

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 - 12 Jan 2024 11:09

That is great to hear! I figured as much. My brain can only handle so much at one time. I am finding myself talking to HaShem more often than before. It is the formal praying and learning that is taking a backseat for now. I am seeing the benefit of having filtered devices as well. I have not had to use those filters in the 10 days, but just knowing they are there as another level of protection is comforting.

I want to give my self a little "pat on the back".. Yesterday, I had a few "alone hours" to kill. Those are my most dangerous times. I instead, headed out to a store and bought a bunch of clothing for an employee of mine whose son just moved to this country and didn't have many clothes or the basics necessities for living. I hooked him up with everything he needed to get through the cold winter. He was coming from Africa and he was not prepared for the cold winter. I thank HaShem for giving me the means to help this young man and the clear mind to spend that time in that manner.

I am not trying to brag or boast, It is just something that I am proud of doing and without YOU guys helping me, That young man would not have receive those gifts. So basically, ALL of you helped that young man, I was just the delivery guy!

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 12 Jan 2024 11:44

Pornography trains us to be very self-centered. As we move away from it, we start noticing other people and their needs. Interesting timing - Someone (who BH has started staying clean)'s wife also commented last night how her husband recently is spending more time with her and noticing things.....

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 14 Jan 2024 11:11

As the victories start to mount and I am looking forward to the next day and not dreading it, I wanted to add something that I read the other day. I will paraphrase it that best I can.

It was talking about new habits and productivity. It used the example of running. It said that many people make a resolution to start running to get in shape. They announce it to the world and then usually go out and try to run 3 miles and either fail or are so sore the next few days that they give up on it.

A better way to approach it is to start calling yourself a "runner" instead of someone who wants to run. If you are a "runner" you can run 100 yards the first day and call it a win. You don't have to "prove" to yourself that you qualify to give yourself that title. If you are a "runner" you can "run" however long and fast as you feel you need to on a given day

A person that wants to "run".. will put some arbitrary goal that has to be reach before earning that title.

I know that you know where I am going with this....

I am not someone trying to quit porn..

I AM a non-porn watcher. That is who I am... I may fail and come up short at times... but I am still a NON-PORN watcher who just messed up...

Give it some thought....

Have a great week

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by yiftach - 14 Jan 2024 11:57

Hey Adam2014!

What a good thought to begin the week with!

I just read some of your story, the turnaround is remarkable... not just in action, but in the perspective as well!

KOT! And keep us in the loop, you keep on inspiring us!

- Little Yiftach'l

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 15 Jan 2024 10:53

New week, new goal met... 14 days, two whole weeks! That is incredible... Half way to my next goal of 30 day! Setting goals is important for me (It may not be for others). I am a numbers guy.. I like keeping track of things. Since the first of the year, I have worked out 14 times, I have read 14 times, I have meditated 14 times, I have engaged in P & M ZERO times!!!

This is uncharted territory for me. I know that this can change at any moment, but I am feeling stronger and stronger each and everyday. I am also seeing that it is not very difficult everyday. I am thinking about it less and less, keeping my eyes where they need to be automatically. The first few days, I was staring at the ground , afraid to look up. Every time I turned on my computer, I had to tell myself "Don't look at porn, be careful ".. Now, I am not even thinking about it. I now just go on the computer, do what I came there for and then get off.

While it is getting easier, I am not taking this for granted. It would not surprise me that I log on here tomorrow and tell you that I fell. Everyday is another battle, but at least for me, I am winning the battle at the moment and I sure am enjoying it.

All thanks goes to HaShem, but I save a lot of thanks also for you guys.... Without GYE, this would NOT be happening...

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 16 Jan 2024 11:11

I should go to Vegas! I just said yesterday that "I wouldn't be surprised if I got on here tomorrow and said that I had a fall".... Well sure enough.. I did! 14 days down the toilet? NO, I have now acted out ONCE in 15 days.. That is still a good achievement.

Not going to beat myself up over this. I was at work, had an employee's laptop that needed updating and BAM! The YH finally saw an opening and I fell in short order.

While I have compared this addiction to alcoholism and drug abuse, one stark difference is there is no hangover. I feel good again today. I am ready for the day and it's going to be a good one. I am seeing the progress that I am making. In the past, I knew that if I fell once, I was giving myself the green light to fall over and over again for the next few days. That is not my

mindset now. I fell, I got back up and I'm moving forward. No guilt, No shame.. just another pothole on this road to recovery.

So a new streak begins.. Today is day one! Let it be a great day, because everyday is precious and a gift from HaShem... I am going to make the most of it!

Have a great day guys!!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by yiftach - 16 Jan 2024 11:46

WOW!!!

Your attitude is something else!!!!

Hatzlacha on today!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chancy - 16 Jan 2024 17:34

Rabbi Adam,

Your attitude is exactly right, its all about getting right up and to keep climbing that mountain.

