

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 - 17 Sep 2024 14:22

Shhhhh... Don't tell anyone ... The traffic is bad enough

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by proudyungerman - 18 Sep 2024 17:43

[adam2014 wrote on 17 Sep 2024 10:35:](#)

Shabbos was great. I did not fall or even have a bad thought. It was just the lifeline I needed to break this cycle. I have not had a chance to call him yet. I am trying to get a little time away from the house to make the call in private.

Please don't let the YH get you on this one!

To quote my dear friend Shem, if there's time for porn there's time for calling HHM.

Please make it happen today! For you!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chancy - 19 Sep 2024 20:26

Rabbi Adam,

I feel your pain, i really do. A big part of what's holding me back is the fear that i will fall deeper and do worse things. That scares me.

But to answer your question about why now all of a sudden? This is a very well known phenomenon, when you stop acting out like you used to, your urges will get worse in some way, temporarily. I have a few reasons that make sense to me.

1. The YH is trying to get us to give up. Simple.
2. Your Brain is used to the dopamine hit from lust and it wants and needs it again. and you have shown the brain that the usual stuff wont do it for you anymore because you are fighting it, so it found something thats stronger.

I have the same problem. Back when I used to watch porn, I felt nothing for that person, i couldnt tell you anything about them afterwards, it was just about me and my one body part. But now, I feel pleasure by looking at a dressed woman much more then i did looking at porn, because its real unlike porn. So the struggle is never over my friend. The only way we can win is to focus on and learn how to not get carried away by our lustfull thoughts.

So you saw something that excited you,

So you feel your heart rate shoot up to the sky,

So you feel the excitement rushing thru your veins,

This is where you get in, we got our brains used to now tell us "well, its over, you saw, you felt, you are too excited now. Just finish it and give me that sweet sweet dopamine and norepinephrine that i enjoy, and we like SHEEP would go and.....

But this is the part we can actually control, by teaching the brain and the body that nothing happened if we got excited, we DO NOT NEED to do ANYTHING! The feeling will go away in a few minutes and we will be back to normal without doing anything.

Work thru the program, it has lots of critical information.

Good luck and Good Shabbos. Enjoy the Holy things of shabbos and the desire for other things will decrease.

You are a hero for even caring about this stuff when everyone around one hasn't a clue what's your problem even.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 20 Sep 2024 10:10

I'm really looking forward to my trip to Williamsburg this Sunday, but it's taken an unexpected turn. Gottleibs will be closed, but I'm still planning to go. The events of yesterday were so surreal. Just hours before Trump was supposed to arrive, the owner passed away. It's hard to believe. My heart goes out to the owner's family. He was clearly a beloved figure in the community.

Finding another restaurant in Brooklyn shouldn't be much of a challenge, but if you guys have any recommendations for somewhere in Williamsburg, that would be greatly appreciated.

I wish all of you a wonderful and peaceful, and clean Shabbos...

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 27 Sep 2024 10:17

I woke up this morning dreading another rough day ahead of me. I got my coffee, sat at my laptop, and opened GYE. It has been a morning ritual for a very long time. I saw that I had a Private Message and opened it. I will not say who it was from, but it was a nice "How are you doing?" message.... That was his first mistake...I went on a rant about how things are at the moment when all he was expecting was a "Fine, how are you?" response... After reading it, I thought that maybe that should have been a post publically, so here it is, in its entirety. Thank you to the Fine Gentleman that sent me the message, you got me to open up this morning, and I sorely needed it....

I thought so, too... I am really in a funk right now, not just with P+M, but with my entire faith journey. My Elul has not gone as I had hoped. My davening is in the dumpster right now. I have not even wrapped for a week.. I can't seem to shake myself out of it.(He asked about calling HHH) I had the phone in my hand and ready to dial it, but I couldn't. I didn't want to talk to him while everything in my spiritual life was crazy; I didn't want to miss the golden opportunity of that call... That is probably just an excuse... I am not sure about anything right now.

