

FASTER Scale Q & A with Experts

(Adapted From the Genesis Process by Micheal Dye)

How would you describe the FASTER scale to someone who has never heard of it?

A. I would first explain that for guys that habitually struggle with pornography and masturbation and generally say “it came outta nowhere”. I was doing really good for 2 weeks or 3 months and then BOOM! I act out. Here’s the reality: It is not out of nowhere! It follows a very predictable escalating pattern. This predictable escalating pattern is called the FASTER scale. Men who know the FASTER scale can begin to see relapses coming weeks before it comes and eventually can learn to stop behaviors, attitudes, and actions that have led you to relapse for most of your life.

A. It's a self-awareness building exercise that helps you understand your current emotional state, see a relapse coming before it hits, and make course corrections in life that keep you in the light and walking in step with the Spirit.

A. It is a tool that helps you see when you are stepping away from restoration and toward relapse so that you can identify the cause of the slide and make the adjustments needed to return to restoration and avoid a relapse.

What's its purpose?

A. To identify relapses weeks before they happen. To see that it does not come out of nowhere. To help people see addiction is a problem with how you process life not simply a moral problem. The FASTER scale helps you tangibly identify areas where you are not processing life well.

A. The FASTER is basically a tool to figure out what I'm feeling, why I'm feeling that way, and how those emotions cause me to do things that are against God (i.e. sin). The tool is not so that I live by my emotions but rather that I can actually become aware of my emotions and respond the way God would have me, so I DON'T have to live by my emotions. It makes me so much more aware of how I'm actually doing and how I'm doing with fighting sin and how tempted/vulnerable I really am.

A. To help you grow in self-awareness and make small course corrections in life that, if avoided, contribute towards an eventual relapse.

What is something that you eventually learned about the FASTER scale that would have helped knowing from the outset?

A: As you become more familiar with the scale, you can discover major identifiers of where you're at on the FASTER that are unique to you. There may be unique behaviors that for you are a identifier that you are in a specific stage but this happens over time as you grow in self awareness.

A. I'm usually not doing as well as I think I am. I often can think I'm at Anxiety, but I'm really Exhausted and don't even know it. So I would say it's important to not paint a rosier picture than what reality really is.

A. Trusting how closely tied my emotional discontent and fantasy life and sexual urges can be linked.

A. God has made us very complex. The FASTER scale is predictable, but it is very complex. You will not figure it all out in 6 months. The goal is to begin to learn your patterns. When you start, you will know Relapse the best. Then you will learn Exhaustion the best. Then you will begin to see Ticked off. The FASTER builds so it is easier to see the stages closest to relapse.

What made it most helpful?

A. The most helpful part of the faster scale is having a system in place to have to think about what you're feeling and knowing how close you are to upping your chances of a relapse. It also gives you tangible information to communicate to your accountability partners so they can help you process living in recovery.

A. Before the FASTER scale, I never actually knew how I was doing or what I was feeling. I just always thought I was doing good. What has made it most helpful is that now, I'm so much more aware of how I'm doing emotionally which then helps me to prepare to fight sin and pursue holiness. It also really helps in relationships with people as it has made me a much more pleasant and patient person. When I'm mad/irritable I now try to identify why and respond/deal with it in an appropriate way that honors Christ. Before I would just be mad (a lot of times not even aware of it) act like everything is okay, do nothing about it, and then watch it flesh itself out with sin in others ways. What also makes it most helpful is doing it consistently, day in and day out so I can see patterns and trends in my life.

A. Using it regularly, personalizing it, trusting that it is accurate, and making changes when I'm in the higher states of the scale instead of waiting to act when I've already slid down.

A. Stick with it. The FASTER scale can be confusing at first and I've heard guys say they didn't get it until 3-4 months in. Guys who have been using it for 2 years will be able to get so much more out of it than when they started.

What helps you get off of the FASTER scale and return to restoration?

A. That can vary from person to person and situation to situation. It is important to identify the cause of the slide (ie. Double bind, out of balance area, etc.) after that it may look different how you move back to restoration.

A. The first step is to voice to someone in your group if not your entire group ("Hey man I'm at exhausted and am feeling very tempted. I think it's because we have finals this week, I feel unprepared for a presentation I have and I don't want to go home to have to answer all my parents questions about why I'm not taking the internship they want me to.) Once you identify the cause then you can identify the double bind so you can address it, which will look different depending on what it is.

A. Recognize where I am right now...the easiest thing is to see it in double binds. And do the hard thing.

A. By identifying the double bind and broken core belief that is driving me down the scale and following through on a plan to move through the DB rather than continue to avoid it. This often involves making very practical changes in life like for me learning to budget so I can minimize the financial chaos in life and help me address the incompetency I feel around finances. Financial chaos and a sense of incompetency and failure regularly put me on the scale. Learning to ask for help with my finances and implement a budget reduced the chaos and increased my confidence in both God and myself regarding finances.

- A.
- Checking in and confessing it
 - Taking a nap
 - Journaling
 - Extra time with God
 - Working out/running
 - Meditating on scripture