

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 chesky - 08 Aug 2013 03:41

Dear Dr. Watson,

Thank you for this very special thread. I just read through a lot of it for the first time.

I identify so much with your genuine will to be clean, your amazing persistence and the disappointment and surprise you have with each fall. I too was in a very similar situation almost five years ago when I was sure that posting here my struggle, and the with the chizuk of the chevra here i would reach a point when I would never act-out again. (You are welcome to check out my old posts under the username "Ovadiah")

Believe me that there is nothing more I would love to see on this thread than seeing you post only how many days you are clean. But for me, focusing on the struggle and how to avoid triggers or how long I held in before i fell would at best keep me clean for a short while and at worst was counter productive in the long run.

The Tafsik method is good for me too, but it is only the first step. Making the shvuot is how I actively admit that I am powerless over lust and that it makes my life unmanageable.

Sobriety is one thing, but being able to live sober and sane is another. Since there is no was al pi derech hateva that I can live without lust, only a miracle can keep me sober and sane.

i was fortunate to have met people here at GYE and subsequently at SA meetings for whom HaShem helped them do what they were unable to do themselves. Through them I realized (came to believe)that HaShem can restore me to sanity, even when I feel that there is absolutely NO WAY OUT.

And I am thankful for the daily gift of sobriety I get each day from my Abba.

May HaShem be with you.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Dr.Watson - 08 Aug 2013 21:45

I want to quote this here because I think it's so crucial for me:

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

I think that stress causes most of my falls. I feel stressed sometimes, and why should I, mighty and important I, have to feel any stress in life!?! So I self-medicate with porn to get rid of the stress that I'm entitled to live my life without. Nonsense! I'm not entitled to live a stress-free life. Hashem knows what's right for me and at times He gives me stress. I need to accept the stress, embrace the stress, thank Hashem for the stress. Of course, maybe He wants me to relax in a more constructive way, but just because He's given me stress doesn't mean I have to get rid of it the quickest way I can (porn).

So it is with everything. Hashem gives us many challenges in life and we have to accept them. Of course if we can deal with them in a good way that's fine (and if you think therapy will help you, by all means get therapy) but we shouldn't try to resist the situations we're in, we shouldn't try to fight against them and change them any way we can. Hashem is our all-knowing, all-benevolent father, and sometimes we just need to accept what He gives us.

I attended a GYE conference call today for the first time in a while and I had forgotten how good they are. The main thing for me was talking about how turning our lives over to Hashem means building a relationship with Him. This means accepting what He gives us, weather we think they're good or bad, and turning to Him and talking to Him and asking for His help and guidance. It's not just when bad things happen that we need to daven, we need to daven for guidance that whenever we have to make a decision, it will be what He wants us to do, and we make decisions all day every day.

It also made me think about how many of my decisions are actually governed by lust. The example given was going to pick up a biscuits (*cookies*) from the shop (*store*) aisle where I've noticed a good looking woman. It resonated with me because today I started watching a film (*movie*) (i know, I said I wouldn't do that anymore, i just felt i needed a break) which had nothing erotic in it, but the main character was a good looking woman. Now i certainly didn't start this movie in order to see her, but after a while I was actually quite bored by the movie itself, but i

kept watching it. I guess i told myself that i wanted to see how it turned out in the end, but the truth is i already knew the ending (it was obvious) and the movie wasn't enjoyable, so I was only watching it because this good looking woman was in it. What annoys me particularly about that is that i know these ancestresses don't really look like that in real life, it's all make-up and lighting. It's just my lust that's attracted to this idea of a woman, not the woman herself.

I'm going to try and attend minyan more regularly starting from mincha today, because I have let it slip recently. Part of me thinks that I have so much work i need to do, and Hashem wants me to do the work, so it's OK to skip minyan. No! Hashem wants me to go to minyan, that is clear. It says so in His book, how much clearer does He have to make it! I just have to have bitochon that I won't lose out by sacrificing this time to do what He wants. He is in charge of my work too and what results I get. He can make me matzliach even if I daven to Him. No, especially if I daven to Him. And I hope He gives me extra siyata dishmaya in my recovery too.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by cordnoy - 08 Aug 2013 22:16

continued hatzlachah!

perhaps try as follows

during a movie, when you realize what you did, pause it for a moment

goto gye for a minute

then see if you wanna continue

my 2 kopekes

b'hatzlachah

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Pidaini - 09 Aug 2013 11:41

Hey Doc, can I just ask you a little thingy? (I'm going to anyway, just wanna be polite)

In another thread you mentioned that your life has not become unmanageable.

Is that statement still valid? or has the term "unmanagaeable" been interpeted differently?

