#)
- [Born Again This Way - Rachel Gilson](#)
- [Unwanted - Jay Stringer](#)
- [Embodied - Preston Sprinkle](#)
- [SHE Recovery](#)
- [Pure Desire](#)



Thank you!

Friend, Thank you for your effort and willingness to bravely bring God's healing truth to others!

The ministry of Authentic Intimacy exists to encourage you on this journey as we continue to develop resources and a community for men and women. We have podcasts, blogs, books, conferences, trainings, webinars, and other materials to help you apply the biblical narrative to the questions and problems you may face related to sexuality. You are not alone!



Finally, we would love to hear from you! Please let us know about your group experience and any feedback you have as we strive to serve God's people more effectively.

All for Him,

Fuli and Foy



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Authentic Intimacy Resources

Check out our website for the latest blogs and Q&As covering topics such as parenting, marriage, singleness, healing, and recovery.



Java with Juli Podcast

Join Juli and other trusted Christian leaders each week for honest conversations about God, sex, and you. Find us wherever you listen to podcasts.



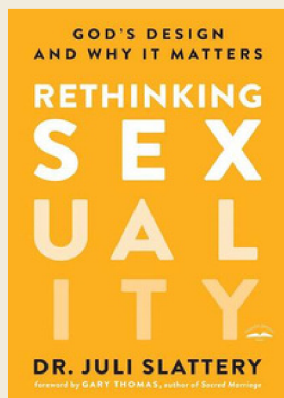
Sexual Discipleship®

This platform equips leaders to the call to make disciples while answering some of the toughest questions about faith and sexuality. Learn more at sexualdiscipleship.com.



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Rethinking Sexuality by Dr. Juli Slattery

"To the extent we refuse to talk about tough sexual issues, we allow culture to define God's character and truth on sexuality."



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