

My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 03 Nov 2023 11:59

Hi all,

I have been lurking in the shadows of GYE for a number of years and just in the last month or so, came into the light and started posting. I see that my posts are all over the place and decided to start a new Topic about me and my struggles and not hijack other peoples threads.

My story is simple and unfortunately common. I am in my 50's and happily married with two amazing kids and I am addicted to P and M. Have been for decades and I see it getting worse. My sex life with my wife is almost non-existent at this point as my focus is on P and M. It is easily available, never says no, never judges my performance, and gives me the variety that a 30+ year marriage doesn't. I am also going down a slippery slope in regards to the types of porn I am watching, they are getting darker and darker and things that in the past would have disgusted me are now things that I seek out. That scares me!

I come from a non-orthodox home and do not live in an observant neighborhood. I live in a town that if I had to say is mostly Reform and Conservative Jews. I hate putting labels on Jews, because a Jew is a Jew and their level of observance does not mean they are Less-Jewish than anyone else. I just say this for context so you know where I am at.

I am hesitant to call myself a Baal Teshuva, but I have greatly increased my observance in the last 8 years after my first trip to Israel. I still have a long way to go (like everyone) but HaShem has blessed me in so many ways and if this struggle was taken away, I think that I could climb so much higher. Maybe this is the final Nisayon that is holding me back? I don't know... only HaShem knows.

I am working through the F2F program and chatting with a few of you guys online. I am still not ready to speak on the phone about it. Hashem Help Me as graciously sent me his number and told me to call him anytime. He will be my first call when I get the courage.

I want to limit the technology in my life and try to give myself a little advantage in this fight. I work in IT so I am surrounded by Smartphones and unfiltered computers all day. I am trying to get rid of my personal smartphone and use a dumb phone. I want to do it for a few reasons.

One, it is the first choice that I go to when I want to act out. Second, every time that I pull it out of my pocket it will be a reminder of the battle that I am in. I know that it is far from the only problem I am facing, but I think that both logistically and symbolically it will greatly enhance my chances.

At this point 7 days is my best, with normally 2 to 3 days seems to be the norm.

That is my story and would appreciate any thoughts, ideas, prayers, well wishes or any kind of inspiration you guys could give. This website seems to be full of amazing people and would like to get to know as many of you as possible.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 25 Jan 2024 10:42

That is so incredibly kind of you to say those words. I have made some progress and while all thanks goes to HaShem, I have to give most of the worldly credit to GYE and the forums mostly. I wake up each morning with my coffee and read all of the new posts, do my "check-in" and then respond to a few and/or post something to this thread. It is a focal point of my day. it sets the tone for the day. I read about your victories and your challenges, both of which inspire me to do better. If something that I have written has helped someone in some small way, that is incredible.

I do not feel qualified to give advice yet, but hopefully I will stick around long enough and grow and learn and then be in position to give advice and guidance.

I know that the YH is always right around the corner, but that is not going to stop me from being happy and proud of what I have done. If I allow him to steal my joy, then what really have I accomplished?

You guys rock! What more can I say? Keep showing up, keep posting, and let's all beat this bastard together!! Have an amazing day!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chaimoigen - 25 Jan 2024 11:35

[adam2014 wrote on 25 Jan 2024 10:42:](#)

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You guys rock! What more can I say? Keep showing up, keep posting, and let's all beat this bastard together!! Have an amazing day!!

Adam,

This post of yours is MY morning coffee for today. Woke up feeling grey. Feeling better now.

Meeting up with growing, striving folks like you in this sacred space is inspiring, and instills in us the courage to keep going forwards.

I love the way you write about keeping the joy for what you've accomplished, allthwhile knowing that future challenges abide. You're a very special person.

Keep posting. Thank you.

We really are all better together than we are alone.

Have a great day!

Chaim

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 28 Jan 2024 11:35

Day 12 in the books .. I want to ask everyone about something that I am experiencing right now. I am in a place now that is totally new to me. I am not struggling or worrying about falling, to be completely honest, I am not really even thinking about it these days.

I know and understand that the YH is lurking around each corner and I have to be ready at any moment, but I thought the daily struggle would last much longer.

