

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

9 March 2023

Transmitted by email: susanne@marriagetransformation.com

Ms. Susanne M. Alexander
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice has received your email of 13 January 2023, addressed to the Research Department at the Bahá'í World Centre, in which you ask if there is any guidance in the authoritative texts of the Faith regarding the use of pornography by adults. It is understood that your query relates to producing the fourth edition of the book you co-authored titled *Marriage Can Be Forever—Preparation Counts!* We have been instructed to convey the following.

There is nothing in the Bahá'í writings that specifically addresses the questions you have raised. As you well know, Bahá'ís are called to exemplify the high standards of a chaste and holy life, a subject discussed in depth by the beloved Guardian in *The Advent of Divine Justice*. Indeed, the Faith calls for an exalted standard of behavior which “can tolerate no compromise with the theories, the standards, the habits, and the excesses of a decadent age”, condemns “all manner of promiscuity, of easy familiarity, and of sexual vices”, and “demands daily vigilance in the control of one’s carnal desires and corrupt inclinations”. Thus, the standard expected of Bahá'ís is clear. In addition, the House of Justice has stated that it is neither possible nor desirable for it to set forth a set of rules determining what would be appropriate behavior for a Bahá'í in various circumstances. Indeed, a believer cannot fulfill his or her true mission in life as a follower of the Blessed Perfection merely by living according to a set of rigid regulations. Rather, it is the task of the individual believer to determine, according to his or her own prayerful understanding of the writings, precisely what his or her course of conduct should be in relation to situations he or she encounters in daily life. Every believer must continually study the Sacred Writings and the instructions of the Guardian, striving always to attain a new and better understanding of the import of the teachings to him- or herself and to society, and orient his or her life towards service to Bahá'u'lláh, praying fervently for divine guidance, wisdom, and strength to do what is pleasing to God.

In light of the foregoing, Bahá'í authors are required to be careful to not create, in the absence of statements in the writings that bear directly on a particular subject, their own standard or make pronouncements on the “correct” way to implement a certain principle or teaching of the Faith. In this regard, the advice provided to you in our letters dated 15 June

2022 and 24 September 2014 remains pertinent as you proceed with producing the new edition of the above-mentioned book.

Be assured of the prayers of the House of Justice in the Holy Shrines on your behalf.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat