

A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...

Posted by aspiringjew - 05 Apr 2011 18:40

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I have to say that it has been very good so far to participate in the phone group and to have "met" a whole bunch of my brethren who are coping with the same issue as me.

I am a BT that has gone through a long mehalech (obviously I'm still somewhere in the middle) with lots of "Yeshivish" under my belt. Outwardly I look like, (in my eyes, of course!), a model Jew. Black and white clothes, peyos, etc. inwardly I suffer from the same affliction as all of you, lusting.

I live, at present, on a small moshav in Eretz Yisroel. I have (kin eyna hara!) 7 children, the oldest is 15 my youngest is almost 2. All of my children are fantastic and so is my wife.

HaShem was mezakeh that I learned in Kollel for about 15 years where I merited to learn a vast amount of Torah, get semicha (don't tell anyone else in the group please, I don't want to be addressed as "Rav Shlomo from Israel". i.e. I'm mochel on my kavod, not that I have any anyway), learned a trade (I'm a sofer stam and a mohel) and to teach alot of Torah at various institutions.

From my early teens until I got married I was dealing with the issue of this Taivah for women, looking at dirty mags and masturbation. When I got married I confessed to my wife what I had done and told her that I was going to strive in the future to be pure and I even think that I succeeded for a few years.

My wife is a fantastic person, warm and caring with a heart of gold: always thinking about how she can help others, hacnasas orchim, a really pure sense of right and wrong and deep in her heart I know that she loves me. She is a fantastic mother to our children (more on that later).

however:

I have always had a difficult time relating to my wife, I'm not quite sure what the reason is. I know that my wife was a premee which caused her all sorts of difficulties both physical and cognitive, and that as a result she has some learning difficulties whereas I have never really had such issues, understanding things came easily to me. It is very hard for me, for example, to understand why using a computer is difficult for her - but it is. She just doesn't get it no matter how I explain it! She also is not expressive - at all - of any affection for me even though I know she loves me and she never has. never. She has never come up to me and put her arms around me, she has never expressed any desire for me in any way - (it's so frustrating). I have talked to her about this and it doesn't change anything! She is also a little bit overweight and it bothers me to a degree but she is so stressed out (I'll get to why in a minute) that even though she has tried dieting it doesn't help. She also is exhausted constantly and has a short fuse due to the stress, (patience please). Needless to say this has not helped our relationship very much.

there have been times that even on the night she went to the mikvah she fell asleep before we could be intimate!

My first two children were born during the first two years of marriage and my third daughter was born towards the beginning of the third year, she was a preemie. She was born under extreme duress due to a bacteria which invaded the womb and she was born at 28 1/2 weeks gestation with alot of complications. she died during birth and - B"H! - was revived. However as a result she has CP (Cerebral Palsy). Our other children were born later. All in all we have 5 girls and two boys.

Having said that I am dealing with, (and have been for many years now), the following issues:

Like everyone: Parnassah.

I have been plagued with a lack of ability to be "self sufficient" in my parnassah. I know that this is due to a real lack of Emuna and Bitachon and lots of "kochi ve otzem yadi" and lack of hakaras ha tov, (also lack of kavanna in birkas hamazon), but it feels like there are so many people out there who can provide for all of the needs of their families but somehow I'm not one of them! For the past two years I have been out of teaching, (the place where I was working couldn't make the fund-raising work) and I have gone back to sofrus to provide, but it's not - as of yet - doing it. B"H I have parents who, although they are not rich they are well off enough that they can give me help financially so that we are (by some miracle, as we have for the past 17 years of marriage) getting by without getting in too much debt. The Yetzer Ha Ra has used this lack of emuna and bitachon making mountains of RID which - of course - has not helped my situation at all. When I was in kollel there were nights that my Yetzer would keep me up all night, (I'm sure you remember yourself "Just one more and then I'll stop", "this is the last one shlomo!" and all of a sudden ... it's morning). B"H it hasn't been that bad for a long time, but there have been nights that I stay up until 2 am.

In addition: my middle daughter with CP.