Part of me says that GYE is part of the problem (Just the Yetzer Hara talking) and that I should stop P+M and quit talking about it all day. Just freaking do it and shut the hell up about it, then the other side of my brain says that Judaism is the problem... "what's wrong with a little Adult Entertainment"? Everyone is doing it, and they don't see it as a problem...Just stop with the Dogma of the religion, "Not eating Bacon is going to help you win favor with HaShem?"... stop being naive.... I have all these crazy thoughts running through my head and not sure about anything now. Before I became a Baal Teshuvah back in 2015, I was happy and ate and drank and watched porn and had lots of sex (with my wife, of course)... Life was easy, now everything that I thought I wanted and needed is affecting my life in a negative manner.... I understand 100000% that this is all the Yetzer talking and maybe this is his Oct 7th with me.. A sneak attack and throwing everything he's got at me, and now it is my turn to respond... But how will I respond? or will I even respond?

I bet you are sorry you asked... LOL

Thanks for reaching out. I hope you are doing well and ready for the New Year!!! I wish you nothing but the best!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by upanddown - 27 Sep 2024 13:42

[adam2014 wrote on 27 Sep 2024 10:17:](#)

....and now it is my turn to respond... But how will I respond? or will I even respond?

I love these last few words!

I think that's exactly it. The YH wants you to fall so he's coming with a million and one excuses and tricks.. but you know full well what an evil monster he is, and what he has at the back of his mind... Ignore him! Show him who's boss!

I feel your pain though... it's sometimes soooo hard...

Remind yourself how amazing you are for all that you've achieved so far - Hashem is well aware of every single difficulty along your journey and is no doubt extremely proud!!

I must admit, you have a unique challenge because you feel like, why did I choose this life style?? Let's just rewind 9 years and I can do what I like and be a happy (?) man...

But again, remind yourself of what's clear. What's *Emes*. That part of the journey - discovering the truth of the Torah - you've already been through. So don't let the YH confuse you all over again. Stay strong.

Much Hatzlacha!

UpAndDown

P.S. I relate to the fear of calling HHM... but they say he's a nice gentleman. So jump into it! And

I might do so myself as well...

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by proudyungerman - 30 Sep 2024 18:06

[upanddown wrote on 27 Sep 2024 13:42:](#)

[adam2014 wrote on 27 Sep 2024 10:17:](#)

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@upanddown,

Did you make the call yet???

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by alwaysstryagain2 - 07 Oct 2024 00:42

I fell today... feeling guilty bec it's literally a day after RH... I didn't MB but still can't believe I'm starting the new year like this... any thoughts appreciated

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by yiftach - 07 Oct 2024 01:41

[alwaysstryagain2 wrote on 07 Oct 2024 00:42:](#)

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Hey brotha!

Validated emotion. But that's not what we're all about. We're not in it for the Guinness world record or the like. it's not about how it started (although it's a good boost sometimes), it's about how we continue.

We have an opportunity this week to get real close to the Ribono Shel Olam. We can prove him that no negative emotions will let us get in the way of our eternal desire, of closeness to Him.

Wishing you much hatzlacha!!

- Yiftach'I

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by alwaystryagain2 - 07 Oct 2024 02:06

Thank you! I'm trying to move past it and have a good week and YK but the urge is very strong now... had a very good uplifting deep rosh hashana and feels like the yetzer hara is trying to bring that down... worried about tomorrow afternoon when i'm usually home alone. PS never posted here before but it's really nice to be able to be brutally honest for once

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by upanddown - 07 Oct 2024 14:46

[alwaystryagain2 wrote on 07 Oct 2024 02:06:](#)

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I'm so sorry about your fall. Intense spirituality is often a trigger. Ellul - and even more so Sukkos which comes right after an intense few weeks - is one of the most challenging times of the year...

But don't get too upset about it. Literally just forget about it and move on. As if it never happened...

When president Biden slips and falls (as he so often does...) he doesn't stay on the floor and shake his head and dust himself off, he just gets back up and carries on as if nothing happened!!

Stay strong and have the most uplifting YK!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by upanddown - 07 Oct 2024 14:48

[proudyungerman wrote on 30 Sep 2024 18:06:](#)

[upanddown wrote on 27 Sep 2024 13:42:](#)

[adam2014 wrote on 27 Sep 2024 10:17:](#)

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But again, remind yourself of what's clear. What's *Emes*. That part of the journey - discovering the truth of the Torah - you've already been through. So don't let the YH confuse you all over again. Stay strong.

