

My nisayon

Posted by mynisayon - 18 Oct 2011 03:09

hi. I just wanted to introduce myself and tell a bit of my story. I'm a married guy with kids k'nh and I have been struggling with this stuff since I was 12. The past 5-6 years have really been more of a challenge. Prior to that period, I would fall but I could always get myself out of it and be clean for months and even years. I started masturbating before I even knew what it was. Over time I was able to really stop and I felt a tremendous connection with Hashem. Somehow I always felt that dealing with tayva was my avoda. So when things were going well I felt that connection and when things weren't going well I felt like I was waiting for lightning bolt to strike. Over time i've learned not beat myself up too much when the falls happen, but i still feel like garbage. B'h until about 5 years ago things were pretty much under control but now I feel like I don't know where to turn. I want my special relationship with Hashem back. I know reading this u r thinking. Get a filter, start the 12 step program and u'll be fine. But there is something else. I do have a special nisayon. My issues are with same sex attraction (SSA). Since I was 12 my interests were guys with only a very little attraction to girls. In yeshiva it was torture and I fell at times but it was under control. I never wanted admit that I might be gay and I convinced myself that if I got married it would be fine. Well I was young and maybe not that smart. I have a wonderful family that I love very much but it did nothing to solve the issue. For the past many years I have struggled with this alone. My wife or for that matter anyone else knows nothing. Coming clean in this forum is a first for me. I can't begin to tell you how difficult it is harboring a secret like this. Everyone thinks they know the true me. I learn, I am respected but no one even my own family knows nothing about my issue. Its an awful feeling. At this point I couldn't bring it up to my wife, it would cause too much pain so I try dealing with this alone. My connection to Hashem is most important to me. Without that connection I could never have happiness and that's what keeps me going.

Ok so those reading this may still wonder why ssa lust is any different than any other lust. In my case at least its very different and those who suffer from ssa may get it, but those who don't may not. Let me explain. I have two types of triggers. One is seeing things or thinking things that will trigger me. That's no different that a regular guy who sees an attractive girl in the street. The way to deal with that is shmiyras enayim and gedarim. In the past when i was younger that was the primary trigger and I used these methods to keep it at bay. But in my the last five years as I was in my mid thirties approaching 40 the other trigger became the primary trigger. These triggers are emotional triggers. The feeling of being alone is a trigger. The feeling of not being able to be myself is a trigger. I feel like i'm an actor starring in my own movie. The feeling of knowing as i get older that I will never satisfy my desires is a trigger. The not being able to fully accept my situation is a huge trigger. Sometimes I feel overwhelmed and that feeling leads to porn and masturbation. Of course then I feel disconnected and the cycle starts again. To better understand, picture a normal guy being told he could never be with his wife again. I think his reaction may be the same.

I can't seem to be able to get beyond these "emotional" triggers. These triggers are voids and

unfortunately with these voids comes pain. If there are any ssa guys who have successfully dealt with this, please let me know how. That said I need to clean up my act. I'm hoping by being open about whats going on it will somehow help. On yom kippur I resolved to get beyond it. I sometimes wonder how things would have turned out had I not had ssa. honestly I don't think I would have a porn issue by who knows. Does that mean i'm an addict? I'm not sure. Well that's my story. I'll do my best dealing with my situation

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Hashem Yaasfeni - 27 Oct 2011 21:01

Wow Dov you're powerful and powerful words.

I have to absorb that point about giving power to others. I have found myself to be needy in many ways and hate myself when i allow others into our life who are also needy, but we all have to unlearn those bad habits no-one taught us better when we were younger.

G-d bless all of you wonderful REAL people on this site. I am loving the experience. Real people.

Kol Nidrei is only complete when done WITH the AVARYANIM (sinners)....

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 27 Oct 2011 21:14

This thread has really become amazing. Alex, Nebula, 1Daat, Dov....you have all brought out so well what I (and I'm sure many others in this situation) feel and what we need to hear and learn. I don't have much to add, I need to absorb all this and really internalize it.

Dov and Nebula, you ought to have a "longest post" contest... ;D ;D ;D

Gevura!

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by mynisayon - 28 Oct 2011 00:43

Guys, for the first time in a long time I am able to be myself on this thread. Thanks to everyone who takes the time to post. SSA is complicated and maybe it even deceives its own thread (or is this it?)

Dov, that was a powerful post with plenty to think about and digest. Thanks for the affirmation on my decision not to involve my wife for support. There are plenty of others who disagree and Ive been told that without involving her I cannot have an honest and open relationship. Truth is I wonder about this myself. I haven't involved her because I know it will cause much pain. Its a tough decision and I hear both sides.