I have a filter on most devices and I have not had to use it in a long time. I am just automatically doing the right things these days and something as simple as not gawking at girls on the street which once was something that I felt was impossible not to do, now seems automatic.

I am in no way declaring victory over this, is it common to have such a dramatic change so quickly? I read back on my posts and where I was a month ago, not being able to go more than two or three days to now is astounding.

Am I being lulled into complacency? Is this just another tactic by the YH?

On the downside, my observance is still not in the right place. You guys have told me that it is common that some things will suffer while working on this problem. That makes perfect sense to

me. I am confident that it will come back organically.

I should just enjoy this ride and hope it lasts a long time (or even forever).

Shavua Tov

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 30 Jan 2024 10:44

I am starting to think that a change is in order, and would like some feedback. I have mentioned in recent posts that while staying clean is getting easier and easier for me. I have had one fall in a month and on day 14 of a streak. I know they are modest numbers, but for me they are big. But those numbers have come at a price and I am feeling bad about it.

Over the last month my spirituality and observance has taken a major blow. I have stopped wrapping tefillin, I am not Davening three times a day, I cancelled some of my Chavrusa sessions. I basically have lived as a goyim over these past days. I even ate my first non-kosher food after almost 8 months.

My thought process was "focus on staying clean, HaShem will understand". While I do still believe that, Why such extremes? Am I just wired for an "all or nothing" approach to things.. When I was using P&M, it was usually to the extreme, but still lived a somewhat observant life (Well, my version of observant). Now I am doing the opposite in both categories.

Wrapping Tefillin has been part of my morning routine for over 20 years (but so was P&M). I want to get back to davening and wrapping, but on a certain level, I am afraid that it might trigger the bad stuff! Is that insane or what?

any thoughts or advice on this?

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by yitzchokm - 30 Jan 2024 16:46

How do you see that davening, putting on Tefillin and eating kosher might be triggers for P&M? How do you see that play out? Why would they be a trigger? Also, without giving any identifying details, is there an authentic Orthodox Rabbi in your community who gives Torah classes that you can attend?

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by parev - 30 Jan 2024 17:37

[adam2014 wrote on 30 Jan 2024 10:44:](#)

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Totally relate to this feeling

It could be related to perfectionism/all or nothing that is often found in adhd's & addicts

?for me I was squishing my conscience to deal with the pain of having cheated on my wife and that was numbing my avodas H. all round too

Once I could face my SH** [don't know how to say that forcefully but nicely - any alternatives?]

in the mirror, my 'ligen in lernen' took a new level almost immediately

Basically the trigger of mitzvos can be conscience, which then needs porn to dull....

[in my case I was after rehab and ready to face my conscience]

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 31 Jan 2024 11:15

It is not the specific act of Tefillin or eating Kosher that I am afraid of. It is getting back to my "old ways".. The good and the Bad that scares me. I had the same routine for years. I will refrain from the details of that routine, but that is what I want to stay away from. If you read some of my previous posts, I went as far as redecorating my office to create a new environment and it has worked up to this point.."The good old day were not all that good".... As far as a Rabbi, I have an Orthodox Rabbi that I meet at least twice a week, both for learning and just as friends. I am not sure what you mean by "authentic" but telling him of my struggles is something that I am not ready for. (Yet)

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 31 Jan 2024 11:56

I interrupt this thread to make a public announcement. This is the Yetzer Hara speaking on behalf of Adam. I have had Adam in my grasp for decades, I have pulled his strings like a puppet. I could, and have made him do many bad things over the years and I considered him one of my prized possessions.

Now after all this time, YOU PEOPLE decide that you are going to change him? You are going to give him the freedom to live a life devoid of all the filth and smut that I have create for him? How dare you! You are just a website full of damaged people, all of who I recognize!

Just because you banded together and support each other and give each other hope for the future, you think you can just throw me to the curb? After all I have done for (to) you??? I am

not giving up, I didn't get to this position easily and I am not going to just walk away. Look at my record, look at the world I helped create. Look at the smut and the filth around every corner. Look at what I have done with the smartphone that some of you still carry. I put porn right in your pocket. I fill your computers with all sorts of trash. I make it so easy for you... You should thank me!!! But Nooooooooo.. You want to treat your wife nicely, you want to honor HaShem, you want to live free of guilt and shame... Damn you...