We have literally traveled the world with her, with HaShem's help, trying to find and utilize methods of therapy to help her to advance and be as self sufficient as she can be. B"H there has been alot of success and she is doing as well as can be expected. HOWEVER there are so many things which need to be done to her and for her and in regards to her that it causes great difficulty to the entire family.

As I mentioned before my wife is a bit of a mess in certain areas, one of which is organization. The house - despite her efforts - is in a constant state of disarray, the laundry piles up, and she puts alot of effort in our middle daughter (yes, the one with CP) in trying to motivate her to do and achieve. when she's not working on the house she is on the telephone for hours - literally - every day in organizing things concerning our middle daughter and our other children. B'h our older girls are fantastic, (number 2 more so than number 1), but they are under lot's of stress as well due to the lack of organization and the needs of helping out their frazzled mother.

None of this, of course, is of any help to our relationship.

I am trying my best to juggle all of my responsibilities as a provider, a husband, a father and an overworked HaShem and I am finding myself more than a little frazzled.

As opposed to one guy on the phone call who said that he has emuna issues I have no emuna problems concerning the existence of HaKadosh baruch Hu. I am even writing a sefer/bunch of lectures on the subject. (at present it's all in Hebrew, but I hope to write it in English as well), it's the second half of the passuk that I am having trouble with, the part of ?????? ?? ?????, the "returning the knowledge from our head to our heart" - that's where I'm stuck. With everything that I know it's still kind of like I get home and say to HaShem at the door "Nice seeing you Hashem! bye for now!" and go on to do what I do without any further thought.

I'm not despairing. I want to change for the better the problem is that I still "plan to" i guess, I still feel somewhere inside me that it's in my power to overcome this, all I really have to do is WANT TO DO SO. Well guess what? when it comes down to it - I don't want to do so! I guess I enjoy wallowing in the mud of the pig-sty, it feels good, doesn't it?

Well I have certainly understood the message of the phone group: the acting out isn't the problem, just the symptom. the problem is the RID. If we can avoid/get rid of the RID then we will no longer have a need to act out. I hope that that's the whole problem and that in working the steps i finally succeed in internalizing what I've known all along.

I know that we all have our own "pekeleh", well in a nut-shell that's mine. All in all I've been polluting myself spiritually for about 28 years now. I really want to stop, at least I'm really saying that I am and I am trying to start the process by getting on the chain-gang of the phone group and, with HaShem's help, starting to work the steps with all of you.

But at this point, however, I am dealing with the sheer frustration of my relationship with my wife. On the one hand I'm furious at her in that she seems to have no strength for me at all and hardly ever makes an effort on my behalf to show any thoughtfulness: bringing me a plate of food for dinner when I'm working (or spacing after a tough day), for example` whereas on the other hand she is a fantastic, caring mother, she goes out of her way to help our children to grow well with good midos, she does alot of things which I would have to do if she were not here. I owe her tremendous hakaras ha tov! AAARRGGGHH!

That seems to be the real problem here: to use the oldest excuse in the book (It's my wifes fault and Your fault - G-D - for not sending me the "perfect" model) vs "ein hadavar talui ela bi", (it's all up to me!), I have what to do, a different way to see, the issues and learn to accept HaShem in all facets of my life. It sounds good but I know that is what we are all struggling with.

In any case thanks for listening and I hope that I have made the first aspect of kinyan of a chaver and a kindred spirit.

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by Me3 - 05 Apr 2011 19:01

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Wow do you have alot to get off your chest. You certainly have it rough, and I'm not really in a position to offer you advice as my situation looks like paradise in comparison.

Just, I wouldn't start blaming your lack of bitachon for your parnasa problems. It could be that Hashem wants you to have it rough at the moment you don't need to add this to your guilt package (By all means though keep on davening, I'll try to daven for you as well).

Second (and I hesitate writing this given you situation) while you may be well versed in emunah, maybe you can work on your ahavas Hashem recognizing that Hashem loves you, wants what is best for you, and is not out to get you no matter how rotten it may seem.

In terms of practical advice in helping your wife....I don't know what to tell you.

