

Talking to wife

Posted by obormottel - 11 Aug 2011 07:26

Hello everybody

For some reason I thought that coming clean to my wife and having her hold my filter password would be a good idea. She cried for two days, and threw everything at me: from "breach of trust" to "unconditional support?! no way!".

What should I have done? Is coming clean to your wife not part of recovery? I put up bravada of course, that I can do it without her, I've quit smoking, after all...

Also, am I allowed to be with her while on my first 90 days? In the past, my being with her could be a trigger for the following day, no web browsing needed...

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by ninetydays - 11 Aug 2011 09:50

I was unable to come to clean to her myself. She actually found me logged into GYE and read my posts. It was tough for me but now we are stronger.

Let people that are more knowledgable than me handle the "how to open to your wife situation". I am sure it was discussed here I just dont remember any threads.

As far as your wife being a trigger for you. That can be a problem as well. I know some therapists really tell you to try to abstain from each other until you really work out lust issues at least partly.

ninety

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by shteighecher - 11 Aug 2011 14:49

Its not easy for her and its not always the best idea. However, you did it already. The way she acts is normal and you couldn't expect anything better. i wen through this a while ago while i was by about 60 days clean. it was very difficult, but, its much better now and is improving daily.

The following is what soemone PM"s me then and its very true every word here.

Your wife must be feeling very hurt and confused at this moment. The man she thought she knew so well has become a stranger.

First of all, I suggest she join the spouses forum. There she will find a support group of others going through the same things as she. It can help her understand that this is an illness and not within your control. (This does not resolve you of responsibility of course; just as a diabetic is responsible for seeking treatment, changing eating patterns etc etc.)

As for regaining her trust, it will take patience, time and a lot of work. Show her unconditional love, GIVE without expecting anything in return, and be patient. She may react by rejecting you in the bedroom. The main thing is to try as much as possible to KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN. Allow and encourage her to share her pain and feelings, without defending yourself or belittling her reactions. She needs to once again feel safe, and thats going to take time and work.

Many wives do not want to know about their husbands addictions. You have shared already, so must deal with the facts on the ground. But do not assume she wants to be your accountability partner unless you discuss it clearly.

As hard as it is to imagine right now; this nisayon can eventually bring the 2 of you even CLOSER than ever before. Daven for siyata dishmaya, for this and everything in life.

May HKBH sed you real healing,

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by shteighecher - 11 Aug 2011 14:50

and here is the official GYE welcome

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. We're all in the same boat here. *Tzuras Rabim Chatzi Nechama*

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 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 from Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See 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 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!

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Aug 2011 18:28

All good posts. Do you have a rav you both can confide in. I know my rav helped my wife to cope with it. It was (and sometimes still is) difficult, but a third party (if it's a good one) can really help a lot. I wish you hatzlocho. It will IY"H get better. You have quite a lot of guts/character. I, like others, got caught. It was bitter at first, but has been a brocho in the long run.

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by alexeliezer - 11 Aug 2011 18:37

[obormottel wrote on 11 Aug 2011 07:26:](#)

Also, am I allowed to be with her while on my first 90 days? In the past, my being with her could be a trigger for the following day, no webbrowser needed...

Welcome Reb O'Mottel !!

Maybe someone else with pasken your 90 day shaila.

My personal opinion, as well as my experience, is that sobriety can be achieved together with normal marital relations.

But why is being with your wife a trigger for the next day?

It is because you're re-living the pleasurable experience in your mind?

For a non-addict, maybe this is OK. For an addict, it's thin ice.

Why?

Because it's a form of fantasizing. And for us it nourishes the addiction. It's like an alcoholic taking a little drink. For the addiction to go into recovery, there must be zero exposure to the substance.

I know, what about marital relations -- isn't that the same drug. Answer is no. Think about a food addict. A meal is necessary and beneficial. The second helping, the late night snack, the 2 liter bottle of Pepsi is the drug.

Nachon?

Alex

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Re: Talking to wife
Posted by ontheedgeman - 11 Aug 2011 19:06

It doesn't sound like you are on a programme of recovery. Just sounds like you are going on a different path of doing things your own way, for your own self. Telling our wives right at the beginning, without considering the steps, is way of the path. Sounds like you have the desire to get on it, so keep reading.

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Re: Talking to wife
Posted by obormottel - 11 Aug 2011 21:30

Thanks to all. Still not sure about being with wife during the first stage of recovery. Is there anyway to get a definitive answer?

To ontheedgeman: ha?! are you just trying to take the edge off? I have a great and open relationship with my wife. It seemed natural to include her in the difficult decisions I was making about my life. Obviously I didn't approach it one hundred percent correctly, but I haven't found anywhere in the Handbook or on the website any advice on the matter, which is why I posted the question here (after the fact). I realized that she would be hurt, and that she would need time to feel close to me again; I was just taken aback by how hard she had taken the news, and how accusing and unforgiving she sounded. With my experience from friends who've gone through addiction recovery (AA, also drugs), coming clean to the people who are close to you is an important and necessary step. So I don't know where you come off telling me I'm WAY off. As far as doing it for myself, of course I'm doing it for myself: I want to get better so that I can have a better and closer relationship with Hashem and, I'havdil, people that are very important to me: wife, kids, etc.

And my wife is through her initial shock by now, and is indeed very understanding and supportive, just like I hoped she would be; even to the point of intimacy, which brings me back to my question: can I or can't I?

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Re: Talking to wife
Posted by gibbor120 - 11 Aug 2011 21:40

What does your wife want? You haven't mentioned that.

