

I want to save my marriage

Posted by withhelpfromupstairs - 21 Feb 2012 11:18

I need help.

My wife has finally found out about my problem and I'm scared about what it means for our marriage.

Her finding out that I've had a whole separate side to my life has damaged how she feels about herself, and about our relationship. I don't know what to say to her to reassure her that she'll ever be able to trust me again. I know she's my bashert and the biggest bracha that I'll ever get and that I've caused her no end of pain.

I can't explain to her why I do what I do, and I can't explain to myself either. I manage to stop for months on end, and then I'll have a fall. I know it's a big averah, and I don't know why I'll do this where I wouldn't think about eating treif, or breaking shabbos. I don't know what sets me off. I know that when I get angry or depressed I'm more susceptible, but that's not an excuse.

She found out without me telling her and so she can't trust me and worries what else I may be hiding.

Worse it impacts on her sense of worth, and makes her think that I want things other than her. Obviously I don't, but if I tell her this she points out, quite rightly, what if she was really enough I wouldn't do this.

I don't know what to tell her, because I don't know what to tell myself. I don't know why I didn't seek help earlier.

I've mostly had long clean streaks, broken up by a few falls, and then a few months of clean streaks again. Every time I convinced myself that this time I had it beat and there was nothing to worry about. She keep asking my why I didn't go to our rabbi, or join here earlier, and I don't know how to answer her.

I know that with help I can beat this, and reading all of your stories has inspired me. What scares me is that I don't know if I can undo the damage I've done to my wife and marriage by bringing so many unclean images into my head and thus into our house.

I've made bad choices. Saying I was "addicted" seems like a cop-out because I managed to stop most of the time - so why didn't I stop that last %1? She doesn't think of it as an addiction either.

Please help. I don't know how to talk to her without it sounding self-serving.

What can I tell her to give her hope that it will get back to how it was?

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 21 Feb 2012 11:42

with a name like withhelpfromupsatirs

I think you should turn to Him.

(by the way I was told that your profile name can have spaces in it)

and thats my best advice because i really dont have anything better to tell you

but I feel for you

and i wish i had some sage advice

I understand your wife's feelings and I dont know if there is a way to explain it satisfactorily to her. This problem is beyond comprehension. The fact that we can control it sometimes doesnt guarantee anything about the future. Its especially difficult for ladies because they dont have the YH that we have. It's mamash beyond them.

Maybe ask her to join the ladies forum, just to get some clarity from a women's perspective.

Im sorry Im not more helpful.

Im davening for you.

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by tehillimzugger - 21 Feb 2012 11:48

[withhelpfromupstairs wrote on 21 Feb 2012 11:18:](#)

She keep asking my why I didn't go to our rabbi, or join here earlier, and I don't know how to answer her.

Welcome! Don't we all need help from upstairs?

Did you know about this site earlier? Why *didn't* you join?

Perhaps you are still in denial?

Check out this thread www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4695.0

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by withhelpfromupstairs - 21 Feb 2012 12:14

[TehillimZugger wrote on 21 Feb 2012 11:48:](#)

Did you know about this site earlier? Why *didn't* you join?

Perhaps you are still in denial?

Check out this thread www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4695.0

I did know about this site, and even used a lot of the tips for distracting myself from here. Every time I got free for a while I'd convince myself that I'd be OK from then on and so not do anything.

Except that's obviously not true. Maybe that's OK for the first time I did relapsed, but the second and third times? I'm obviously lying to myself somewhere, and I obviously am still in denial of something.

I just can't reconcile my beliefs with my actions, and I can't understand why my wife should ever trust me again as a result.

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 21 Feb 2012 12:35

I just can't reconcile my beliefs with my actions, and I can't understand why my wife should ever trust me again as a result.

this is true for all of us, not just those here on GYE but even those who do anything wrong. If we really followed what we believed, we wouldnt go wrong.

Berating yourself isnt going to get you out of this mess. Believing in yourself and in your ability to change, will. and who knows, maybe if you can convince yourself, you may just be able to

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by tehillimzugger - 21 Feb 2012 13:12

[Gesher Tzar Meod wrote on 21 Feb 2012 12:35:](#)

Maybe... also you should check out that link I posted earlier.

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by ur-a-jew - 21 Feb 2012 14:24

I've made bad choices, Saying I was "addicted" seems like a cop-out because I managed to stop maybe if you can convince yourself you may just be able to convince your wife most of the time - so why didn't I stop that last %1? She doesn't think of it as an addiction either.

Perhaps if you understood what it meant to be addicted you wouldn't feel it was a cop out. Being an addict does not give you a "free ride". To me addiction means that I am powerless over lust once I let it get in. And when I do let it in it makes my life unmanageable. The eitzah therefore is not as some people think throwing up your hands and saying there is no eitzah after all I'm powerless. But rather turning to the RBSO and asking him for the ability to not let lust in the first place. As to that I'm not powerless and I have no excuse.