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 09 Aug 2013 13:27

@Pidiani, I don't think my life is unmanageable, I don't think it ever really was. Last night I re-read some of my first posts and I realise that it sounded a lot like my life was unmanageable, but the truth is those days were very few. For the most part I have been able to live a normal life despite my porn and masturbation habits. I keep trying to quit and work on it not because it has ruined my life but because it's an aveiroh.

A drunk is a drunk and if his addiction is ruining his life then his life is unmanageable, whether he's religious or not. But porn and masturbation to the extent that I was doing it, is only a problem because I'm a frum yid who's trying to do rotzon Hashem. Could my life have been better if I never saw porn or masturbated? Probably, even if i was a goy there would be something in self-improvement that would tell me to stop p&m, but self-improvement is very different from saying my life is unmanageable.

I think that this aveiroh is very common, something that lots (maybe most) frum men have done, or even do, and they might be so upset at having done it even once or twice that they come to GYE to find out how they avoid the aveiroh next time. I don't think you would call these people

addicts. My worry is that send these people away because we try to convince them that they are addicts, that their lives are unmanageable and they have to revolutionise their lives or else no matter how long they're clean for, they will still be addicts and the fall will come.

Am I an addict, I still don't know, I still don't think it really matters. I mean, where do you draw the line? Some people would say I'm addicted to caffeine, but i don't care cos i like coffee and it's not disturbing me. Am I addicted to p&m? Maybe. Is it just because i do it every few weeks, or is it because i'm consistently trying to control myself?

So what's the answer? Try to work on this issue no matter where i think i stand. One is too many and a thousand is never enough. I'm trying the 12 steps, I'm going to attend the phone conferences, i applied for a sponsor, I'm trying to let go and let G-d. iy"H I will be successful, I don't see why my life has to get worse before it can get better.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Pidaini - 09 Aug 2013 14:09

True, most people have probably masturbated a few times, but it seems that you and I have done it a bit more than just a few. And how many of those people start posting and get invovled in the forum here? It must be that there is something more bothering us.

I don't think life being unmangabeable has to have anything to do with outside circumstances. My life was/is "unmanageable" because I was sick of and couldn't bare living with myself! most of it probably because it is so immoral and assur. But there is for sure something really really bothering you if you are so active here. (I agree with you that the definition of an addict isn't terribly important for us, and we probably aren't addicts, BH)

Just a point, not that we are even disagreeing (maybe we are, dunno).

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by inastruggle - 11 Aug 2013 09:12

I don't know if the (probably true) fact that most people do it less than the people here means that we're addicts, it can just mean that we have a bigger yetzer for it or that our personalities are more geared toward this type of behavior.

I think you're right that unmanageable doesn't always have to do with outside circumstances and not being able to live yourself would qualify as well. I never had that feeling though. For me it was way past naaseh lo k'heter, and I rationalized it in many ways.

I'm pretty active here too but I think a big part of it isn't even that I'm such a mevakesh and I feel so bad about doing it, it might just be that I like everyone's company here, and like hanging around people that are so ehrlich and honest.

Anyway, Mitoch shelo lishmah, buh lishmah.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 12 Aug 2013 22:47

[Gettingthere00qi00](#) wrote:

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.

I am cancelling my taphsic neder as i said i would do when i made it. The reason is that my challenge seems to have changed a bit. It helped me to stop and say tehillim when i was in front of a computer, but now it mostly happens when I'm in the toilet and i can't say tehillim. The idea was that I wouldn't be able to do the aveiroh at all because i couldn't say tehillim, but that's not what's happening. I fell again yesterday and the taphsic didn't help, and the amount of tehillim i have to say is growing too much for me. Therefore i am cancelling the neder as i had in mind when i made it.

Yes I fell again yesterday. I got in contact with a fellow GYE member and we talked for a while about it. we agreed that if either of us feel like we're falling for the yetzer hora again we should call the other. I hope that it will be much easier for both of us to stay clean from now.

I had a scare when i fell. I saw blood in my sh"z. It was very scary and i've been in some pain since. I saw the doctor and he said i have a urinary infection and i need antibiotics for 5 days and iy"H I'll be fine. But I feel like it was a warning shot from above "sort yourself out or I'll sort you out". I'm grateful to Hashem for giving me the opportunity to sort this out myself. I need to reaffirm my commitment to stay clean and live clean.

This shabbos I was thinking about something i wrote last week. I said that my shmiras einayim in the street is good even though i've seen so many naked pictures. I realised over shabbos that my shmiras einayim is not good. terrible in fact. I had been lying to myself. i look at every woman in the street, all the time. In fact if i half-see a woman and she's good-looking and i can't quite see her properly i get slightly irritated. It was quite a realisation and i know now that i have to work on that too. I mean i'm more likely to look at porn if i'm frustrated at not quite seeing the beautiful woman. I need to make the commitment to not looking in the street either. Hopefully this will make it easier to avoid peeking at home too which in turn will make it easier to stop masturbating.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 13 Aug 2013 01:35

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

...i need antibiotics for 5 days and iy"H I'll be fine. But I feel like it was a warning shot from above "sort yourself out or I'll sort you out". I'm grateful to Hashem for giving me the opportunity to sort this out myself. I need to reaffirm my commitment to stay clean and live clean...

