

Local Ministry Empowers Men in Battle Against Sexual Addiction

There are six 'For Men Only' groups in San Diego

By Denis Grasska

SAN DIEGO — Aaron J. Reinicke has a message for all those men out there who are struggling with sexual addiction.

"No matter what you've heard from anybody else or from any other source, complete and absolute freedom from sexual addiction is 100 percent possible," said Reinicke, a licensed marriage and family therapist and director of Reinicke Counseling Associates.

Though "it's a battle" that requires time and dedication, he said, "it's absolutely achievable and absolutely worth it."

And Reinicke knows what he is talking about.

As a youth, he was "ensnared by pornography," he said, and it "held [him] captive for many, many years."

In October 2007, Reinicke established FMO San Diego/OC, a ministry that provides men with the necessary tools to battle and conquer their sexual addictions.

The first FMO — the name is an abbreviation of "For Men Only" — was founded in 1992 by Pastor Ted Roberts of Gresham, Ore. Since then, the Bible-based program has spread to cities

throughout the United States.

There are currently six groups in San Diego and one in Orange County.

Each group consists of between eight and 10 men who come together for a weekly two-hour meeting. At each meeting, the men share their experiences during the past week — how successful or unsuccessful they were in remaining sexually pure — and set goals for the next week. Group members also work their way through a yearlong curriculum.

The leaders and assistant leaders of each group are men who have overcome sexual addiction themselves. Those who lead the FMO San Diego/OC groups have completed six months of training.

Group members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement, which ensures that the meetings take place in a safe environment in which members are free to discuss their struggle openly and honestly.

"FMO sees itself as part of a county-wide movement that is providing opportunities for men who want to get serious about moving into sexual integrity, to give them a place of support in order to do so," Reinicke said.

According to Reinicke, sexual addiction is rampant in contemporary society. He said he has seen several anonymous surveys of church-attending men, more than half of whom admitted to viewing pornography during the previous week.

In addition to the use of pornography,

he said, sexual addiction can also manifest itself in other harmful behaviors, such as compulsive masturbation.

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Sexually addicted men often find themselves "wrapped in a lot of secrecy and shame about their behavior," he said. Their lives are marked by "emptiness and isolation and shame," which "robs [their] marriage and other

relationships of real closeness and intimacy."

"Our mission," Reinicke said of FMO San Diego/OC, "is to help men, women and their families to fulfill the holy calling of their sexuality."

"We have seen just in the last year," he said, "a number of different men come to a place of sexual integrity and move away from lifelong patterns of sexual addiction that were really threatening ... their marriage and their family."

He added that, "for every man who gets free from an addictive sexual pattern, there's a family and children who are benefited."

FMO San Diego/OC presented its second annual conference, "Unleashed II," Nov. 8 at Grace Point Church in San Diego. The conference, which featured three keynote speakers and six workshops, was designed both for men struggling with sexual addiction and those who minister to sex-addicted men.

On Jan. 24, the local ministry will also be presenting "Warrior Women: Battling Pornography in Your Marriage," a three-hour workshop for women whose husbands have sexual addictions.

For more information on FMO San Diego/OC, visit www.fmosandiego.com or call (858) 366-4325. To contact Aaron J. Reinicke, visit www.RCAcounseling.com or call (619) 298-8722, ext. 101.

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