So where do you go from here. Well in terms of your marriage. I think you need to apologize in word and deed. First, make it clear to your wife that the responsibility is all yours offer no excuses. Acknowledge that she will have a hard time trusting you but that with the passage of time when she sees how serious you are in changing you hope that she will come to trust you. And now it is incumbent upon you to do the steps to recover. Sitting on the sidelines has

obviously not worked for you.

Finally, as Gesher suggested send your wife to the wife of addicts forum. There she can speak with woman who are going through the exact same thing she is. She will see for herself that it is not about her. And that she did not by her actions or inaction do this to you.

Wishing you and your wife much hatzlacha.

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by chaimyakov - 21 Feb 2012 15:20

Crying for you my brother. i have 30 years of addiction with over half of that married. My wife doesn't know and i don't know when i will tell her. The advice i have been given says i should only tell her after i am sober for "a while" and in the presence of a Rav or therapist/counselor that she trusts.

Is there a Rav that you are close to?

At first it will possibly make this even more difficult for you, but your wife may find some solace hearing from the Rav about how insidious this addiction is and the fact that it truly is not about her and any shortcomings she may have in your eyes. (The Rav may need to do some research here before the meeting if he is not familiar with the problem)

Many here say that it was a blessing when their wife found out. i pray this will be the case for you as well.

Hatzlacha in all things GOOD.

chaimyakov

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by heuni memass - 21 Feb 2012 18:04

Chaver listen up- YAJ said it beautifully.

I've had streaks like you and felt like i am not a addict as well. However, I started looking at my

behavior and realized that there is something deeper here. Sure I am fine for so long but what can possibly bring me back here after i know it's so wrong? is this normal what I am doing? if I was busted how would I explain? yet, I do it again... So what is going on? This took me many times to come to the realization, I have a addiction to this behavior and therefor will return to it again and again. I can stop for a year yet I know I will return to it. That's all for me(my wife also thinks I am not a addict.) I can't tell you about you...

I used the tool of powerlessness and to me it was not a cop-out. Actually, I fell very powerful because he"my higher power" is powerful and he was leading me away from places I couldn't remove myself. I need to use it all the time otherwise I will be back in the same place.. Just yesterday with 180 days + i had a test that I on my own would have failed big time... B"h I realized I am powerless...

About your wife's feelings - it will be a long trip to get her back to trust. After all you and me are not trust worthy. Are we? I found if there is real work on your side she will see it and feel it and thats when her trust level will start rising. Not over night, chabibi.

Stay around... Start getting real about recovery... And remember hashem controls our emotions and out wife's emotions as well. Daven to him for guidance...help and peace.

we are here for you my friend- your never alone.

HM

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by alexeliezer - 21 Feb 2012 19:29

You've already gotten a treasure trove of good advice. Here's my 2 cents anyway.

Make your recovery the most important thing in your life.

Give your wife some space.

Encourage your wife to post on the spouses forum.

Consider jumping right in to a local SA group. Your wife may want to join a live spouses group (SA-anon). You can search for local meetings at www.sa.org.

Read Garden of Peace, a Marital Guide for Men by R' Shalom Arush.

Stay with us here. Things will improve. It will take time. As your wife sees that you are *recovering* (changing, growing, mending) and not just abstaining, she will sense it. Women know.

Hatzlocha,

Alex

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 21 Feb 2012 22:40

[TehillimZugger wrote on 21 Feb 2012 13:12:](#)

[Gesher Tzar Meod wrote on 21 Feb 2012 12:35:](#)

Maybe... also you should check out that link I posted earlier.

you talking to me TZ?

which link?

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by withhelpfromupstairs - 21 Feb 2012 22:46

Thank you all so much for your advice and support. I read all of it (and the links too).

I know that with RSO on my side I can beat this one day at a time. I need to be the man my wife thought she was married to and win her trust back.

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by alexeliezer - 22 Feb 2012 16:29

You are the man your wife thought she married.

You just have something about yourself she didn't know.

You didn't know either.

Now that you know, you are taking it very seriously.

Once you are sober and have the freedom to grow again, you will be able to reach your full potential as the wonderful man she married.

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 22 Feb 2012 21:06

hi and welcome,

you got some really good advice and ideas. i just want to add my support and prayers that you not only weather this, but that you come out all the better for it.

all the best

zs

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Re: I want to save my marriage

Posted by chaimyakov - 22 Feb 2012 21:20

[alexeliezer wrote on 22 Feb 2012 16:29:](#)

You are the man your wife thought she married.

You just have something about yourself she didn't know.

You didn't know either.

Now that you know, you are taking it very seriously.

Once you are sober and have the freedom to grow again, you will be able to reach your full potential as the wonderful man she married.

AE,

These words penetrated all the way to my Neshama and give me tremendous chizuk.

Hatzlacha in all things GOOD!

chaimyakov

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