

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 Dr.Watson - 18 Dec 2013 17:39

Not a good start to the day. Porn and masturbation has been on my mind since I woke up. I so want the escape and release. Boy do I have RID. Things are not going too well for me right now. I can see the connection now more clearly than ever before. Things going badly --> want to look at porn --> need the physical release.

Not entirely sure what to do about that though.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by chesky - 18 Dec 2013 18:45

[Dr. Watson wrote:](#)

Things going badly --> want to look at porn --> need the physical release.

Thank you for sharing this. I identify with what you are feeling. I have been there countless times.

Thankfully today I came to understand that my need to look at porn is not a reality. It is what my body and more so my mind have tuned themselves to do. But for me that feeling is very real; so real that there is nothing I can do about it - on my own.

Now my real problem is always not so much the craving to act out, but the absolute conviction that if I do not do it, then I will die at worst or go crazy at best!

Thankfully I have come to believe that I CAN remain sober without dying and that HaShem CAN restore my sanity.

Talk to Him. Tell Him what you are going through right now. Tell Him about that feeling between your legs and about the things that are going badly. He is there for you. He loves you; addiction

and all; He GAVE you this matzav!

May He grant us sobriety and sanity today.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Pidaini - 18 Dec 2013 18:49

Duvid Chaim gave a nice speech by the 2nd annual GYE convention, one amazing thing he said is that our lust is a behavior, behavior comes from feelings, feelings from attitude, and finally attitude from thinking!!! So the best (and only) way to really change behavior....is to change our thought process!!!

He calls it "B-FAT"

I found that to be very helpful, all the addict stuff aside, it's simple logic!

get into it, change your thinking, your attitude will change, you'll feel better, and your behavior will be top notch!!!

(Take it from the guy who was more wary about the "big book" and all the other big stuff than you were!! Do it right, as they say "it works when you work it" and DC adds "and you're worth it"!!)

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Dr.Watson - 19 Dec 2013 00:32

Thank you all for the support in terms of messages here and private messages. They certainly helped me stay sober for another few hours. A few hours more than that would have been nice,

maybe even got me to the end of the day, but it didn't work out that way. I feel like the odds were stacked against me, but I'm upset over the lost opportunity to prove myself and show my love for Hashem and yiddishkeit in the greatest way available to me.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by cordnoy - 19 Dec 2013 00:44

sorry doc

as soon as I saw that you put up a new post, I said one word.

I repeated it when I read your post.

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by chesky - 19 Dec 2013 02:24

Sorry to hear.

[Dr. Watson wrote:](#)

I feel like the odds were stacked against me

I learnt to accept that the odds **are** against me. That on my own there is NO WAY for me to stay sober.

[Dr. Watson wrote:](#)

but I'm upset over the lost opportunity to prove myself and show my love for Hashem and yiddishkeit in the greatest way available to me.

As Dov would say, if for you this is a Y"H issue, then your reaction is normal and may or may not help you in the future.

However, if lust for you is an addiction, as it is for me, then twenty plus years proved to me that no amount of love for HaShem and sincere Yiddishkeit (I think that I was trying to be genuine) was enough to prevent me from acting out.

What does it say under Dov's username?

"I don't care which lav suicide is; I have other reasons for not doing it"

May HaShem grant us a sober and sane day.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 19 Dec 2013 02:24

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

...I'm upset over the lost opportunity to prove myself...
Why do you want to "prove yourself"?

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 19 Dec 2013 02:35

[gibbor120 wrote:](#)

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

...I'm upset over the lost opportunity to prove myself...
Why do you want to "prove yourself"?

If I can't prove myself then how do I know I even exist?

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 19 Dec 2013 03:20

You seem interested in "overcoming" or "proving" which is another way of putting yourself in the center of the battle.

I find it much easier to focus on "humbly serving" G-d and "letting go" of lust, than to focus on "winning the battle" (which I am historically bad at).

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 23 Dec 2013 15:06

I hear you Gibbor. But 'humbly serving G-d' is a very difficult task. Almost more difficult than quitting porn. As I understand it, this method means that everything I do should be to serve G-d. Which is 100% true. But very difficult.

Let me ask you this: if I davened shacharis with a minyan every day, would I struggle less with this addiction?

