

SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by sonicReducer - 04 Jan 2010 17:16

Evening all (;

I only discovered GUE a few weeks ago, but it's been such a huge help to me. I thought I'd post my own story.

I'm a baal teshuva, and I've been shomrei mitzvot for about 5 years. Becoming frum has been both the most fulfilling and difficult journey I've ever undertaken (still on it!). Although it can be very hard day-to-day, and I've had more than a few moments where I wanted to throw off my yarmi, the Aibishter has helped me to keep going.

My family emigrated from Johannesburg, South Africa, to London when I was about 14. This move was very, very hard on me, especially socially. I left behind a lot of my friends I grew up with, and struggled to rebuild in the UK. For the past ten years (I'm 24 now), I've been quite lonely, and my self-esteem took a lot of big hits (although Baruch H-Shem therapy has helped a huge amount). I was unhappy with my situation, and unhappy with who I was. I think I used p**n and shfichas zera as a pick-me-up, and as an attempt at some kind of intimacy, besides the usual urges and curiosities of a young man.

This continued when I become frum, although frequency decreased (and guilt increased). University was a very difficult time, fashions left very little to the imagination, although I managed to avoid getting involved with all the shmutz that goes on.

I spent a year at a well-known baal teshuva yeshiva after uni. This was to be my greatest length of shmira - just over a year. I fell badly when I came home for pesach - after 9 months in Yerushalayim, the fashions and posters in the UK were just far too much to handle, along with my PC that I had left behind.

Since then, I've really fought (and fallen), and GUE has given me a lot of inspiration. I was quite happy to realise I had been mechavin to the Guard Your Eyes Handbook already about 3 years before I had read it! My browser opens onto the chizuk list, which is really handy.

London is a tough place for shmiras eynayim, and I really daven hard that H' should help me. Baruch H-Shem I'm usually ok but sometimes the y'h just gets too much. My recent best period is about 6 weeks. I found a good filter and I'm really considering accountability software, but I'll see how the next few months go.

A big challenge at the moment is shidduchim - I'd really like to get married (and feel emotionally I'm finally in a good place to deal with it properly). I don't fit in very here - I'm too 'modern' for a chareidi girl, but too chareidi for a modern girl, so it's been hard meeting girls that are shayich. That sneaky y'h gets me here a lot - telling me that it will be years before I find someone and in such a tough environment, who can blame me for giving in? Positive thinking and bitachon are really my biggest weapons here, but they don't come easily.

One thing that really surprised me reading others' stories is how widespread these struggles are, and how wide a cross-section of yidden it affects.

May the Ribono shel Olam give you all the beracha and hatzlacha you all deserve for your truly super human efforts!

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by silentbattle - 25 Feb 2010 20:34

Hope the rest of your fast goes easily!

I know for myself that stopping shidduchim for a while was very frustrating - especially after I'd been clean for a month or two, and felt that I was ready to move on. But having a longer clean streak behind me was a good decision, I think.

Re: want to/have to, I can totally understand - let's remember that all of us here have felt that we need to control ourselves for years, and that's never helped :D We need to realize and remind ourselves that this is something we want.

Remember that the simcha of purim is all about recognizing that even when things seem dark (arur haman), it's really all hashem behind the scenes, and it's really all good.

Keep on rocking!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by sonicReducer - 28 Feb 2010 07:02

Purim Samaech!

I was kind of expecting a bit of a burst of happiness - of recognizing that everything is in the hands of H', that everything is meaningful and necessary, and that I would bounce up to something approaching true simcha.

. . . didn't really happen. In fact last night I was feeling pretty down, and the two things that cheered me up were spending time with 2 close friends (one of whom is also going through a tough time) and some admittedly very expensive whisky. I didn't get drunk, but I drank enough that I felt my mood swing upwards. In a way this is quite dangerous. I discussed with my therapist 2 things I'm worried about getting into due to depression - alcohol and p**n. I've never been much of a drinker, but I'm a bit nervous I'm going to get to the point that everytime I feel depressed, I dive into a bottle. Anyway, I've not really done anything like that yet, but knowing is half the battle.

I bolted out of shul last night. There was a megillah reading straight after ma'ariv, and another after that - I ran, and out of the back door, to avoid the women there basically. I remember how bad it was about 3/4 years when I was there, lots of girls, and everyone dolled up. Unbearable.

Baruch H' I had a decent night with my friends, it was just schmoozing (including about what's going on with me), laughing, chilling out. I really needed it.

Not sure what I'm going to do with myself today - Purim is one of those days when I never know what I'm expected to be doing, and afterwards I feel like I missed something. I don't agree with this spirit of 'let's act like drunk goyim for a day', so I always feel a bit uncomfortable. Will daven, and try to get a bit of learning done, and relax. Tomorrow is a new work week after all.

Spoke to my therapist about my depression - he said he would be worried if I hadn't felt like that at all, and that I'm dealing with what's going on exceptionally well. I think this is very much a case of looking back in 10 years and thinking 'wow, I'm glad I went through that, it really made me what I am', but right now it kinda sucks. I'm trying to take a message from Purim, but its not easy.

Struggled a bit last night in terms of shmira. Turned off of the thought of looking at p***, but still had an urge to be pogem. I think its the comfort/feel good y'h. Ducked it, but must make sure I keep myself busy today.

Hope everyone has an amazing simchadik freiliche kasher Purim!

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by silentbattle - 28 Feb 2010 16:00

Sounds like you're doing great - thanks for starting my purim off with a smile! ;D

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by sonicReducer - 01 Mar 2010 17:36

Today's been awful - I've been wrestling with this teiva all day.

