

From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by qi - 05 May 2013 15:38

Hello all,

I'm in my late 20s and have been masturbating since I was 12. By the time I found out it was wrong I was so used to it I couldn't stop. I saw lots of pornographic pictures online but wasn't addicted until I discovered pornographic videos. I tried hundreds of times to stop but when the inevitable fall happened I despaired of ever fully recovering. That changed about a year ago when I started really trying to stop and when I fell I got right back up.

However, I'm far from recovered. The longest I've gone is 40 days with no P or M. I found GYE a few weeks ago and joined last week. I think it's fantastic that we have a frum site on this. And, it's much better organised than goyishe equivalents.

So here I am trying to kick the habit of a lifetime for a lifetime. I'm interested in the 12 steps although I don't fully understand how they work. But here goes:

Hi, my name's Qi and I'm a porn addict. Porn has damaged my life considerably. It affected my school work when I stayed up till 2 am looking at it. It affected my learning when I needed to leave mid seder to M. It affected my shidduchim in a profound way. It made me depressed when shidduchim were hard. It affected my shteiging because nothing else matters compared to this. It affected my moods. It affected my relationship with my family. It affected my relationship with HKBH.

When I first found out it was wrong I still didn't know how bad it was. I'm ashamed to admit this but I actually masturbated on Yom Kippur once. HKBH please have mercy on me and forgive me.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by zvi - 13 May 2013 00:03

Don't give up! The fact that you fought is a positive sign beyond all others! Keep climbing, it'll be a lot worse if you don't.

Up is where you belong, it's where your soul will find her song (Avraham Fried, Keep Climbing-gevaldig song, it should be compulsory listening for everyone on this forum)

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 13 May 2013 20:44

[qi wrote:](#)

All my confidence in my ability to do this is gone. I just don't know how to change permanently.

Sounds like you have hit bottom and started step 1, admitting powerlessness.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by qi - 27 May 2013 18:52

Wednesday night was terrible. I binged on porn and TV, TV and porn all day until about 2:30am. I got no work done because of it and my parnosoh looks like it's going down the drain. I'm not kidding either. I'm not sure whether my chronic procrastination and my porn viewing are in reality one thing or if I need to work on both at the same time.

Anyway wednesday night lying awake at 2:30 I started to cry. I am so broken and I don't know how to fix myself. I resolved to start over once again. I got 4 days in and again I binged. I'm so annoyed with myself because I could feel it coming, slowly creeping up on me and I did nothing to stop it. I let me kid myself into thinking that I was strong enough, but I know that's not true.

Today hasn't been much better. 5 aveiros in two days. I feel so weak and pathetic right now. I joined the telephone meeting earlier but I couldn't say what I wanted to say because my wife

was nearby, so I just listened then and I'm saying it now.

As for the work, I know I have a huge problem with procrastination and I find it impossible to stop. Last night I joined a program for procrastinators and I told my wife about it. I thought she'd be pleased but what I got was an outpouring of what she's wanted to say for months. She said that she's extremely worried about our future because at this rate I'll never get a good parnosoh. That was the gist of it. It really stung because it's true.

Any chance I was going to tell her about porn is gone for good now. I have to overcome these two things as of yesterday or i don't know what will be with me.

The thing is these two things are feeding off each other. I procrastinate by watching porn or by trying to not watch porn, and if I do fall it takes all the energy from me and I can't work either. These two things have to go together, and soon, or I'll lose everything. That's not an embellishment. I stand to lose my wife, my job, my home, and my standing in the community. And the stress of that is not helping me.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 27 May 2013 20:27

I'm not a therapist nor do I know you, so take what I say for what it's worth. If it rings true, good. If not, please ignore it.

First of all, are you a perfectionist? If so, procrastination is one of the symptoms.

It basically all stems from low self-esteem and a fear of failure.

, so what do you think?

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by qi - 27 May 2013 21:52

Yes I absolutely am a perfectionist. One of the reasons I can't start my work right now is that I know I can't get it right, so I can't even start knowing I can't really do it properly, even though I know that practice makes perfect.

I spent some time on the phone today with someone talking about procrastination and he said that studies indicate (although not conclusively) that procrastination is similar to any other addiction, like substance abuse, porn etc. So I do think that the porn and the procrastination are connected. More than that, they're the same problem.

I'm not sure about the low self-esteem. No-one really knows for sure but I think I have a healthy self-esteem. But fear of failure might be it. I come from a family of high achievers so any failure on my part is a big deal, whereas success is not celebrated, it's expected. I was reading 'The Now Habit' last week and literally cried at some parts, like when he pointed out to one of his clients that her parents never praised her or accepted her as she is. I don't think anyone has ever said to me 'well done,' I really crave to hear those words.

