

My New Life Starts NowPosted by startingover13 - 24 Nov 2011 21:20

Hi all,

I'm new to this website and so I'd like to introduce myself. I figure I'd give you my basic life story. I apologize if it's a bit lengthy (totally fine if you have no patience to read it all) and if it goes a bit off topic, but at the end of the day, so much of where I've ended up began with my "lust addiction." Okay, here goes:

I spent about 8 years in yeshiva after high school. For 5 of those years, I was learning in a very prominent American yeshiva. During my years in yeshiva (at least most of them), I was pretty much as "shtark" as they come. I learned yoimam valayla and all I imagined doing with myself was learning for a long time until one day maybe I would be forced to go into chinuch. As shtark as I was, I always struggled with this "lust addiction." It was my #1 nisayon as a yeshiva bochur. There was a few year period when I really had it relatively under control. By under control I mean I could go for maybe 2-4 weeks without shefichas zerah. And whenever I would sin, I would get extremely depressed, mad at myself, run to the mikvah, take on nedarim, and often times it would lead to me having a bad day/week/month in terms of learning and general yiddishkeit. To a large extent, as my lust addiction went, so went my entire avoidas Hashem, and general mood. I would roller coaster up and down in yeshiva - going two weeks learning non stop, then being depressed for two weeks and not wanting to do anything Jewish (though for the sake of my reputation, I kept up with the basics). Now, while my lust addiction certainly played a large part in all of that, I do want to stress that there were certainly other factors involved as well - including the way I think (nothing too crazy, I just sometimes feel like I don't function the same way as everyone else), some people who I associated with, etc. I have an extreme personality, and if I'm gonna do something, I have to do it all the way. So when I would be sinning, I subconsciously felt like I might as well just live my whole life without G-d.

My roller coaster ride kept getting more extreme - the lows were getting lower, but unfortunately the highs weren't getting higher. Over the years, I just got less and less shtark, all while still trying to maintain my outward image as an excellent bochur. I spoke to some rebbeim over the years, but never got into too much detail with them because I was too embarrassed. Eventually, I switched to a yeshiva closer to where I grew up. Bad move. Then I left yeshiva entirely (I think I was about 26 years old). I can't tell you how exactly it happened, but to make a long story short, I somehow ended up pretty much completely "off the derech". Again, there were certainly other factors besides my lust addiction, but so much of it had to do with that. I was getting older, had been dating for a long time, and still wasn't married. Everyone knows how hard that can be. My lust addiction got so bad that eventually (over a number of years) I didn't even think about it anymore. It just became part of my daily routine. I stopped even caring in the sense that I didn't even try fighting it. Eventually, it even spread to actions with

girls (though thankfully I have a pretty tame personality, so I didn't do nearly as many ma'asim geruim as I might have if I had been born with a more confident personality). Unfortunately, slowly, over time, my entire avoidas Hashem was out the window. I started doing some of the worst aveiros imaginable, even outside of my lust addiction (think things like kashrus, shabbos, etc.). On the outside people thought I was still frum (with a couple close friends struggling themselves being the exceptions), but people had certainly seen that I had changed. Now, understand that I didn't grow up in a very yeshivish family. My family is frum, but very modern. So it was easy for me to revert back to a very modern lifestyle. I started dressing differently (jeans, etc.), talking differently, and pretty much living a non-religious life, while trying to appear at least minimally religious on the outside. I still got set up with some very frum girls, but felt that I had no shaychus to them anymore. I went back to school, where I am now (don't want to say what kind of school as I'd like to keep myself as anonymous as possible). Without getting into hashkafa, that was a bad move for me. I associate with goyim all day, and I went from bad to worse (actually, this is the era in my life where aveiros that I'd never thought I would commit started happening).

Now, my yeridah started probably when I was around 24 (though I always roller coastered even before that). This past year is the tekufah when it got really really terrible. At the risk of identifying myself to anyone who's somewhat familiar with my story, I'll tell you that I'm now 28 (it's ok, one of the things im trying to work on is being more open with people and not caring what they think of me). I want you to know that throughout my entire yeridah I was never happy. G-d was the first thing I thought about when I woke up in the morning, and the last thing I thought about at night. I cried myself to sleep many nights. I didn't like where I was and always thought that eventually I'll do teshuvah cuz I can never live my life like this. But I was just stuck in such a terrible rut that I couldn't get out of. I was pretty much misyaesh. I figured that everything would be solved once I got married. Both in terms of my lust addiction and in terms of just having the stability to be able to live a frum lifestyle again. But of course, who could I marry in my matzav? Frum girls were too frum for me, and the modern ones, while I may have had more in common with them, I could never see these girls raising my children. I knew I had to change myself, but I just couldn't get out of the rut. I knew the emes so clearly, that nothing in this world will bring me happiness except torah and mitzvos, but for some reason it just didn't translate into action.