Have been clean for 2 weeks. Sometimes I feel like I'm pushing against a spring - and the harder I push, the harder the teiva pushes back, until it reaches a point where the 'spring' overcomes me, and flings me away.

Anyhow, will just keep on wrestling I guess

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 01 Mar 2010 17:50

[sonicReducer wrote on 01 Mar 2010 17:36:](#)

Have been clean for 2 weeks. Sometimes I feel like I'm pushing against a spring - and the harder I push, the harder the teiva pushes back, until it reaches a point where the 'spring' overcomes me, and flings me away.

I read that somewhere on this site or heard it on a shiur not sure which one but that concept is here somewhere ill look for it.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 01 Mar 2010 18:13

See this: Michtav MeEliyahu, Vol. 1, p. 235. I found the source in yechida's efections but thats not where I saw it originally but Yeshida quotes in his thread anyhow (I did a search).

Hope it helps!

-Yiddle

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by sonicReducer - 01 Mar 2010 18:50

Must say I'm grateful for my filter, and fact that my filter password is now far away.

phew.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by silentbattle - 01 Mar 2010 19:47

Remember that YOU'RE the one who decided to install a filter!

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far

Posted by trying123 - 02 Mar 2010 11:22

Hi Sonic Reducer,

Just read through this whole thread...

Don't know if this will mean anything to you, but I see Sonic Reducer as a good Jew fighting a good battle and growing...

After all the challenges, to be where you are is something to be proud of...

There was one thing were you said that you can't imagine a Girl wanting to go into marriage with you if they'd know your story...

1. For every boy with a story there is a girl with a story

2. It's a matter of how it is presented...

A new immigrant from the Soviet Union was lamenting to a friend about how ill adjusted he is. "I am here for a year already and I am still living in a tiny one bedroom apartment, I still can't speak English Normally, I still have a low class Car service job, I still have no friends... he was going on and on...

Another Guy in the exact same situation was bragging to his friend...

"I Came here from the Soviet Union only a short 12 months ago... Look what I've been able to do... I've got myself my own apartment It's not huge but it's nice and cozy, I pay for it from my own earned money No Handouts..., I am already picking up some English... I obviously don't speak it fluently yet but it's great to have learned so much in such a short time... And I've hooked up with some Americans and got a job... Etc.

It's the same with Shiduchim one can present themselves as someone with a whole list of issues... who seemingly can't get anything right...

Or you can show how after all that's come your way you've conquered so so much.... People look up to that...

3. You don't have to pour out the whole story in one lump sum, you open up a little see what the reaction is... In all likely hood the girl will respond by opening up about her 'things'....

Peace and Love....

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by sonicReducer - 02 Mar 2010 18:09

Thanks guys!

Baruch H-Shem today wasn't too bad, although I honestly think women's fashions are getting worse by the day. anyway...

trying123 - what you said is quite reminiscient of how I've been trying to think, so it was good to see it in other person's words. Was just trying to tell myself yes, I have been through a heck of lot, but I'm a decent, responsible, stable person despite it, and I really think I have the basis to be an amazing husband - maybe just needing a bit more hadracha than average but that's not such a problem. Opening up to girls on dates is hard for me, but I push myself because I want my wife to know everything about me.

I'm currently thinking about whether I should get back into dating or keep waiting. On the one hand my parents' situation isn't resolved. But on the other hand I'm doing much better and feeling pretty stable, and who knows how long they'll take to sort themselves out? I can't wait and wait for something, who knows who long dating itself will take?

Not rushing, but at the same time I don't want to wait longer than necessary.

Kol tov everyone, all the best

sR

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by silentbattle - 02 Mar 2010 18:28

I think you don't have to wait till your parents sort their issues out - just make sure that you've sorted YOUR issues out, at least to a major degree.

I'd also recommend that you be careful - opening up is important. And yes, the woman you're going to marry should know you. But know everything about you? That's dangerous. Talk it over as far as what you should say, how much, and how. I can give you examples of how someone thought they were being honest, but in their honesty, they were actually pretty much lying by saying too MUCH truth - because it gave a distorted image of themselves.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by trying123 - 02 Mar 2010 23:51

To SonicReducer:

I've been told that the main factor of whether you have what it takes for marriage is whether you have the ability to care love and respect another, You have that so the rest is just a matter of figuring out the details....

Not sure why you'd wait for your parents to sort out their issues...

You are your own man, my friend....

Regarding being fully open to a girl about everything: It is tricky, because you don't want to paint yourself as being your problem, because you are not... You are a good human being who as a footnote had some difficulties that you are overcoming....

SilentBattle: wondering what those examples are... can you describe it?

Peace and love my friends.....

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by silentbattle - 03 Mar 2010 00:06

Trying123 - Sure.

Guy was very honest with himself, and demanded a lot of himself. So when he was dating girls, he was honest about himself, and he would say things like, "I don't learn as much as I should."

Now, he was being honest, and sharing the demands he placed on himself - but the girls got the idea that he must not be a good learner.

Or another example - I once mentioned that I need to work on my anger. I meant anger on a deeper level. But the girl was understandably freaked out (although it was a later date), because she was worried that i was really possibly a violent enraged person!

Either way, by being honest, you can give a distorted image of yourself.

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Re: SonicReducer's story so far
Posted by trying123 - 03 Mar 2010 00:11

Got it thanks....

P.s. looks like we're playing follow the leader here ;D

Where are you headed next? ;D

Also in a good marriage are you able to be totally open with your wife, or there are some things that you just have to keep for yourself?

(I guess this is for the married guys (with a good marriage) to answer)

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