Adam thinks he is free and clear? Hardly... I have not retreated, I am reloading!! Enjoy your little break and let me be perfectly clear to you and all Adam's GYE friends. I am not through with you yet!

That is all.. Now back to your regular programming

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chaimoigen - 31 Jan 2024 14:40

Oh! Thou, foul dark creature, crouching at the edges of shadow, your stained and twitchy fingers a-grasping, waiting for distraught and fumbling travelers to venture within your reach...

Aroint thee!!! Get thee back.

We raise now, together, an incandescent firebrand against your darkness, burning white and bright with light and life!

You have no power in this circle- Get you back to hell where you belong -Demon, doppelganger, undead ghoul who steals men's souls and often wears our own faces. You shall have no power here, as long our hands stay linked and this sacred circle stands intact.

Adam, now that he's gone (for now), here's a hug.

If you have a relationship with a rabbi with whom you meet twice a week, I suspect that you would find him to be compassionate and understanding of f you would take the courage to share your struggles with him. You can start with some of them and see how he responds. Opening up to someone trustworthy you're close with in person can be a completely life changing experience.

Another thought, if I may. Tefillin have the power to infuse your body with holiness. The names of Hashem that are spelled out in the wrapping of the straps convey the message that it is not the inanimate **objects** that bring G-ds name into the world, but rather **a person's actions** that do it. Your act of wearing Tefillin, especially when it's hard - can elevate you...

We're in this together. You are not alone.

Chaim

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 01 Feb 2024 10:39

"Another thought, if I may. Tefillin have the power to infuse your body with holiness. The names of Hashem that are spelled out in the wrapping of the straps convey the message that it is not the inanimate objects that bring G-ds name into the world, but rather a person's actions that do it. Your act of wearing Tefillin, especially when it's hard - can elevate you"

You are 1000% correct on Tefillin. Wrapping those boxes of leather over the years has been such a source of strength for me. It was the official beginning of my day. It was my special time with HaShem each morning. I miss it like I miss an old friend... I know that I need to get back to it ASAP. It is 535am, it is still dark... I will wrap this morning. I will take a chance and your message will be the catalyst for me beginning my journey back to honoring HaShem like I know I should.

Thank you Chaim!! I needed to hear that

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 10 Feb 2024 11:01

First Fall in a long time. I broke my personal record by a mile. I was (and still are) feeling great. It was just one of those things that I will probably have to wrestle with forever. It was a hard and frustrating day at work. I came home a little tired and aggravated, and one thing led to another, and I fell.

The filters on my computers worked, and I used only the computer in my head that the filter didn't work this time. I did not have the immediate wave of guilt come over me. I felt bad for a minute and then said, "Another bump on the road." The good news is, I also didn't get the same satisfying feeling of relief that I used to get. That immediate but short-lasting rush of dopamine that usually accompanies such an action.

It didn't take away the stress from a bad day at work or make me feel any better. It was more like, "That was a waste of time"... The rewiring of my brain is working. I am a different person now. I am still very optimistic about the future.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 11 Feb 2024 21:38

Great post buddy. First of all it appears you did not see anything inappropriate online. If that is so, keep a separate count going for keeping your eyes clean. Secondly, the fact that it was a one-time episode and not continuous binging, is a sign of a healthy mind. Lastly, being optimistic about the future shows that you understand that your fall was a fall into a ditch and not a fall down the entire mountain.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by Heeling - 12 Feb 2024 01:21

Dear adam2014,

Great post, I love every word. Everything you wrote is so true, thank you! The rewiring the brain

is amazing and we clearly see it working – with that amazing attitude of yours.

And I second every word HHM wrote as well – you're a genius!

@adem2014 keep Rollin' and focus on the good.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chaimoigen - 12 Feb 2024 13:58

[adam2014 wrote on 10 Feb 2024 11:01:](#)

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Love it!! Keep climbing, friend!!!

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