Much Hatzlacha!

UpAndDown

P.S. I relate to the fear of calling HHM... but they say he's a nice gentleman. So jump into it!
And I might do so myself as well...

@upanddown,

Did you make the call yet???

Yesssssss!!!

And it was amazing.....

@adam2014 - where are you holding? It's your turn!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 08 Oct 2024 09:53

Hi Guys,

?Happy 5785 to all of you... I hope that your holiday was clean, healthy, and everyone is ready to take on the world in the coming year. I wanted to give everyone an update on my own journey. Sitting in shul on RH with my wife sitting next to me, holding my hand (Yes, that is allowed in a reform shul). I thought deeply about my life and the prospects for the future. I was listening to the music and the Rabbi giving a moving sermon and I thought about the blessings that are in my life.

I first thought about the woman holding my hand next to me. Decades of love and devotion to me, raising two great children who are out in the world doing good things, I thought about all the chesed that I do and have done over the years. I thought about the home that I built and how I gave my wife and kids everything that I had. A good home, a good education, fun vacations, endless love..... I was a great Dad and Husband.

?I am relatively healthy, my wife and kids are healthy, I have a few bucks in the bank, I am spiritually grounded.... I have a good freaking life!!!

I then think about why I am here, I am struggling like we all are in this department. It is a constant battle, It is more than a battle, it is a war!... It is a day to day, sometimes hour to hour fight. A fight that I am losing, but I am not going down without a fight, and I have a few more punches left in me.

?I tell you this to explain that I need to spend more energy thinking about all that I have and not the few things that I don't have. Would I exchange the health of my children for being clean the rest of my life? Of course not! How about my home and relationship with my wife? Never....

I have it pretty damn good, this is surely a problem that has to be dealt with and I am trying and will continue to try, but I have been wallowing in guilt and despair over it, when I should be counting the immense blessings that HaShem has given me. There is no reason that I can't continue the fight, but be happy most of the day while fighting it.

That is my new focus for 5785. Be happy, be a happy warrior. Kill the YH with happiness, I am sure me being clean and happy will piss him off!!!!

?There is part of this that may be controversial and in no way do I want to offend anyone nor am I judging anyone either.

I have stopped wrapping tefillin, I have stopped doing the obligatory three prayer sessions daily, and have exchanged them with a good sit-down conversation with HaShem each morning and sometimes multiple times a day. I am going to him for advice, to talk about my wins and losses. I cry with him, I laugh with him, I mostly just THANK HIM for everything I have in my life. I have let him into my life in ways that I never did before.

I have stopped worrying and judging myself on how well I am praying, or how observant I am, I have given myself the freedom to be the person HaShem wants me to be and not a person trapped in an endless cycle of pray at this time, eat this food, read this book....instead, I am giving more tzedakah, I am doing more mitzvot, I am being a better husband, father, human being..... and in the process, I have been clean all of 5785...

?Coming from a non-frum background gives me a different perspective than most of you have. I am jealous of the structure and the community that most of you have. I do not have that luxury, so I have to carve a different path. Being a religious Jew in the non-frum world is tough, very tough, but it also gives me the liberty of trying new things, not necessarily better but different....

So, I am using these days to prepare myself, to forgive myself, and to get ready to attack this problem from a different vantage point. Of course, I will still be here getting my motivation tank filled up on a daily basis. You guys are the fuel that is powering this old ship through the choppy seas of life, and with HaShem as my Captain and you guys the crew, I know that smoother waters are ahead..

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by BenHashemBH - 08 Oct 2024 12:43

Shalom Brother Adam,

No one can work on everything at once. People who bite off more than they can chew either have to spit it out, or they choke on it.

I'm not in charge of these things, but I think it's smart and good self-awareness to know your capacity and work on what you can manage. This will keep you healthy to take on more as you see fit in the future. What you are doing is incredible.

Carry on happy warrior!

PS I really enjoy the feeling that I'm the one giving the YH trouble sometimes. Flip the script.

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