I have looked for support in many places. Dov u hit it on the head. It seems everyone has a particular agenda and that agenda drives the methods. There are the reparative folks (unproven low success rates), the live the gay life folks (Im a yid, Cant do that), the "ur a yid control urself u pervert" (he's an idiot!) folks. There are many sides to take on the issues but I think there are too many that are focused on their particular agenda and not me.

Truth is communicating with others on this thread is just what I need. Thanks!

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by obormottel - 28 Oct 2011 07:03

HATLOCHO RABBO, BUDDY MYNISYON! We are rooting for you. ;D ;D ;D

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by gothika - 28 Oct 2011 13:48

[mynisayon wrote on 28 Oct 2011 00:43:](#)

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mynisayon, I am glad that you finally feel like you can express yourself, I felt the same when i arrived at gye a few months ago too. Then when I made another posting about how disgusted I feel about myself for having SSA, and I recieved such feedback as I did, that I shouldn't feel that way about myself, and no one thinks that I am a disgusting freak, and so I shouldn't get so down on myself, so I am happy that the opportunity to express your own issues here has benefited you too.

Now Dov, I will accept what you said as Tochacha, since I may have come across earlier as

trying to "sell" reparative therapy, and that can certainly make others feel misunderstood, and feel like they are being used as objects in someone else's ego trip, as objects to collect. Look how many people I have fixed. Look at their wonderful families that they are able to have now, look at all that. You know who did that? ME! Obviously that is just truly vile, debasing behaviour that is no better than just bullying others to uplift oneself.

Now I hate it when a thread just gets 'hijacked' by others and just turns away from what the original poster, the one who felt that he needed to create a thread to focus on a specific issue, wanted, but I do feel that this will be o benefit to everyone here, and is not off topic.

So I want to make myself, and my opinion clear:

I have no belt, no system of notches above my bed that collects the amount of people I have "saved". It is a sad reality that there are actual people out there that do such things.

When it seemed above that I was trying to sell reparative therapy to mynison, or anyone else, I was most certainly not. All I was trying to do was explain my own experiences. I went from being basically fully disillusioned at life two months ago, and at the grim prospect of starting to think about dating, and realising that obviously the thing that I was attempting would not work if I would remain feeling that way. Once I decided to stop moping about in my lonesome pity party, and start looking for options before just giving up, my life really changed. I started reading up on what causes all these feeling inside me. Both sides of the sea of opinions out there. I decided to stop saying, well if the APA (american psychological association) decided that it can't (or was it shouldn't be?) be fixed, they obviously know what they are talking about, and I'll just give up trying based on that. I started reading whatever books and thesis's on the subject that I could find, and I started realizing that there really is another side to this story. Nothing was clear cut, I found no secret button to switch off my SSA, but on the other hand, I could see that there was clearly some options for me to at least try. At that point, it was that or just despairing (which truly wasn't also not my only option but that was how I saw it)

I have since then, finished reading up on 2 books on reparative therapy, not all of which involves actively seeing a therapist by the way, there is a lot of benefit to be gained by just reading about what might be contributing factors to SSA, and in doing so, recognizing a series of patterns that could be playing a negative role in one's life. I personally found so many things that I was doing, or on the other hand, avoiding doing because of what I believe contributed to the development of my own SSA, and now that I know what was causing those things, I could start to reactivate my own free will in choosing what truly was good for me, and I did all that without any therapist being involved. *{I had a major breakthrough in dancing with all the other men on simchas torah in shul, and for the first time in my life, I actually felt some joy in dancing, and I didn't feel like an actor in some bizarre show, that was my life, but that is for another time, and another place, so contact me for details if that rings a bell for you.}*

What I am saying in perhaps too many words, is that I have found reparative therapy, even just reading about what *may* cause it's development - and due to this being potentially misinterpreted, I must add yet another tedious disclaimer - (I only speak for myself in this and even though I have never been as sure of anything else in my whole life as sure as I am that my SSA developed because of almost everything that I read about in that book, everyone's story is unique so there are no guarantee's), and not even actively doing anything about it had already made me much happier, and therefore much more in control of my life.

I said this in this forum, and on this page because I thought that I could feel some of mynisayon's pain in his SSA, and I know that he is another human being, just like me, that feels pain, and I wanted to give him some hope that there are options, and one doesn't always have to be so cynical about never being able to feel any different ever, just because everyone else tells you that you can't. I certainly was not trying to sell him something, and chas v'shalom, I was not trying to make him into an object on my belt.