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Re: Talking to wife
Posted by ontheedgeman - 11 Aug 2011 21:49

Sorry Obor - didn't mean to sound harsh or be judgmental. What am I, nothing. What are my views, nothing. Just words. To a woman, hearing that her husband has other lusts must be a very difficult thing to hear, so the fact that you have trouble understanding her reaction suggests that your own "thinking" needs work, and that relying on your own thoughts or understanding is what got us into this mess. Like they say in the rooms, if you have a "good idea", call your sponsor. If you have a "really good idea", go to his house. That being said, I acted out a few days ago and I'm still angry with myself and maybe that's coming across in my posts and my speech to you. Why didn't I call my sponsor? It's frustrating. My kids are now misbehaving, maybe they are drawing from the dark energy that I'm secretly emitting. Gcd help us all and forgive us all.

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 11 Aug 2011 21:58

hi Obormottel,

welcome to the forum and to GYE,

i feel for you, it is very tough to go through that experience of telling the wife. If you would have asked before doing so you probably would have been advised not to do so without preparation and guidance but the point is moot ipso facto. it's great to hear that she is coming to terms with the situation.

regarding your question about relations, here is my uneducated opinion

there is no halacha regarding intimacy after a disclosure as far as i know (although it might touch upon 'tesha midos')

and it is hard to know the exact nature of your wife's and your situation and personality without knowing the two of you and the circumstances in person so i wonder if anyone here on a virtual forum can give you a definitive answer.

if she is ok with it (you need to ascertain that she is sincerely ok) maybe try it and see whether it has negative repercussions on your recovery.

a very important concept to learn is that there is a world of difference between relations with a spouse and porn/masturbation. even though they both sound like opportunities for indulgence and gratification they are polar opposites in their true form. might be beneficial to read The Garden of Peace by Rabbi Shalom Arush (available at judaica stores or online at feldheim.com, eichlers.com or amazon.com).

part of recovery in general is becoming less focused on ourselves and increasingly focusing on others and their needs, so here is an opportunity to focus on your wife's feelings and emotions.

whatever you do, use this opportunity to grow and deepen your relationship with your wife and with HKB"H.

wishing you the very best

ZS

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by ur-a-jew - 11 Aug 2011 22:16

Warning I am going to be brutal and if you can't handle it then don't bother reading but I actually agree with Ontheedge.

I may have assessed the situation wrong. But I am writing from experience. And that is the beauty of this place. You can come be open and honest and get honest feedback. If I am wrong I apologize but if this is not you, it will be someone else. It is for myself as well.

I read your post and see that its all about "yourself." "I" need to recover and if that means that I have to tell my wife even though "she would be hurt" then so be it.

Can I have relations? If she wants it, then what's the question you have an obligation to give it to her. I suspect that she's not begging for it. And it's back to "me" again.

You can't compare a drug addiction to a sex addiction. If I do drugs I am not breaching the marital bond I have with my wife. If I look at porn I am.

You obviously did not have that great of an "open and great relationship" with your wife if you've been hiding your lust addiction from her all of these years.

I think you have alot to deal with before you get to the question of relations. Like assuring her what steps you are taking to make sure that you will re-earn her trust. And you can tell her that you recognize that it will take some time for that to happen.

Hatzlacha and welcome.

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by ur-a-jew - 11 Aug 2011 22:47

I would just like to add having taken the plunge its time to make the best of it. So 1) have you apologized to your wife?,An apology that has a "but" in it is not an apology. I would think you owe her two apologies. First for your past conduct and second for dumping your problem on her without fully thinking through what effect it may have. And after you do let her vent her anger frustration and anything without answering her back. Just listen and emphasize with her. 2) what's your plan to change yourself? One thing you probably shouldn't do is make her your accountability partner. It's too much for most wives. You can assure her that you are getting help, that it is completely confidential and you can offer to put her in touch with other wives (only if she wants). You had a great relationship and you can still have one. But recognize that its hit a bump and assure her you will do all that is necessary to work through your problem and to earn her trust back.

Hatzlacha. You've come to the right place.

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by obormottel - 11 Aug 2011 22:54

To ontheedgeman: fair enough. G-d love you.

To Gibbor: she wants to be with me.

To Zmiros: you're a breath of fresh air; thank you very much. I actually appologized to her last night (again), this time for being an idiot and dumping my tzores on her without asking someone smarter first. Seemed like a good idea at the time, in retrospect: foolishness and selfishness. The filter gabbai could have held the passwords for me just as well. But I was so proud of myself for doing the right thing, I forgot it would hit her like a ton of bricks. But again, she is my best buddy, and she is back on her feet, fully backing me up. I don't spare words to affirm her emotions etc.

By the same token, I couldn't bear a thought of being caught with my pants down (I mean no pun), and I felt that coming forward would be a necessary dose of brutal honesty that would help me snap out of my delusion that everything is normal.

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Re: Talking to wife

Posted by obormottel - 11 Aug 2011 23:54

While I was typing, ur-a-jew posted...I already said it's all about me. It's just that by helping myself I hope to make it right b'eyney Elokim v'odom. Part of being addicted is lying about it to yourself and others.

She confronted me about viewing porn (after seeing web browser history) many years ago, but, like everyone else here, I made light of it and promised to not do it again. So it wasn't all new to her.

Otherwise, I have no secrets from her, no secret bank accnts etc. So yeah, we had/have good relationship. And the proof is, she's confirmed she's on my side, she understands that it's a disease, and she's accepted my appologies. And the true healing process for both of us is just beginning and will be a long one, I'm not fooling myself about it.

Thanks again for all your thoughts. Stay strong.

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