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by ben durdayah - 05 Apr 2011 19:25

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Wow HaRav Shlomo, Sofer Sta"m and Mohel Mumcheh...

You truly have a lot on your plate! May Hashem give you an abundance of koichos.

Noting that you participate in one of the phone conferences, I'm assuming that you're probably familiar with the GYE system.

Before I give you the standard welcome, I would like to make two suggestions.

1. Be careful about sharing your personal details at length -they could be compromising your anonymity.
2. There is a special forum for marriage related issues for members only. For access PM or e-mail GuardUrEyes.

And now for the welcoming package:

**Welcome to our community, you have finally come home!**

Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up with them!

[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#): *(Right Click the link and press "Save Link/Target As" to save the PDF file to your computer).*

'Guard Your Eyes' offers a unique approach to helping people by recognizing that there are many different levels in the struggle for "*Shmiras Ainayim*" and "*Shmiras Habris*". After studying the experience of hundreds of religious strugglers over the past few years, we put together the suggestions and recommendations that we feel are best for the various levels. We divided the tools, features and services that GYE offers into 8 different levels. This "[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#)" can help people quickly identify at what level of the struggle they are at, and which tools and features would help them most at their particular level.

**Here are some quick things you can do to help you jump straight into recovery:**

- 1) Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while

having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best – and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information... We also **highly advise** installing "Reporting Software" such as [webchaver.org](http://webchaver.org) to give you some accountability, because filters alone are usually not sufficient and they can often be bypassed.

2) Join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day.

3) Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#).

4) Post away on this forum! You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you **get out of isolation!**

5) GuardYourEyes also offers many free anonymous phone conferences where you can join a group of other frum Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [www.guardyoureyes.org](http://www.guardyoureyes.org) > Tools > Phone Conferences for many different options. Our conferences are taking place every day, morning, noon and night... Joining a phone group would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps – which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but the daily call will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

6) If you need more general guidance, write to our e-mail helpline at [gye.help@gmail.com](mailto:gye.help@gmail.com) or call our hotline at 646-600-8100.

7) Download and read the "[Guard Your Eyes Handbook](#)". This handbook outlines the GYE approach in detail, and makes our network much more effective and helpful for people. **The handbook has two parts:**

A) The first part, "**Attitude & Perspective**", details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for

tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

The second part, "**The 18 Tools**", detail suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. No matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

**May Hashem be with you!**

Elazar ben Durdayah

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by alexeliezer - 06 Apr 2011 17:12

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Commit to a regular date night (or maybe during the day would work better) with your wife at least once a week and get out of the house together. You can just go for a walk or sit somewhere and sip a soda. The time together will benefit your relationship, and having this to look forward to will help with your feeling like you're off your wife's radar.

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by Serene smile - 09 May 2011 07:06

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alexeliezer has the right idea

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...

Posted by Jew - 15 May 2011 07:14

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I have to say, this is the first time I relate to someone so much here! Not saying that my issue is as complicated as yours or perhaps I don't see it as but I do truly understand a lot of your problems. What do I mean? (I have no experience of living with someone with CP, though my relative does, so I can't possibly comment but does sound like you got your hands full)

My wife is also constantly exhausted, I'm a little bit behind you, in fact, I'm you, 15 years ago! I've been married for 2 and half years and my wife has always been either pregnant or breastfeeding, this has led to a tremendous stress on our relationship, her hormones are constantly flying around and this has been her excuse for our entire marriage! - "things will change" but they haven't yet, In three years I think we have had relations under 20 times!!! Coming from a BT history - but I was very involved in secular life if you know what I mean, this was very difficult for me, never kicked the habit and only since finding this site have I had any respite (63 days today). Our home is also a mess, always! This time I insisted on contraception as I couldn't take a third so soon, I know it's a bracha but I mamish would explode, we had a heter for two years after the first one - to enjoy our child and get to know each other better - WITHOUT THE HORMONES - but no, she went nine months pregnant, to nine months feeding, to nine months pregnant and is now six months into feeding - thankfully she is taking contraception. She is naturally a cold person so finds it hard to show emotion, I'm the opposite - like you, the lack of physical contact doesn't help the cause either.