A fall is a bump, a setback, not a reset! thats the worst thin the YH does to us, he is all about all or nothing when its not true!

Our lives would be pointless if we weren't expected to fall at all ever!

The expectation Hashem has for us is to never give up, to keep growing, learn from your fall.

Never let a fall go to waste. What can/will you do next time such an opportunity arises? Decide now.

Maybe have the other employee stay next to you while you work on his computer. Most Rabanim say that a computer, especially an unfiltered one should be treated like a 'Issur Yichud'.

Or next time you can call someone to let them know you are in a danger zone, so you know you will need to report back afterward.

there are lots of tools, now is the time to choose the appropriate ones for you.

Good luck, we are rooting for you.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 21 Jan 2024 11:31

Back-up to a five day streak. Coming off a single fall after 14 day, I am now clean for 19 out of the last 20! There are many reasons to celebrate that, but what I am finding out is that I am adjusting to my new clean lifestyle. I am automatically staying away from dangerous situations, I am not glaring at the girls on the street, I am just living a regular life of a regular guy and not a pervert!

I had mentioned in previous posts that one of the things that drove me to GYE was the type of porn that was needed to "satisfy " me. It was stuff in the past that would have disgusted me. It was getting darker and darker the more I watched it.

Well, now I am heading in the other direction. The thought of some of those things I was looking at are disgusting me once again. I am hardly out of the woods with this stuff, but I am heading in the right direction. I only mention this because I have read and chatted about this subject with a few of you and some of you had similar situations.

I am here to say that you can reverse this stuff and knowing that is highly motivating!

I had given up most of my “extra” tech in my life. That was a big help. I did have a certain website that I had a hidden account that I said to myself that I will not delete it, I will just not use it.... Well, if you are not going to use it, why keep it???? Crazy logic from a deranged mind... Well I got rid of that as well, and it was easy, not just the result of guilt after a fall. It was just the YH continuing his attacks, but this time I was ready.

The next big thing for me is the smartphone. I have the dumb phone sitting next to me. I could make the change today if I wanted to. The iPhone is so engrained into my daily life in mostly positive ways, I wonder if getting rid of it is necessary. I have deleted all the potential bad apps, have some safety measures in place.

Just using Uber for example. I use Uber a lot. That isn't possible with my dumb phone. Are these just excuses that I need to overcome? Is this the YH playing with me? Or can I remain clean with an iPhone?

The battle continues, but the light at the end of the tunnel is not a train getting ready to run me over.... Shavua Tov to all you guys. I wish everyone a clean, fun, healthy, and productive week!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by frank.lee - 22 Jan 2024 09:16

Hi Adam, you are an inspiration! BTW there is a company called Fruber where you call them and they send you an uber. I think it should work even in your city, if you are in the USA.

There are many successful businessmen who don't use smartphone.

Keepup the great work, one smart step after another!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 23 Jan 2024 10:13

Reason number 5498 to Quit Porn.... Your physical health... Seriously, during my latest stretch of staying clean, I am feeling better about myself, eating better, and exercising more. I have lost 5 lbs since Jan 1st, Granted I have about another 20 to lose, but that is a good chunk of weight for me. I am at my lowest weight in over 4 years.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chancy - 23 Jan 2024 16:45

Rav Adam,

You are truly an inspiration to all of us! To see you take the path towards purity is very encouraging and exciting.

Now, regarding your iPhone, I gave mine up years ago after having every phone since the 3G, it changed my life to the better. 1000%

Its an extra addiction that i dont need.

But, you gotta be ready for it and make sure you are doing it for the right reasons, I was sure that i cant stay clean with a smartphone, i simply couldnt, i would always find a loophole. Plus the excitment of knowing that I have something in my pocket that could give me that pleasure, that itself kept my fantasy mind up and running, so i got rid of it.

So you gotta make sure you have enough conviction and reason to do it.

Regarding Uber, im using a phone called the Qin F30, its a android phone but its modified to be kosher, it has email, uber, waze, i love it.

Good Luck

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 23 Jan 2024 23:39

I know that the long range answer is getting rid of the iPhone. I have never heard of that phone that you mentioned, but I will definitely look into it. Thank you so much for reaching out

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 24 Jan 2024 11:11

Boker Tov everyone...

Just want to say that yesterday I had about 5 hours alone in my home office with an unfiltered phone and laptop and I never gave it a thought. I didn't struggle to stay away from it, the thought of acting out never crossed my mind. That is a big deal for me. If I can stand being alone in my home for a number of hours and not give it a thought is something that never would have happened before GYE... For this and so many other things, I am so thankful for all of you.

I read almost every post on here. Many of you have helped me in so many ways and will never know it. Keep posting, you never know who is reading it and getting inspiration from it!!

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