I had a very bad week last week and fell 3 times. My worst week in hmmm about 5 months. I can see a clear connection between things happening to me that I have no control over and falling. I guess if I choose to fall that is something I have control over.

So I need to let go of this illusion of control. But talking about difficult tasks, that one is right up there. I mean, how can I do well at work if I don't feel in control? How can I control my urges to watch porn if I'm not in control?

I don't understand.

Yesterday someone said something that I took offence at, so I told him why I didn't like what he said. He basically just replied "truth hurts, I'm not talking to you anymore." It got me quite annoyed. What got me even more annoyed was the fact that it had got me annoyed.

I don't know the guy, I've never seen him before and may never again. Other people there probably agreed with me and even if they didn't so what. It doesn't affect me. I didn't lose any money, I wasn't physically hurt, it didn't affect any relationship I care about. Why should it bother me? What is it about me that allows myself to be bothered by such situations? How do I work on humility?

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by chesky - 24 Dec 2013 02:09

[Dr. Watson wrote:](#)

Let me ask you this: if I davened shacharis with a minyan every day, would I struggle less with this addiction?

Doing what YOU think HaShem wants is not necessarily His will.

The Big Book says:

At the hospital I was separated from alcohol for the last time.

There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then understood Him, to do with

me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction. I

admitted for the first time that of myself I was nothing; that without Him I was

lost. I ruthlessly faced my sins and became willing to have my newfound Friend

take them away, root and branch.

I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. Common

sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure.

That to me is something way more basic than daavening, but I had to learn it from a bunch of alcoholics who realized that their lives depended on G-d.

And to answer your question from my experience; does a spiritual connection make it less of a struggle?

To me the answer is not necessarily, but the difference is that today I have a solution; I am able to choose, something I was unable to do before I came to SA.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 25 Dec 2013 00:47

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

I hear you Gibbor. But 'humbly serving G-d' is a very difficult task. Almost more difficult than quitting porn. As I understand it, this method means that everything I do should be to serve G-d. Which is 100% true. But very difficult.

True, kind of. It's not all or nothing. When I joined Dov's phone calls a while back, I was able to let go and "let" Hashem direct my life to a small (very small) extent. Even that little bit, made a big difference. Don't make it all or nothing. It's a recipe for failure. Remember "**progressive** victory over lust" NOT "**total** victory over lust".

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dov - 26 Dec 2013 09:52

Hi Doc,

One option here is the one I and many others have taken. Gibor alluded to it, I think, but I am suggesting breaking things into smaller pieces. It may sound not as frum, but I don;t think it is:

Long before trying to focus on 'humbly serving G-d', make *humility* a goal in itself - G-d-service or no G-d-service. There is a lot on that in the 12 step literature, like in AA, the 12 and 12 on steps 3 and 7, and elsewhere. A drop of humility really makes life less heavy, less tense, and a lot more fun for ourselves and for all those around us.

But even before that, i have to do something first:

Accept G-d's Will for me. And that has nothing directly to do with being frum. It's more about accepting the Torah - not yet the mitzvos, for actually, the majority of the Torah is *not* about mitzvos!

"Istakloh b'oraiso ubara almoh" means that for everything that happens in this world, in your life, there is a remez in the Torah. It's somewhere in there, as the GR"A and many others spend time explaining. How fat you are, how much money you have, make or don't make today is in there. How much money you have made till now, how your wife has treated you, whether you are married yet, how many children you have, you health, your wife's health, how the guy next to you drives this evening on his way to work, how his wife treats him that affects his mood and the way he will drive and the traffic jam it will cause affecting the lives of 2-3 thousand people w/you on the freeway this morning, how your hair looks if you have any, what rebbi and teachers your kids have and their moods today, and whether your boss is nice to you or not, etc, etc... today and every day forever...they are all tailored expressions of His Will for you.

I'd estimate there are 10,000 variables at the very least (maybe more like 100,000) and are the ways His Will specified for *you* will be expressed today. Now, how many mitzvos and halachos really come your way on a given day? 200-300 or so, at most?

With mitzvos, we frummies consider whether to accept His will, meaning whether to keep it - to *do* it - or not to do it. But at it's core, the 3rd step is not about that! Its is about accepting His Will for us. Not *doing* it, but just accepting that His Will **is** at work through the day throughout our lives, on all those myriad factors that make up our real lives: How we look, what happens to us, what we've got, have't got, etc...