I have learned above all else, in my ongoing struggle with my own SSA to refuse to accept anything that anyone else says as truth until it rings true to me, as was made clear in the beginning of the book that I linked to and read, above. And just because it has a supposedly 'low' cure rate, some artificial measure by the way, which does not reflect any one persons potential experience with it. Reparative therapy offers some hope to others, it does not claim to just cure all, in fact in their terminology, they only speak in terms of 'change' which reflect a continuum. There can be a total longing and hunger for other mens sexual, and emotion attention, there can be a total feeling of in difference and unexcitement in other women, and there can be anything inbetween. Which includes *less* unsettling feels of attraction to ones same sex, and *more* potential for heterosexual feelings which I would accept as a worthy goal, even if they never went away fully.

Ok so shabbos is almost in,so I have to go, but in closing, I wanted to apologise, and take responsibility for any ill-feelings that I have caused and consequently any feeling that I may have hurt. I was only trying to help someone that I greatly sympathised with, and I was only trying to share my own experience with reparative therapy and its positive effect on my my own life, and how I can see that it has already benefitted me tremendously.

I hope that in this current post I have made that all clear.

Good shabbos, my amazing friends!

NebulaMud

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Dov - 28 Oct 2011 15:40

Now that was useful! In sharing our own personal detailed experience is actually worth something to other suffering people...while *advice* usually is not, even if it is true and from Chaza"l, rabbonim, the Torah, etc.

No, actually I was not referring to you **at all**, NebulaMud. I was *only* responding to what Mynisayon wrote about, for him. Though you did mention reparative therapy and shared a bunch of your stuff (which I thought was great), I wanted to remind him that there are people out there who may not even have SSA but are 'therapists' and are dying to convert people. Christians have such organizations, and so do we. The guys in charge are sometimes purely religiously motivated, seem and feel sincere, but can be 100% dogmatic rather than caring. Those who give up all their dirt and yet fail in their program, they might label as just plain evil. And now they know all your dirt! And they really think (say they know) how 'evil you really are'.

Please - I doubt seriously that you are anything like that, especially being one who is sharing your own dirt here, as I do. I also never suspected you of being a 'notch-counter'. I have met those types before, but it feels to me like you do not speak their 'dialect'! You are not snooty, at all. Maybe **I** come off that way, but you do not. So. Let's please stay chavirim and please accept my apologies for giving you a different impression of my leanings.

Hope your Shabbos was really nice and that we both keep sharing here.

Oh, and hi Mynisayon!

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by mynisayon - 28 Oct 2011 15:51

Nebulamud..I always thought ur post was coming from ur heart. I also had had some experience limited with reparative approach and while it may not cure me it did give me some coping tools.

please continue to speak ur mind. That is what this is all about and thanks for taking out the time to try to help

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Hashem Yaasfeni - 28 Oct 2011 19:42

[Hashem Yaasfeni wrote on 27 Oct 2011 21:01:](#)

Wow Dov you're powerful and powerful words.

I have to absorb that point about giving power to others. I have found myself to be needy in many ways and hate myself when i allow others into our life who are also needy, but we all have to unlearn those bad habits no-one taught us better when we were younger.

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by blackbigday - 28 Oct 2011 20:32

nisayon - keep it up, man, you're digging real deep- you'll find gold.

I'm with the 'don't tell your wife' group, of course based on individual circumstances. women are wired different, and I don't think many of them can handle what some of us have lurking in our hearts. We need our wives to live happily in a Naive Bliss- all based on individual circumstances!

I am hetro, but my wife can't give me the love I so desperately need (not her fault). So I find myself in your boat, in a kind of way. I'm in this situation, this marriage, with kids, and I want it to last for a lot of reasons. But being in this situation means having this need that I know will NEVER,ever be met, and it wears me down, it eats away at me slowly, it converges on me at times with darkness. Are we that different. We both can't have, hopefully ever, what we need. I'm not trying to take away anything from your struggle. I'm just trying to relate to a common demoninator (spelling intended).

Yours,

BlackBigday

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Dov - 31 Oct 2011 17:15

[Please forgive this aside in your thread, mynisayon]

Dear Black bigday,

It seems to me you are getting into something that is broader than what mysisayon is referring to. So now that you brought it up, I want to say something about being open with my wife. Hope it is useful to you, or to somebody...

There are certainly stages in recovery. Everybody seems to have watershed experiences that are big steps forward every now and then. Almost every time, they are painful, or come through some painful situation. Boruch Hashem I am having them, and always have, in recovery. The alternative is living a stupid, miserable, and apparently useless life. The timing and sequence is surely different for everyone, but some common patterns seem to emerge when we look at many folks in recovery.

Married sex and lust addicts discover that the state of their marriage is the best barometer of their recovery. This may not be true in the first year or two of recovery, particularly if the wife is either too *involved* in the recovery of her man (a stupid mistake some couples make) or if she is bitterly *fighting* his entire 'recovery program' business (also a big mistake, but who can really blame her?!).

