

It's Time To Step Up...Here's My StoryPosted by Avraham613 - 20 Jun 2012 03:39

I have been on and off this site for around 3 years now. I have utilized many of the tools here but never really got involved in the forum. Over the last few weeks, I have posted for the first time asking for some help. I received some great feedback and was encouraged to come clean and introduce myself as honestly as possible. So here goes...

Unfortunately, my story sounds similar to many of those I have read on the forum. I am currently 25 years old and married with one child B"h. I have always considered myself to be a very sexual type of person. As far back as 11 or 12 years old, I remember myself being attracted to inappropriate pictures. The environment that I grew up in, never really emphasized any importance to "look away" so I enjoyed what I had available to me. My parents (both amazing people), never thought twice about giving me my own laptop when I was around 14 or 15 so I, like any other innocent teenager gladly accepted. At times I tried to blame my parents for allowing me this accessibility when my struggles increased but I know now that Hashem wanted me to grow up a certain way.

I quickly began to use my laptop for very easy access to p***. If I remember correctly, I looked forward to getting into bed at night knowing that I had my favorite part of the day awaiting me. There were no filters, no one watching and no one even using that computer except for me. I would look at pictures and videos for hours on a nightly basis which always ended with being Mz"l throughout those highly impressionable years of 14-18. The environment I grew up in and the Yeshiva I went to never really spoke much about the dangers of the internet at that point.

Along with these nightly "adventures" came a total disregard for Shomer Negiah. Again, where I was in school (yes, a Yeshiva day school), the amount of girls one touched was an honor, not something to be ashamed of. I truly believe that these two factors, the internet and the constant physical contact with other girls were the main source of my future struggles.

Baruch Hashem I had a sincere desire to go to Eretz Yisroel for a year (or more) and become more serious about my Yiddishkeit. I went to Yeshiva in Israel for 2 years and almost completely cut out any form of inappropriate material. I loved (and still love) learning a lot, got very serious and made very drastic changes in my life over those years. I became Shomer Negiah from the day I stepped off the plane in Israel even though I had a girl friend at the time. She gladly agreed to my plan (although this was a major change for us both) and B"H neither of us ever slipped from that day onward.

I became known as a very serious learner and a real shtark kid. My parents had their reservations because this was not how I grew up but warmly accepted all of my changes. When I returned home from Israel (with the same girl friend), I placed myself in a great environment in order to succeed in my learning. As I got back to America, I continued learning very seriously. The problem was that when I went back home (for weekends etc.) I began to get that same feeling that I knew all too well. I remember the first time I slipped after all my work and changes. It was devastating and I promised myself it would never happen again. Unfortunately, that one slip turned into weekly slips. Every weekend it became routine to come home and go straight to my computer that I had not used all week in Yeshiva. It would kill me that I would spend my

weeks learning every spare second I had and just give it all up on the weekends. I felt this growing contradiction within me but could do nothing about it. The addiction began to grow even more than it was pre-Israel in some ways. Now, I had an image to maintain. Suddenly, I found myself searching desperately to form online discreet relationships with random girls just to relieve the inner stress I was feeling. On one hand, I longed for my previous High School lifestyle, but on the other, I loved being frum. More importantly, I loved the way others perceived me and was not willing to give that up. A secret life was the only solution. I tried what I could to avoid those weekly occurrences but to no avail. I continued learning shtark but was constantly nichshol.

I cried many time to Hkb"h to help me get over this issue so I could be completely engrossed in my learning and Avodas Hashem but I kept slipping. This continued for a few years until I was around 21. That girl friend I had since High School and I never split up. We continued to grow and learn together. She made the same types of changes I did. She was always supportive of my learning and growth while she continued to grow on her own. We decided to get married early (being shomer negiah with a girl friend can only last so long) and I was ecstatic to finally resolve this issue once and for all through marriage. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think the issue would continue once I was married.

