

New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.

Posted by reconcilingmyself - 27 May 2011 06:27

I am having a strange feeling as I write this... Like so many other attempts to stop acting out, I am filled with optimism... But at the same time, in the back of my mind.... I am thinking... Mah nishtanah... But I am hopeful that I will be able to share my pain and my shame and that maybe I will be able to lean on you to help me be stronger.

I grew up modern orthodox, have an amazing wife and beautiful child, and I love them with all my heart.

I have always struggled with the pull to look at things that poison me, I have seen so many things that I can never unsee, and I am so angry at the way those images and scenes know how to implant themselves in your mind at all of the worst moments.

I have tried to be honest with myself, and fully admit that I have an addiction. I have sought and found wonderful help from therapists. I have admitted my problem in detail to my wife, who is supportive. And have been able to go long stretches without acting out. But I also become lulled into feeling like I have beaten this, and I always fail, which leads me into a spiral whereby I feel so low that I repeat and have to start over as if none of that progress ever happened.

I suppose everyone has their poison, I was always drawn to pornography, would intentionally walk past a strip club or adult store,..... more often than not I would resist, and would let my addiction convince me that I was strong, but I always stumbled eventually, and the climb back from the starting line always seems so daunting that I would let myself just do it once more..... Then I'll be better... Then I'll stay with it.

In hate the pain that I cause my wife, I want to be that Father that my baby sees when she looks at me and tells me she loves me.

That feeling of disconnect between who I am to everyone else, a respected Frum, learned businessman, and this hidden lie of my other side sickens me.

I know I need support, I won't remove this curse unless I can share, but I couldn't bring myself to go to a live meeting, I am just too embarrassed and afraid. I am so hopeful that this community can save me.

A friend of mine jokingly told me to check out "the funniest site"; [Moderator's Note: name of site removed] I will never forgive him.

That site, and another like it, literally caught me like a drug. They anonymously match you . . . with a complete stranger. And unlike "passive pornography" the stranger on the other side is alive. The excitement of someone performing for me, was literally like a drug. It would mostly be perverted men . . . But the possibility that the next click would be a young woman, who would do whatever you asked made me nearly unable to stop clicking. I would click through dozens and dozens of people for the bizarre hope that I would find a pretty girl next. It is/was crazy since this was so rare, and all the other images, which I have no interest in anyway, just passed before my eyes, making me numb to the absolute perversion.... The excitement and expectation would literally make it so that it was physically hard to pull away. I would tell myself that I would never do it again.... It even led to my having HZ on Yom kippur night, such shame and disgust with myself. But somehow.... even when I was going 6+ months clean, I would be alone or sad and I would fall again. these sites, in my eyes have taken a terrible thing to the next level and introduced newer stronger temptation in me.... To such an extent that the previous things that I would have been tempted by seem dull.

I've spent thousands on therapy, and it has helped me realize so much about this disease and how it works, but I have finally come to understand that I won't be able to beat this one day at a time without the strength of friends to help. Therapy is not a permanent solution for integrating abstinence into my life for the long term.

I am grateful, hopeful, and humbled. Please help me, I truly am powerless on my own.

[Moderator's Note: Minor details removed to avoid giving other addicts new ideas].

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by reconcilingmyself - 31 May 2011 16:04

Thank you so much for all of the replies... I already feel much better. I truly appreciate the time you have taken to give me such chizuk.... it know how long it takes to formulate thoughtful responses, and I am grateful for the caring you have shown to a total stranger.

I look forward to remaining an active member of this community and hope that I will be able to lean on you for my strength and to lend strength to anyone whom I can help as well.

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by Serene smile - 31 May 2011 18:38

As long as you want real freedom, and I'm sure you do, you'll have it.. You're probably better off than you think.

Wishing you happiness with yourself and family, b'emet

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by Dov - 31 May 2011 20:51

[Serene smile wrote on 31 May 2011 18:38:](#)

As long as you want real freedom, and I'm sure you do, you'll have it.. You're probably better off than you think.

Wishing you happiness with yourself and family, b'emet

Yes, but you will not likely get freedom just by *wanting* it. Even if you are very sincere. It usually requires taking real steps and doing some real work. It does for me and for everybody else that I know with (so far) successful recovery. Following that path of real work, real action-steps, and real openness requires one thing: Humility.

Most people do not expect that, but think it takes determination, or self-sacrifice. They think it is a madreiga of some kind. But of course, it's not - it is purely selfish. I **need** to save my behind - I *need* to. But really, all it takes is humility.

If we do not get a gift of humility from Hashem to let go of our egos and stoop down low to do the work, then we will stay in the slime and mud and torture of our acting out. Lower than anything, it is, no? Eventually we get humiliation enough...and some arrive at recovery because of that. Humiliation brings 'humility' - like fainting brings blood pressure up inside the brain. Not pleasant - but effective.

Reb Nachman used to say, "ader ah nisayon, ader a bizayon," and I think that is what he was referring to. Either we bring ourselves down enough to face the truth and actually do what we must, or our problem will bring us down against our will.