Sometimes I blame the shadchan - to be fair I only asked for three things, one of them was tidy!!! just shows you who is in control, in fact she isn't any of the things I asked for or thought she was - I only now understand that she is my ezer c'negdo and pushes the buttons that grow me - oh boy it's so hard! - so therefore, I guess my ezer c'negdo isn't what I asked for. that's a good mussar for me!

I have two books to recommend, if you're a litvak you won't like these books and if you live on a charedi moshav, you'll have to read them under your bed!!! - But, I also went to very charedi and litvish yeshivas, big brisk influence but the rosh yeshiva was very open to allowing the guys to explore themselves as Jews - important for us BTs.

1) Gan Sholom, by Rav Arush, I found this book very helpful, chapter three in particular, if you're a big litvak you won't like it but try to stay open minded when reading it. It's truly helped me and many others I know personally, just read the introduction and chapter three.



2) Awareness, by Miriam Adahan, this book mamish saved me, I'm super sensitive and understanding that others do things because H' made them that way was very helpful. Definitely essential to understand others and yourself. It's been very helpful to understand why my wife isn't as emotional as me, not only because she is tired but because she is not emotional! I remember one of my rebbeim rebuking me for reading this "we have mesilas yesharim for these things" I don't know about you, but that never worked for me, in fact my rosh yeshiva learnt shlitah books rather than zatzal books - he just found them more relevant.

Anyway, hope that helps - it's certainly helped me, ba"ch.

Hatzlocho,

Jew

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by aspiringjew - 16 May 2011 22:01

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I want to thank everyone for taking the time to read my story and to comment.

I am in the midst of reading Rav Arush's book Gan HaShalom, (I think it's called). I have had the opportunity to meet Rav Arush on a few occasions and although I am not an adherent of Breslov - He is an incredible individual. He also knows how to write very well.

Things are still up and down. I am working very hard on improving my Tefilla. I think that the first prayer that I need to concentrate on most is to **want to make this nisayon my number one priority in my spiritual life!** It's a classic case of doing what I have to (GET TO) do vs. what I (my Yetzer HaRa) want to do.

I installed the K9 filter and found that it messed up my internet connection. I am connected through RIMON in Israel, which is a built-in filter but it's not fool-proof. Had to remove it because of that.

HASHEM OZER!

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...

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Posted by Shteeble - 17 May 2011 03:32

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sound great!

aspiring sounds about right.

keep it up!

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by Jew - 17 May 2011 05:59

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[aspiringjew wrote on 16 May 2011 22:01:](#)

I installed the K9 filter and found that it messed up my internet connection. I am connected through RIMON in Israel, which is a built in filter but it's not fool-proof. Had to remove it because of that.

Do you use windows as your OS?

windows has a option for parental controls and can use a blocked and allowed list, meaning you can only access whats on your list. if you can get your wife to hold the password it is very powerful and free. really worked for me.

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by aspiringjew - 30 Aug 2011 19:28

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I have to say that I recently switched to a Linux distribution, Kubuntu 11.04 and with all of the little difficulties for a windows user... I'm never going back! What a difference!

Unfortunately K9 does not work on Linux. There are other methods some of which work and others that don't.

I'm still trying to cope with the real issues in my life, not just the virtual ones. My relationship with my wife is still up and down: there are days that I want to hug her and then there are those days....

In any case life goes on.

It truly makes a difference in my life when I take the time to devote working on this taivah every day. The problem of course is that when I do take the time to do so it usually means that the Yetzer will find a reason why I shouldn't do it tomorrow.

I recently posted in the "break free" part on this subject. I called it "A time to think" please tell me what you think!

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Re: A very learned Long time BT, married... with children... still coping...  
Posted by Back on Track - 31 Aug 2011 12:00

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Aspiring I relate to much of ur story, but not at all to other parts. Thank you for sharing. I could not offer advice. Your situation is really sounds like its too complex for anyone to grasp through a few lines in a post. Over time though friendships here develop and ppl get a clearer understanding of each other. May Hashem help you in all of your challegges and please continue to share your situation with us.

Ps- linux? Awesome!

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