Wow. Scary. Hope you get better quickly. Maybe you should save the bottle/box and carry with you as a reminder to stay clean and live clean.

Hatzlacha

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Dov - 13 Aug 2013 02:05

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

This shabbos I was thinking about something i wrote last week. I said that my shmiras einayim in the street is good even though i've seen so many naked pictures. I realised over shabbos that my shmiras einayim is not good. terrible in fact. I had been lying to myself. i look at every

woman in the street, all the time. In fact if i half-see a woman and she's good-looking and i can't quite see her properly i get slightly irritated. It was quite a realisation and i know now that i have to work on that too. I mean i'm more likely to look at porn if i'm frustrated at not quite seeing the beautiful woman. I need to make the commitment to not looking in the street either. Hopefully this will make it easier to avoid peeking at home too which in turn will make it easier to stop masturbating.

We all lie to ourselves k'seider.

You are so fortunate to see it. Daven for me to keep seeing my own lies I tell myself, chaver.
Thanks!

I credit opening up he

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 14 Aug 2013 00:37

Yes Dov, we lie to ourselves k'seider.

Let me tell you another startling realisation i just had. I just started reading the GYE handbook that has been sitting on my desktop for a while now, and you know what I realise, I actually have not read this before. I've looked at the GYE site and read bits and pieces so when I called the hotline and the tzaddik there asked me "have you read the handbook" I said "of course i have".

I wasn't trying to lie, I truly thought I had read it. But I hadn't. This clearly shows me the extent that I have pulled the wool over my own eyes. I mean, this isn't some wishy-washy subjective question that there is no definite answer to, it is a simple yes or no, have you read the handbook, I thought the answer was yes, but it was actually no.

Do I always tell the truth, I thought the answer was yes, but it's a no.

When my wife, who went early to my parents for friday night meal, asked me where i davened, I lied. I told her a shul where i knew my dad wouldn't have davened. I actually davened at home. Why? because i felt so down about things that i couldn't be bothered to go. Besides, no-one would ever know anyway. Why was i down, because i could not stop myself from looking at pictures.

Do i have this under control? I said yes, i thought yes. But i am denying the most obvious state of affairs that i didn't even get to shul on friday night because i was so drained from fighting with my yetzer hora all afternoon. Is that under control? How can i say anything but no.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by gibbor120 - 14 Aug 2013 00:41

BEAUTIFUL! Honesty is beautiful!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 18 Aug 2013 17:20

I'm going to a wedding soon. My job is to be mesameach chosson and to NOT look at any of the women there. This is the job that HKB"H has given me to do today. I thank Him for the trust He has shown in me in giving me such an important job.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 21 Aug 2013 21:06

It's been a while since I shared and I'm getting to a point where I feel my resolve starting to slip. It's been 10 days since I saw any form of porn whatsoever or masturbated and I really want to

stay clean permanently this time. I've been working on this long enough and I feel like it's about time I broke free from this once and for all. I know it doesn't work like a cure and I need to keep working on it to succeed, although I still hope it gets easier after a certain point.

B"H I think I've taken on board a lot more of what Dov, Pidaini, Gibbor and many others write, as well as what Duvid Chaim says and I've come to realise that acting out is not the problem, my lust is the problem. More specifically, my desire to have lust is the problem. I create lust using my own mind so I can act out.

I mean 11 days ago I was in my 'office' peeking at porn, then shouting at myself to stop, then peeking again, then shouting at myself, etc. Then I went to the toilet, knowing full well the urges I would have to control (in truth I didn't really need the toilet) and started fantasising, then stopping, then masturbating, then stopping, then masturbating, etc. I mean I was almost the biggest tzaddik in the world for stopping despite such strong urges, for maybe 2 seconds, then the urge went away a bit but I wanted it, so I started masturbating again, then stopped, etc.

Why?! I created the urge for myself so I could enjoy it, then fight with it and call myself a tzaddik! Why? Who am I doing it for?!

Right now I feel the desire to get that lust back. Not that I feel lustful, I want to feel lustful so I can enjoy it. and maybe I'll fall and say it wasn't really my fault, it was too hard for me and start the cycle over. Or maybe I'll enjoy myself for a bit, fight and win and call myself a tzaddik, despite the damage it does to me.

Why? boredom, stress, escapism? But what do I stand to gain from it? More pain, more disappointment, etc. But that doesn't take this feeling away from me that I want to have some lust. And it bothers me.

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