OK, enough out of me.

It is nice that the chizzuk you have found here makes you feel better already. The question is have you come here primarily to **feel** better, or to **get** better? Sadly, many come here only to feel better. Yup. And I do not blame them, for I am one of those who did not get better until I was humiliated, and the willingness still came very slowly after that before it became a touch of humility and saved my life. But you are really tired of the suffering, no?

So go for it, brother!! You are worth it.

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by Serene smile - 01 Jun 2011 00:04

Couldn't o'said it better myself :-)

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by 1daat - 01 Jun 2011 01:31

Hi Recon,

Do you have filters on all your electronics yet? Have you spent some time reading the handbooks? Did you sign up to get chizuk emails? Have you listened in or maybe even joined one of the phone groups? Have you found somebody you feel some connection with and asked them if you could call them in a tough moment? When you daven do you ask Hahsem to help you just get through today? Have you begun to not take that second look, and to avoid routes that put too much temptation in front of your nose? Have you...? Have you...? Have you...?

Fences, fences, fences. Before I stopped, everything, all at once, my connection with "H was all about the drama cycle--beg, promise, fall, cry, beg, etc. etc. I never knew there was a different kind of connection. It took doing the stuff the guys recommended, sifting and sorting, finding what was working best for me.

For me, coming out of isolation was critical--talking to my Rov, to my best friend, to a therapist, and to my virtual friends and brothers at GYE.

Next came posting. I didn't know what the "rules" were here. How open could I be. I just kept putting it out there until one time Guard deleted some stuff from a post. That was how I learned what the limit was for me. It was done lovingly, gently and with explanations. I encourage you to let it all hang out to the extent that it's comfortable for you. (Collectively we've probably pretty much done it all anyhow)

I also had to struggle with wanting to be the best poster, to get my posts in the chizuk emails, to get lots of responses to my posts. This was good in the beginning. It gave me someplace to put all my need to be center stage, rather than in the eyes of some pixilated image.

Facing truths about myself, my personal variety of this addiction, about my selfishness and self-centeredness and resentments and entitlements could only have happened (to the extent that they have so far) with the help of the guys here spilling their own beans and me getting to piggyback (you should pardon the expression) on their sharing. At first I spent hours and hours on the site. That was also a good thing. I needed the images flashing in front of me of the guys I was "talking" to. I discovered that what I wanted with all that posting was to matter. To matter even with my monkey on my back. Guys told me "H loved me no matter what. But it took me a very long time for that to become a little bit felt as my own experience.

I say all this to let you know there is no "right" way to get clean and find your peace. I still flap all over the place. And when I come here, I settle down. sometimes I need to come here before davening. Even before leyning a little Chasidus before davening. I gotta settle down a little.

so that's a little about me. Please check in with us soon and a lot. Tell us what you're doing, eh?

If you're not really ready, if you haven't really hit your bottom, from above or below, doesn't matter--after all it's your bottom, you call it.

So I hope you'll post here a thing or two that you've gotten started with so we can encourage you with what you have done, are planning to do, or need some help with doing. But please don't think this is something that just takes self-discipline. Because we're all here because we failed the self discipline test. and we re-took the test thousands of time. We gotta DO things. It's our histadlut. Then step aside as best you can. He'll come. I can't say "I promise", but it's a really good bet. Take it.

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by wannabehappy - 07 Jun 2011 04:35

Dov,

Your first post, the one that got the wow from kedusha.

Wow

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by Dov - 10 Jun 2011 17:02

Thank-you! Have a nice Shabbos!

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by reconcilingmyself - 08 Jul 2011 15:14

I have been slipping more in the last month than in years... I am so ashamed of myself... I've installed blockers, but i hack them.... I am back to all the old acting out... and I am feeling so so so low.

everytime i think i've made progress, i feel like ive slipped right back down and its worse than ever.

i cant look in the mirror.

even worse, I've been too embarrassed to call and tell my therapist, since I know how disappointed he will be. arrrrrrrrrrr.

Dov, if you are there, can you PM me, I'd love to be able to lean on you.

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 08 Jul 2011 15:24

Recon, i feel your pain.

give yourself a break, you have an addiction, which warps the mind and alters thought paths.
while it is not a carte blanche to let you act on impulse, it is a reason to reduce the guilt and self-loathing and focus on doing something to help yourself.

lots of guys here have been down the road you are on. there is a way out.

if what you did until now is not getting results maybe try some other tactics.

wishing you the best

zs

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Re: New Here.... I Deeply Want To Be The Version Of Myself That Everyone Else Sees.
Posted by alexeliezer - 08 Jul 2011 18:15

Get one day of sobriety.

Take it one temptation at a time. One day at a time.

There's some killer pritzus out there this season. It's nearly impossible not to be assaulted with mind-robbing candy if just for a moment. But you're here with us now. There's no turning back.
GET UP !

Alex

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