This all changed this past Shabbos. Unfortunately, I recently fell so low that I have even "gone out" on Shabbos. Going out on Shabbos (and eating non-kosher while out) was an absolute all time low for me. But it happened. When I woke up Shabbos morning, I was on my computer surfing the web. Somehow, I came across a video of my old Rosh-Yeshiva delivering a shmooz about Shabbos. He told over the famous story of the Chafetz Chayim crying "shabbos" to a yid who opened his store on Shabbos. I was so moved by the story and I just broke down crying. I ran to the local beis medrash and learned for hours straight (something I hadn't done in years). I will tell you that since this past Shabbos, I haven't been able to stop crying. Something in my brain just clicked and snapped me out of the rut I've been in for so long. I cry over the things I've done. I cry over what I threw out - how great a talmid chacham I might have become if I had taken a different course. I cry to Hashem to forgive me and to help

me do a true teshuvah. Everything changed for me this week. Though I have a long road ahead, especially considering the situation I'm now in (including the chevra I'm with now, the big TV in my apartment, etc), I once again view myself as a ben Torah. I want to come back and I look back at these past few years and can't believe I did all those things. I was sitting in school the other day and looking at all the goyim that I know and thinking how they're lives have nothing in them. And I have been a part of that for the last couple years. I don't know how I got here, but I am soo determined to come back. I spoke to a rebbe who I haven't spoken to in a while and we set up to talk soon. He's very perceptive, understanding, smart, and a huge tzadik, and I think he'll be able to help me set up a plan to get back on course. I started davening and learning again, and I can't imagine ever eating non kosher again or breaking shabbos, or any other aveiros.

Ha. That's funny. Of course, I know myself so well that I know eventually I'll get off this high of initial inspiration and everything will turn into a nisayon again (including things that didn't used to be nisyonos). That's where the real test will come in. But I'm determined to succeed. I don't want anything now except to be a ben Torah again (and maybe to get married soon :-)) Now, I recognize that a large part of my success in my new journey starts with my lust addiction. It's going to be sooo hard. Even on this cloud of inspiration that I'm on now, I've already caved once. But I'm still determined. This addiction, I feel, can make or break everything. I need to get it under control or I have no chance. But how can I do this? Yeah, now I'm feeling great, but soon, my life is going to catch up to me again and I'll be right back to my old ways! I really want it to be different this time. But I've fallen into such a bad matzav that I don't know how it will be possible! Let's see... I go to school with goyim, and have actually become good friends with a lot of them (though I have always felt that I have no real shaychus to them). They always go out partying, always want to go "pick up girls", and always talk about prust things. I'm a serious people pleaser, and I want everyone to not only like me, but to think that I'm just like them. So what am I supposed to just tell them all to take a hike, I can't be friends with you anymore cuz I'm religious now!? What else... I have a roommate who's barely frum. Yeah, that's a pretty big deal. When I was at my lowest point I took him in, and I can't just kick him out now. I have a huge tv, I love movies, and I'm on the internet like all day. Okay, but I found this website and it's amazing. I'm really going to give this a try. A lot of the suggestions are going to be very hard for me - like stopping tv and movies - that's a big deal, even though I do want to do it. Facebook - another big deal - I love facebook but its probably the biggest trigger for my addiction. I just installed a filter but I can't bring myself to part with Facebook quite yet. I know I will have to eventually, but right now, it's almost like I just wanna see how this goes and if I have to get rid of it, eventually I will (i know, that's a dangerous move to wait). But I'm going to try to implement as many of the tools from this website as I feel ready for right now.

Now, some of you might be thinking "why is he confessing his whole life here?" I know, maybe this isn't the right forum. I apologize if that's the case. It's just that 1. I can't just talk about my addiction without putting it in the context of the rest of my life and showing you how big a part of my life it's taken on; and 2. This is honestly the only forum on the internet where I feel like I can open up about not just lust addiction, but all my other yiddishkeit struggles.