But, I'm not one to blame. At the end of the day, things are as they are, and it's my responsibility to deal with it, fix myself and do something useful in this world.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by qi - 28 May 2013 18:03

My day actually got a lot better yesterday afternoon. I was able to stop procrastinating for a while. It's actually the most I've worked in one day for months and it felt good.

I also called GYE helpline and got some chizuk from the man I spoke to there. I was very depressed when I called but I felt better and more positive afterwards. He spoke to me about how Hashem doesn't need perfect people but imperfect people who struggle with the yetzer horah but are committed to keeping up the fight. He doesn't know this but I was crying. Thank

you to that tzaddik.

He also told me that my approach to taphsic was not done right. All I did was make a neder about what I would do if I fell. I did fall and now I've got half of tehillim left to say. He said I should have a small knas and a big knas in mind, and then make a neder that if I fall I will do the big knas, unless I do something else first. My thinking now is that if I get the urge to fall, if I do 20 pushups first and then fall I will say 5 kepitel tehillim, but if I don't do the pushups I will say all of tehillim. I'm going to give it some thought before I make the neder final.

Today's going so-so. I haven't fallen or slipped and I've learnt 2 hours but I haven't done any work yet. If I work hard for the rest of the day and don't fall, then I'll call it a good day.

I also intend to join the telephone conference later. I'm very much looking forward to it.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 28 May 2013 19:30

[qi wrote:](#)

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clients that her parents never praised her or accepted her as she is. I don't think anyone has ever said to me 'well done,' I really crave to hear those words.

I can identify with a lot of what you wrote. Why are you afraid to fail? Think about it.

Have you read Dr Soroskin on perfectionism? It was a real eye opener for me! You can get articles and audio here www.drrosotzkin.com/ .

Let me know what you think.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by some_guy - 28 May 2013 23:30

Thank you for posting. I have been reading your posts and was worried for you. I makes me feel

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Gettingthere00qi00 - 29 May 2013 00:01

Thanks someguy. Truth is I'm feeling far from good, just better than yesterday. Both yesterday and today I feel like I'm in a deep pit, but yesterday I felt hopeless and today I am hopeful. I guess I know that it's a long tough road and I'm frustrated that I've been on this road for a year and I haven't got near where I want to be. But that type of thinking is not helpful to me. I am where I am and I only have to be good for today. But I would really like to know what it's like outside the pit.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Gettingthere00qi00 - 29 May 2013 19:24

Fell again today. I had 2 urges, the first time I stuck to the taphsic i mentioned and it helped, the second time i ignored it because i hadn't said for sure i was doing it yet, and i fell. So, I'm going to put taphsic into action as of now:

small knas - saying tehillim perokim 1-4

big knas - saying ALL sefer tehillim

If I get the urge to fall I will say tehillim perek 6. This saying perek 6 must last at least 60 seconds to count here.

If I fall without tehillim 6 I will do the big knas. If I say tehillim 6 and then fall within 60 minutes of that then I will only do the small knas.

60 minutes start from when I finish tehillim 6 and the moment of falling is considered the time of hotzoas zerah. If I am genuinely unsure about times I will be lenient and do only the small knas. If I genuinely cannot do the knas then this neder does not apply, but I must provide an explanation on this forum as to why I can't do the knas. This neder will last until I cancel it or change it with an explanation on this forum, unless I genuinely cannot write on this forum any more due to circumstances unforeseen as of now.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Chachaman - 29 May 2013 22:07

Sounds good! Good luck!

Also, what other measures are you taking? Are your filters strong enough?

I'm sure you'll do great--one day at a time. We're rooting for you!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Gettingthere00qi00 - 30 May 2013 00:53

I've got good filters on my own computer. One problem is my wife's computer which I know the password to. I don't use it but I could access porn with it. It's a problem and I will ask my wife to change the password soon. Strange as it sounds I don't feel strong enough to do that right now.

Truth is, my biggest problem is not my wife's computer but so-called clean sites which I can access on my own computer because the filters haven't caught up yet. certain very popular sites which are supposed to be clean actually have on them a lot of what they would strongly deny is porn.

Basically, filters aren't helping me much in the sort of things I struggle with. I've never been interested in hard-core material, only the type of things that some sites argue is not real porn. They just don't get it. Or perhaps they don't want to get it. Such reshaim - the first daf of avodah zarah springs to mind.

I'm not sure what to do about that because I do need the internet, and even if I didn't I'm nowhere near strong enough to get rid of it. So I've sort of made my peace with the fact that temptation will always be there.

