

Having a Rough Time of it

Posted by musicman - 17 May 2011 17:06

Hello. Thank you for this community. The total amount of zchus and potential for good that this website contains might just be reason enough for the Internet to exist in the first place.

That being said,

My story:

I'm 24 years old, happily married, with a 2-year old son and one on the way (IYH September). Like many here, I started on this sad and lonely road in high school, although I remember being "curious" as early as 4th and 5th grade. It's only been downhill ever since. I'm at the point where I'm giving in almost every day, if not twice a day. I don't justify it in any way, and I never have. I've just always considered the nisayon too string to tackle, and I've been too embarrassed/terrified to reach out. And I'm never happy afterwards. Many times, I'm on the verge of tears.

Here's where my situation becomes interesting. I do IT (computer work) for a living. It has been my passion, my hobby, and my outlet since almost before I can remember. I was fascinated with computers and technology since I was basically a toddler, and I have been lucky enough to make a hobby that I've cultivated since childhood into a very decent living and parnassah. My comfort zone is in front of a computer screen, and I regularly spend 7+ hours/day in front of my dual 22" screens (at work, and my laptop at home). I have a BS in Computer science and I'm working on my masters degree in the same. I am an editor at an esteemed and popular tech news website, and I basically live and breathe computers and technology. I carry two smartphones, and I may be getting a third from work. I have a vast network of close, personal friends, and I don't even know what they look or sound like. As the Internet is my lifeline, my home away from home (and even while I'm at home), I feel very strongly about solving this problem without limiting my access. I know that's a tough sell, and I know filtering is one of the most basic and vital steps to recovery, but I really don't think it's the right way for me. There are other reasons why I shy away from the idea, though.

It's a known fact that you can't cover your traces on computer. being trained in Digital Forensics procedures, I know that more than most. However, the same training allows me to hide things where I'm positive nobody outside of a trained professional will no where to look. I can anonymously bypass most filters, and cover my tracks. The computer nerd inside of me sees a

filter as a puzzle, and bypassing it becomes an end unto itself. In my 8-or-so years of "activity", I've only been caught once, and that was in 10th grade, before I knew what I was doing. But that's not all.

My wife is totally clueless to any of this. She not only has no idea that I'm even dabbling in illicit behaviors, sometimes only a few feet away, but I'm pretty sure she's extremely naive to the idea that this is even a problem for people in general. The topic has come up in conversation with friends/family, and the look of utter disgust and contempt for people in the news caught with illicit materials or behaviors is like a dagger in the chest for me. In my own experiences in my social circles online, I've found that the idea of pornography and acting out is as normal as eating and drinking, just like smoking was 60 years ago. In fact, I know there are sites that specifically discuss the benefits of regular "acting out"!!! (hard to believe, but trust me, it's there) While I'm pretty confident I won't get "caught" by my wife, I do know that should it ever happen, that will be one wound that will take years to heal, if it ever does. For the same obvious reasons, I'm extremely hesitant to come out to her with my problem, especially after hiding for so long. It's not about pride. If losing pride was all it took, I'd be out of this hole in a jiffy. I'm honestly terrified of the consequences of disclosure. I've got a good life right now. It's a busy life, a many times stressful life, but I'm surrounded by good people, I'm able to make a parnassah, and the idea of risking the harmony I've been blessed with is anathema to me. Installing a filter is kind of a "Shtika K'Hodaah" concept for me; it's an admission that there's a problem to my spouse, and I don't think I nor she is ready for that.

I've come a long way in other personal areas in my life over the past 5 years. I went from being a Chronic Fatigue Syndrome-riddled adolescent, quite literally doing nothing for 1.5 years straight, to getting a college degree, making a parnassah, finding a spouse, having children, owning a house, having a productive and meaningful day where I manage to go to Shachris and learn once a day, starting another degree, becoming active in my community, getting in shape, and overall doing a pretty good job of things (if I may say so myself). There have been ups and downs (getting laidoff on my wife's due date was a classic), and as I approach my 25th birthday, I really really want to get this monkey off my back so i can live the next 2.5 decades of my life looking forward at opportunity instead of looking back at my failings.

I understand that trying to progress down the road to recovery without a proper filter is almost pointless, but I feel like I have no choice. There simply has to be way.

After reading a good portion of this forum, I'm confident I've found the right place, and just writing my first post feels like such a huge weight off my chest. I could leave the site right now, and feel like I've already made progress (I won't, don't worry).