Some of you might also be thinking that "this guy needs a therapist." Well, let's see - I'd estimate I've been to about 5 therapists over the years. And they've all been highly recommended and supposed to be really good. Some of them helped a bit, mostly trying to get me to see that I'm not such a bad guy. But there's no therapist in the world who will make me feel better about myself so long as I'm not living as a ben torah. So yeah, I definitely have some psychological issues to work on, but at the end of the day, I promise you, if you knew me you'd know that I'm such a normal, not crazy guy. Guess you have to know me to fully believe that. Just somehow I got stuck in a really bad matzav. You're also probably saying that I need a rebbe - well I already addressed that because that's for sure true. Meeting with him next week. Definitely need that support in my life. And I'm going to try to be as open with him as possible.

Anyways, I apologize for such a long post, just once I start talking, I can't shut up. Everything just came pouring out. And I really hope I can find some support on this forum. I could use it. Also, if I don't make my struggle public right now, I will have no accountability to anyone and will fall very quickly. And if anyone wants to reply, don't feel like you need to solve or even address all my issues - I'm not expecting that. Just looking for fellow yidden to listen to my soul crying out. And I understand that this forum is specifically for lust addiction, so it's cool if you only focus on that. After all, that is a huge part of my life and I know it will be the single most important test during this new tekufah of my life. I really want to get it under control before I start dating again. Maybe if I do, the Reboino shel Oilam will have rachmanus and me and send me my bashert. But either way, I need to do this for myself. Alright, I think I'm done now. Thanks for listening! (for those still here at least).

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by ur-a-jew - 06 Dec 2011 01:03

Thanks for sharing that I can relate to the feeling about everything going out the window.

Re the asher yatzar thing. Ask yourself this question which is spitting in His face. Not showing gratitude for your continued existence and working body despite the fact that you violated His will or showing Hashem gratitude for giving you another chance. If you answered the former ask yourself who do you think wants you to believe its the latter? Hint his initials are YH and its not Yosef Hatzaddik. Continued hatzlacha

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by gibbor120 - 06 Dec 2011 04:18

[startingover13 wrote on 06 Dec 2011 00:35:](#)

I don't know what to do.

Stick around. I'm sure you'll figure it out. It can take some time, but keep posting, reading, etc. You need to "do" something that actually works. For me, it is speaking to people regularly, taking a phone class, doing step work. Besides the obvious of having filters, shmiras aynayim, etc. Never give up on yourself. Your life is too precious.

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by Ben492 - 06 Dec 2011 05:10

Why do you think you have an addiction? I don't think you have an addiction. Just because you find it hard to stop does not mean it is an addiction.

This may seem like nitpicking, but it isn't. The way you should deal with it is vastly different if it is an addiction.

I think you should focus on the fact that since it is very hard for you, especially since you are used to doing it, and started when you were very young, that G-d is probably not extremely angry about it. And that G-d still loves you, and wants the best for you.

And that when someone loves you, they love you even if you have done something bad or embarrassing. And that G-d still wants to have a relationship with you even if you are doing this and will continue to do it.

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by gibbor120 - 06 Dec 2011 05:49

[Ben492 wrote on 06 Dec 2011 05:10:](#)

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Hi there, Ben. Why do you say it is not an addiction? What is your definition of addiction? In what way is it "vastly different" if it is an addiction?

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by Dov - 06 Dec 2011 06:26

[Ben492 wrote on 06 Dec 2011 05:10:](#)

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And that when someone loves you, they love you even if you have done something bad or embarrassing. And that G-d still wants to have a relationship with you even if you are doing this and will continue to do it.

Dear Ben,

First, where did you ever get the idea that G-d does not love an addict as much as he loves anyone else? I see that He loves an addict probably even *more* than he loves many other people, simply because: look at where he has brought so many of us and our families! Clearly he decided to guide them to recovery **while** they were still on their knees in some bathroom somewhere masturbating to their porn - and he loved us desperate perverts enough **right then** to help us find what we really wanted: recovery and the *good* life!

The ongoing miracle that He has done for the families of five guys I can introduce you to, who I personally know started on GYE and eventually found real recovery, is amazing. New lives for them, for their wives, and for their children; freedom one day at a time from porn obsession - and from what is even more tragic than porn obsession: fighting porn obsession. The self-centered, pseudo-religious romance that many addicts (and non-addicts) cling to in the 'valiant struggle' against *their own lust* is sad to witness.

G-d *certainly* loves the sex addict a lot, *even before* he or she starts to recover.

