

Reward Systems in Men and Women's Brains

Men's brains are wired for dopamine as a reward system. Their brain craves dopamine. This is because God designed men's brains to work, provide for a family, and solve problems which all provide dopamine.

A woman's brain is designed for oxytocin as the primary reward system. Their brain craves oxytocin (connection) and to bond to their husband. This causes them to want to help their husband and be mindful about connection with their children/ friends/family. God designed women to be the man's helper and to want to help him and be bonded to him.

During sex oxytocin is released by the woman and the man will experience an oxytocin bond to the woman. After orgasm, the man's prefrontal cortex shuts down for a short period of time so he is no longer thinking about work or solving problems. This allows him to solely focus on oxytocin and bonding with his wife. This causes the man to feel more bonded to the woman and feel more motivated to work, provide for her and the family, and solve problems. This in turn causes the woman to feel more bonded to the man, increases her respect and desire to help him even more.

Satan comes in and instead of encouraging the man to solve problems for dopamine he tells the man that the problem is too big and he will never solve it. Satan convinces the man that he just needs to find other sources of dopamine like pornography or other addictions. This prolongs the lack of dopamine and sense of achievement, exacerbates anxiety, shame and secrecy and causes a disconnect between the man and woman. The woman will no longer want to help the man and now feels she needs to lead and that he is not safe. He feels disrespected and feels the woman is a burden and is unappreciative which gives him more excuses in his mind to act out and not work or pursue achievement. The woman no longer feels oxytocin or bonding is safe and will oftentimes start using dopamine as a reward system since oxytocin is no longer safe. The purpose of dopamine and oxytocin are now hijacked and the family system is now broken. The man is designed to work, provide, cherish, and give himself up for his wife and the woman is designed to support, help, respect, love.

Satan and the world likes to tell us that our bodies and brains are flawed or broken but the reality is they are designed perfectly. Satan tempts us to hijack it for selfish gain, laziness, or a quick fix to the reward system/high that God designed. Alternatives to how God designed dopamine and oxytocin to be experienced always leads to feeling unfulfilled, ashamed, an imposter, and a sense of feeling unlovable.

APPLICATION: Long Term vision of recovery is for addicts to find fulfillment in work and solving problems and that they seek out the counsel and support of their spouses during it. They need to be actively pursuing challenges, wanting to solve them, and wanting their spouses input and help. This is how God designed it from the beginning and this is what is needed to abstain moving forward.