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Re: Having a Rough Time of it
Posted by musicman - 18 May 2011 16:30

[TheJester wrote on 18 May 2011 15:50:](#)

[Here's the Microsoft KB article on how to do it :\)](#)

Wonder if I can it 8)

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Re: Having a Rough Time of it
Posted by Leiby - 18 May 2011 18:49

Hi Musicman,

I would recommend that you stop trying to deal with the symptoms, and that you start dealing with the core issues in your life. People have addictions usually have many issues such as negative core beliefs, low self esteem, codependency, fear, resentments just to name a few. You need to get yourself over to a therapist and to a 12 step meeting and start working. It has been proven that nothing else works. Us addicts have tried hundreds or thousands of times to stop to no avail. If you put a filter on your computer, or even if you get rid of your computer you won't stop acting out; you will just find another way to act out (probably worse.)

The secrecy that you have about the issue just complicates things and makes them much

worse. One of the major parts of recovery is being able to share your feelings freely and having the support of others.

I know that it will be difficult to disclose to your wife, but if you go to a therapist and meetings and you have some sobriety behind you then it may be a little easier for you. I would suggest that you disclose in a therapists office.

It is time for you to start taking responsibility for your actions, it is time for you to grab life by the horns and not allow for your addiction to drag you through life.

Hatzlacha Rabbah!

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Re: Having a Rough Time of it
Posted by TheJester - 19 May 2011 08:26

[Leiby wrote on 18 May 2011 18:49:](#)

I know that it will be difficult to disclose to your wife, but if you go to a therapist and meetings and you have some sobriety behind you then it may be a little easier for you. I would suggest that you disclose in a therapists office.

+1

The fact that my wife has access to (all of) my smartphones, my email and my web history, and knows my entire past and potential future, is almost definitely a huge part of why I am not even one tenth as bad now as I would otherwise be.

And as you have probably guessed, I could probably dual-boot my machine/s with a Linux OS, hide it in the system, and run a completely parallel existence that non-techies would never dream of finding - then encrypt it, and run the Internet off a 3G dongle... Dealing with your issues is really the only way.

Now, I don't suggest you run and tell your wife: "I'm a pervert, and I've been doing perverted things! Yay!". But with regards to your perception of your wife's attitude, you would probably be surprised. Of course, it isn't for all wives to know things - some are actually, truly fragile. But we tend to make excuses not to deal with the real issues. Like "I'm too technically savvy for filters to work", or "my wife would die if she knew".

The purpose of my previous post was to demonstrate that you were kidding yourself, and some filtering is actually possible (and the editor of a respected tech publication should know this). Not to offer "the solution", since even a strong filter is not a solution. I'm not saying that this is the case, but I'd like to open the possibility that you might be the roadblock, and not circumstances beyond your control.

By the bye... To what sort of music does Musicman listen?

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Re: Having a Rough Time of it
Posted by musicman - 19 May 2011 15:27

The spousal disclosure thing is something I'm not ready for... yet. I know that it's very possible that I may be surprised by the outcome, but the alternative is too horrible for the benefits to be worth it. It's as simple as that. I haven't see any evidence that such a conversation would go well, so i really really don't want to jump into that situation just because "I might me surprised."

I play a lot of music, so I listen to a lot of music. If you'll ask me who my favorite band is, I'd tell you Bela Fleck and the Flecktones. My tastes are wide, and I'll listen to anything played by a

talented musician. I play Sax, guitar, Bass guitar, drums, piano, and banjo, although less and less of each my life gets busier and busier. My dream house has a recording studio built-in :p

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Re: Having a Rough Time of it
Posted by alexeliezer - 19 May 2011 16:39

I still haven't told my wife. As I was able to get on top of this without her knowing anything, I don't see any point. There's something to be said for keeping up the chitzoniut and our wife's expectations, which we strive to rise up to (striving to make tocho k'baro). I also haven't been to any groups. I have had helpful therapy in the past, but nothing to do with this addiction (therapists never picked up on my addiction). So when I discovered this site, and discovered I had a diagnosis (Lust Addict) I was in a good position to start recovery. I applied all the Steps that I could that didn't involve talking about my addiction to others. I committed to doing whatever it would take. If My Way failed, I would have to join a group. This was actually a motivation not to fall. Fortunately I was blessed with success.

As always, just sharing what worked for me.

I know you can do this.

Alex

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Re: Having a Rough Time of it
Posted by heuni memass - 26 May 2011 18:10

Alex well said. I agree with you on the wife thingy and even on the steps issue as well. But again - as long as it works.

One point- make sure that if it doesn't work out as planned then you know what your plan B is. If one ends up in the mud but had a plan of action if it would happen, chances are he will get up

quicker.

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