Second, why should it matter whether He is "extremely angry about it", or not? If a person loses all the money they have, do they react by throwing their possessions out the window? No. They try their best to build with what they've got, to do the best with what they've got and at least live poorly. It beats dying of hunger.

So let's say I am destined for a lot of gehinnom for all the thousands of times I had sex with myself and all the acting out I did with women real and imagined...so? Therefore what? Does any real person actually throw in the towel? Is all lost? Or do we do the best we can with what we have, from here on? The s'forim are *full* of resho'im who made good, **even without evidence of any significant teshuvah!** Posul? No one is posul to my G-d. Maybe to yours, but not to mine. Even lu yetzuyar that I am considered in Shomayim to be a true rosho, **He even has a role for me** in His Will. Just like you and all the other earthlings.

Would I throw all my furniture and clothes to the street because I lost my job and all my savings? No. Would I turn my back on my birthright as a human and as a Jew simply because of a stain I may be carrying - no matter how ugly it may be? No.

Finally, I agree 100% that just because a guy (or gal) likes to act out their lust and has a hard time staying quit *does not* mean they are addicts. I agree that the steps an addict is forced to take are vastly different than those a normal tempted person needs to take - and you wrote it so well.

But *who said this man is an addict, but **himself***? Who are you or I to argue? I feel strongly that most of the people here are not addicts, at all, at least as I understand the meaning of the word. Normal people are not powerless, I believe. But some here most certainly *are* addicts, and they *will **not** get better* by wishing it away, by getting more self-esteem, or by "Teshuvah". But who are you or I to try to convince any person one way or the other?

Of course, if one is sincerely concerned that the label 'addict' means that G-d probably can't really love me, and/or that a sweet and good life is impossible now, then I can understand why they'd want to do people the favor of dissuading them of the idea that they are addicts.

Maybe you share my faith that those who really *are* addicts will, in the end, be forced to discover it. Maybe it is risky business. But, as with many mental illnesses, where do we draw the line and start allowing people to take the label?

I am not arguing, but rather, asking.

Thanks,

Dov

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by startingover13 - 06 Dec 2011 14:33

[dov wrote on 06 Dec 2011 06:26:](#)

freedom one day at a time from porn obsession

I forgot about that - "one day at a time." I'm focusing on today right now. Gonna try to make it through just today, with God's help.

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by obormottel - 06 Dec 2011 17:18

Hi

welcome to the forum. Hopefully you're reading the handbooks available here

<http://www.guardureyes.com/GUE/PDFs/ebooks/Guard%20Your%20Eyes%20Handbook%20July%202011.pdf>

As for the compulsion to go on the internet whenever you find yourself with nothing to do, it seems you're talking about me.

My friend, a recovering alcoholic, confided in me that the toughest part of his recovery was finding the stuff to fill up the time that used to be filled up with drinking (or porning, in our case).

I found being on this forum of great value for this purpose alone.

Hatzlocho.

Mottel

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Re: My New Life Starts Now
Posted by me - 12 Dec 2011 16:54

Dear Starting Over,

One extremely important factor in 'staring over", is to.....take a deep breath, and relax! What was.....WAS.

You have now chosen to.....to S**T**art O**V**er! This means a new page, Daf chadash. Even though you are presently still being pulled and overwhelmed with your past, well, so am I. So what. This does and will not negate that fact that I have chosen to also Start Over. And, even if I mess up here and there, I can still start over, and over again and again. This is what Rabbi Nachman Z"tl teaches. HisChadshus. Each and every day, I will make a new beginning, and he said on himself that there were times that he took on to begin a new derech, and fell, and had to restart many times all on the same day!

Relax, lighten up, loosen up, and let Hashem come in. He's the one that showed you that great shiur on Shabbos. He's the one bringing you back.

One you have made the decision to Start Over, (and you have), then outside circumstances (a slip, slide, an oy) here and there can not erase it!

You have been filled up with Lust, and when you give it up, your being is left with a huge void inside. This void needs to be filled up with something. Something to take the place of the garbage lust. And, so remember. You yourself dear friend, came to the conclusion that this lifestyle is EFES, and B"H sh'IAsani Goy, and have "started over" to feel once again the feeling of kedusha. The kedusha of Torah, and Tefillah. This means that when you are once again feeling Taiva for Lust, it is not **your** wanting or **your** believing that the Lust really IS good. It is merely the addiction. The sickness of this insidious illness.

You have made a great start. Hashem Itchah!!1

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Re: My New Life Starts Now

Posted by Dov - 12 Dec 2011 17:30

Where'd the sweet dude go?

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