Most of those things we see and know, *but do not **accept***. This stuff is very basic and deceptively obvious. But as Mesilas Yeshorim points out, to the extent that it is obvious, people ignore it. There are amputees who know they are missing a leg, wear a prosthesis to hide it, and cry over their disfigured body every now and then - they may know they are amputees, but do not accept it yet. So they suffer terribly...maybe forever.

But there are many amputees who readily admit it. If they ever see a person who has recently lost their leg, these are the folks who will go over and say, "Hi, I'm Sammy, and I'm an amputee, too. It's OK. My life is just fine," and start up a candid discussion with the unaccepting one. It changes lives. All because they accept the facts about themselves.

But to do that, an amputee needs to lose the *shame* of having a leg missing. Some people (you will see it here) deal with it by shunning labels and say, "I wouldn't ever say 'I am an amputee' - because that is not what I am *at my core*." Gibberish. Being an amputee does not define me as *a person*. It's just a true thing *about me*. And also, it is not disgusting, either - even if you, him, and most people in this room might think that it is! I do not accept that, and know that it is not disgusting. Acceptance means coming to peace with it, with the facts.

And BTW, it's the same with 'addict'. I am an addict. A sex and lust addict. If i know it but do not *accept* it, then I will be trying to run from myself. Here on GYE we call that, "struggling". And I will fail. But if I *accept* it, then I am accepting G-d's Will **for me**. I am a Jew, a father, a husband, a xyz shul member, am short, fat, a kolel man, a sex addict, and lots of other things. Now that I truly and fully accept it - I can start to learn what addicts do to live right. But not before.

Sorry I strayed to addiction. My main point is that before accepting avodas Hashem, how about spending a few months just trying to **accept** the Will of Hashem for you? Your life circumstances, your limitations, your people. As they all *are*. Just for a while. Not *knowing* them, but **accepting** them.

If you are already doing that, I contend that you would not be falling. Lust would not find a foothold in your mind. You'd be too busy **living** life rather than trying to *outsmart* it. I am not accusing you of being a bad guy - just normal.

It may be the first way you will really start to learn about G-d in your life. Works for me...

Just a thought to consider. Not changing from davening or anything else, but just a change on focus for a good while.

And a few months after that you can start to talk about focusing on serving G-d humbly, and actually get some traction there. And pray for me please.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 28 Dec 2013 00:06

Thanks dov, you expressed the idea I was reffering to, only you said it much better.

This idea was one of the most (maybe the most) important for my recovery.

Thanks for reminding me!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by chesky - 29 Dec 2013 02:48

With your permission as ????? ???? ???? I would like to share with you some of my experience, what worked for me and some of my thoughts about this discussion.

I struggled with lust for years and I tried every possible means I had to stop acting out. Either way, my life revolved around my struggle with lust; if I acted out, I expected to be punished and if I had a bad day, I was happy and relieved; if I did not act out, I expected to have a good day. If I acted out and things went well, then I would be edgy because I was sure that something had gone wrong. The point is, that lust was the barometer of my life.

Five years ago I found GYE. It was like being handed a plank of wood to stop me drowning. I was very excited. Finally I had found the real answer to my problems. I was sure that GYE was the answer. And for a while things were good. I started to post on the forum, I kept a record on the chart and I reached ninety days and beyond. But at some point that small slip or fall had to happen and I started to act out again.

After a number of more attempts using the tools on GYE I admitted defeat. Largely with the help and guidance of Dov (and with the constant encouragement of someone else here who prefers not to be mentioned), I today go regularly to SA meetings; and it is certainly thanks to Dov that since I am in SA I have any measure of sobriety.

I don't want to sound judgmental or critical but I feel that I can speak because I was in the same situation as you are, and I know today that if I would have continued doing the same thing, then nothing would have changed for me. I may have been lucky and "scored" some sobriety but the fall was always inevitable.

Doc or whatever your name is, your ideas are all good and genuine, you clearly are really trying your best, but as long as these remain ideas, at least for me it would not have made any difference, (except for making me feel good, and that was NEVER a good idea).

In contrast, Dov does not "express" ideas. Dov shares his experience which he gained through taking the action he was told to do and by which he is sober today.

I pray to our loving Abba for another day of sobriety and sanity for all of us.

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