Right now I'm working on not being motzi zerah levatoloh. Therefore I know I can't watch porn because then I'll either be motzi, or it will start to physically hurt (blue balls). When I feel stronger in that department I'll start being more strict in all areas. I know that I'm supposed to have zero tolerance to any such thing, but I've been trying that for months now and I'm burned out. I don't feel strong enough right now to fight it all. I'm so tired.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by the.guard - 30 May 2013 01:18

The best way to make the TaPHSiC Shavuah is by using the Nussach we set up on page 3 of this article:

guardyoureyes.com/articles/tips-suggestions/item/the-taphsic-method-made-simple?category_id=18

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Chachaman - 30 May 2013 01:44

In my not-so-extensive experience, the problem we are fighting is lust, not necessarily zera levatala per se. So, if we still have lust filling the void even if we aren't motzi, the void still exists. Of course, it is very important to start with small steps and at all costs avoid being motzi, because it is a serious aveira. Perhaps the 12 steps are a good idea?

Also, have you considered kabbalos? (I think I had a conversation with zvi on his thread about them.) They don't have to be "I will not go on [insert a website name] ever or else I pay \$500". They can be as simple as "I won't use the internet after 9 o'clock", or "I will use the computer only in view of my wife, etc.

You don't have to go cold-turkey with the internet. However, I had an epiphany like a month ago: WHAT IS IT THAT I REALLY NEED FROM THE INTERNET??? I'll tell you the websites I used to frequently visit: Yahoo Sports and other sports news, YouTube, GYE, Facebook, email, and Yahoo Contributor Network (I sometimes write articles just for fun). I graduate in a few days, but before that, I would frequently use microsoft word and google/wikipedia (hehe) for school-related purposes.

In my opinion, if we examine what it is that we are doing on the internet, it just fills a void of time in our life that can be spent doing productive things. We can live without sports articles, facebook, youtube (believe it or not, there is almost nothing important that we use on there--of course, we all rationalize "hey, a how-to video could be helpful", but practically, we never use YouTube for anything productive), etc. eBay is helpful. Work is helpful. But the semi-kosher sites? If I were you, I would think that it's EASIER cutting down internet usage than not being motzi!

Plus, if you constantly trigger yourself but then aren't motzi, you are making the addiction much worse than it needs to be.

Perhaps talk to Dov also, he has tremendous advice--and his words (almost) always ring true for people of all different situations. His big thing is that this process of recovery is about starting to live, and not about measures like TaPhSiC which get rid of the symptom but the underlying problem remains.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Gettingthere - 30 May 2013 02:44

Thanks for the responses. It really helps to know someone cares.

I made a neder, not a shevuah, a shevuah is just too scary for me. I mean, I say bli neder if I even do a hanhogoh tova for fear that if I do it 3 times it will be a neder. Also, I'm not strong enough yet to do taphsic on all pornographic material. Right now I'd end up beating myself with knas after knas and I'd just give up. I want to approach this a bit slower.

Chachaman, most of the sites you mentioned have triggered me in the past (and one in the present). I suppose I could block all internet except the few sites I really need, I'll give it some thought.

kabollos are fine, I've made many before, but I just made the taphsic so I'll give it some time to get ingrained in me.

I'm trying to do the 12 steps but I'm still very unclear on them. I bought the books and I've been attending the telephone conferences but I'm still confused. (My major annoyance with the phone conferences is that my wife is always around during those times and I can't say anything, so I just listen and I feel like I'm missing out. I'm thinking of going somewhere else to make the calls.)

The thing about living - I couldn't agree more. I actually started attending procrastinators anonymous meetings in my area a few days ago and I've found that tremendously helpful. I've been more productive the last 3 days than I have been in months and that helped me with porn too. This afternoon I binged on porn and procrastination. For me the two go hand in hand. If I'm busy I don't watch porn or even want to. When I procrastinate I watch porn and when I watch porn I procrastinate.

So, yeah porn and procrastination must go together and I'm attending meetings/conferences for both. I feel more positive about both too but I'm very unsteady on my feet right now.

More specifically to porn: I've made a taphsic neder about masturbation. I know that to keep that I can't watch porn, but I feel too weak to make a neder about porn right now. What happened earlier was that I started looking at porn and had the urge to masturbate. I remembered the taphsic so I said tehillim 6 and the urge went away so I stopped watching porn too.

There are only 3 sites from which I ever accessed porn. Maybe later I'll make a neder about each one in turn. I just don't want to bite off more than I can chew.

Sorry, I sat down to write a very short post but it's come out quite long.

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