But in the long run, the quality of my relationship with others is the best way to see how comfortable and good my life is. And by "others", obviously I mean: my G-d, my wife, my family, and other people. The big ones, of course, are G-d and the wife if one is married, and G-d and his parents (or friends) if he is not. The people I am the most beholden to - that's where the truth comes out.

So in my case, my wife has *her* work to do, and *I* have mine. We do not often confuse one with the other, b"H. Our honesty and openness with each other does not mean we involve ourselves in the work of the other! I must be honest with her - but it takes a lot of sensitivity and wisdom and *siyata dishmaya* (which I usually get plenty of through my sponsor, who incidentally, is a goy) to learn what to share with her and what to only share with my recovery buddies.

But all this is academic, after a while. For as time goes on, it becomes obvious what I need to share with my wife and what I do best with when keeping it to myself: experience bears out that it is stupid and counterproductive (and cruel) for me to share with my wife that "I really liked the rear-end of the woman in front of me at the supermarket today, honey. And she even smiled at me, and I felt like asking her to meet me in the car." Puleeze. My wofe does not want to know of this garbage - though Hashem does, and so do my program buddies. I share it openly with Him and them, make calls to unload when needed, and things go well on a good day.

But if I acted out c"v, then I'd absolutely need to share that with my wife. That is just too big! It is a major life event, as far as I am concerned. Of course, when a guy is not even sober nor working a real program of recovery and is therefore running to lust, sweet porn, and sex with himself every other day, acting out our lust is not much of a 'life event'...nu. I am talking about

recovering people. Not the dime-a-dozen 'brave strugglers', but the one's who have finally given up on 'beating lust' and are finally ready to really *give up their lust cuz they can't afford it any more!* Like me, the recovering drunks and the other addicts.

For us losers who are finally ready to win freedom, we find that recovery is mainly about recovery in our real relationships...now that we have given up our fantasy relationships and have given up the fantasies about our real relationships, too.

After all, the 12 steps are not about *controlling* lust or alcohol, at all. They are about ***giving up*** lust or alcohol. That is why the steps do not even vaguely mention the lust or alcohol after a brief recognition in the very first step. The rest is *only* about learning how to be sane and thereby live real life (rather than merely existing between fantasy orgasms), for a change.

So relationships take center stage. And the realest human relationship there is is between husband and wife. Sick people see that as *a problem*. The healthier we get, the more beautiful the relationships become.

Does any of this make any sense to you, BBD?

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by wishing for the real me - 31 Oct 2011 17:27

[dov wrote on 26 Oct 2011 01:27:](#)

Love,

Dov

Since when do you sign like this? When you write a note to your wife?

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by gibbor120 - 31 Oct 2011 17:30

I'm not BB, but I hear you loud and clear!

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Dov - 01 Nov 2011 17:04

[wishing for the real me wrote on 31 Oct 2011 17:27:](#)

[dov wrote on 26 Oct 2011 01:27:](#)

Love,

Dov

Since when do you sign like this? When you write a note to your wife?

Frequently. Particularly when what I share in my post is especially close to my heart and came through very painful or difficult experience. Also when I post what I fear may be a painful subject

for the reader it just seems right to remind myself and him that I really love him.

If you doubt that I could possibly love you or do not know what that even means, then I will say this: Rav Noach Weinberg z"l used to say that love of another grows out of recognition of virtue. When I see that a man is a person who has been passing through the same fire I know only too well, has the same insanity I share - and yet wants to actually start letting go of their precious best friend (nudes, fantasies, orgasms, and the habitual behaviors they have grow so dependent upon) and get free...well, I see beauty in that. And I love them. Not simply because of the virtue I see, but because of the fact that I know what in my deepest reality.

My wife - who hated my program for the first few years and hated everything I did for recovery almost as much as she hated my acting out - now admits that the day I started getting sober was *far* more important a day in her life than our wedding day.

That is love...and she is not even a fellow sufferer! I have even more, for every recovering addict I meet.

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Re: My nisayon

Posted by Hashem Yaasfeni - 01 Nov 2011 17:11

WELL I certainly do get it and am determined to make it all the way. I dont have high expectations, I just want to be a benoni, which is a high level indeed. The YH still lurks but never gets to hold the steering wheel of my world as long as i stay in charge.

Dov is a powerful and mature guy. I wish i could meet you Dov as you are far ahead. I really do get it.

I joined a week ago and am clean since then. Theres no turning back now !!!! I cant believe i could have discovered GYE years ago and would have been free all that time. All i needed was to share with friends struggling w same issues.

Ah well, its never too late. Am working carefully to rebuild with my wife. That is the true reality,

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not easy at all, but certainly worth it.