I was right..... in the beginning. I had no desire to look or doing anything I shouldn't and was completely submerged in doing what I knew I was supposed to. Unfortunately, those initial feelings began to slowly go away while those old, unwanted desires crept back in. Now that I was not learning night seder in Yeshiva, I had plenty of time at home with my computer. I hated myself for "cheating" on my wife in that way. I felt so guilty for looking at other women but felt completely powerless. The thrill of meeting other women discreetly over the internet (even just to schmooze) was too powerful for me to stop on my own. All my wife ever did was smile and be that perfect Kallah any guy could ever ask for. I couldn't continue hurting her like this....even if she didn't know.

My wife and I always had very open lines of communication and I felt that I could truly tell her anything, so I did. I told her about my struggles, what I used to do every night in High School (some of this stuff she already knew from previous conversations but not to this extent). I never told her that I tried to form dumb online relationships with random women because I felt it would hurt her too much. She was completely understanding, never judgmental and wanted to do anything she could to help me. Randomly, she would ask me if I looked at other girls because I didn't get enough satisfaction from her. I would cry deep down for giving her those insecurities after convincing her that it was just my "addiction" and had nothing to do with a Chisaron in her. I thank Hashem for giving me such an amazing wife.

Over those years, I decided I wanted to become a Rebbe. I wanted to devote my life to guiding kids growing up in a similar situation that I did, trying to prevent them from making certain choices that I might have made. My wife was all for it and we have been in this together for a few years now. Only because of GYE have I made the progress that I have. It brings tears to my eyes that I can count the number of times I was Mz"l this year on one hand. For me, this was unheard of. Recently, I saw a post on the forum about someone that struggled with going to inappropriate masseuses. I am not going to lie, I have been feeling those taivas lately myself. But when I saw the cycle he suddenly found himself in (and b"h is getting out of) I decided I cannot let myself fall into that world....who knows if I will be able to get out like him? I do go

through swings of taiva and am trying very hard to work on avoiding those vicious cycles. I have strict filters and accountability on all computers that surround me. I have acted out on occasion this year and felt horrible about it, especially when I am preaching to kids the opposite. But, I have come to realize that my clean streaks never go to waste and I just need to get back up and keep going. Any slip I ever had always ended in disgust and despair. If I can focus on the result without having to go through that torturous process, I know I can prevent many falls iy"h. I thank GYE and everyone here for all your help and support and look forward to many more years of Kedusha and Tahara.

All the best,
Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by mggsbms - 20 Jun 2012 04:46

Beautiful post. hatzlacha !

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Strugglesincehs - 20 Jun 2012 06:55

My story sounds so similar to yours except I don't have the courage to discuss it with my wife. Instead, when I slip and fall, I get depressed and am unpleasant to be around.

This is my first time posting on Guard your eyes. I have known about the website for a while but I never seriously got involved. I recently had a fall while attending a convention for business and I just got fed up with myself.

I really want to kick this habit and 90% of the time I feel in control but I guess if I am not in control 10% of the time, it means that I am not really in control.

I find it very hard to accept that I am an addict. I feel that I could control myself if i wanted to. Afterall, I am very disciplined when it comes to so many other things. i wake up at 6 am to

daven and learn before I go to work. So why can't I control this? I can push myself physically to far limits. My wife tells me that I am most disciplined and focused person she knows. Why can't I control this?

I don't have an answer. Is it because I am an addict? Could it be? I always thought this problem would go away after I got married. But it didn't

I probably fit into category 4 on the list. I have done 90 days clean in the past but it has been awhile. I can consistently have 21 day streaks but normally fall around day 21.

I really want to become clean. I am petrified of the consequences of this terrible chait. Hashem has been so good to me and why do i deserve all this bracha when I continue to fail in this area.

- struggling since hs (high school)

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 20 Jun 2012 12:06

The depression and anger after a fall sound very familiar. I know the feeling of not being pleasant to be around.

I think the very first step is to realize that even though you might have tremendous self control in every other aspect of your life, Hashem smacks you with this test for a reason. He is very bluntly telling you that HE is the only one in control at all times. Maybe just to take a step back and realize that you are completely powerless in this area will be helpful for you. Don't try to conquer it on your own....your chances are slim. Let HIM conquer it for you. When day 20-22 come around, ask Him for some extra help. Say very clearly: "Hashem, these days are for you to handle, because I have tried to do it on my own but it's just not working".

Continue fighting and have a great day!

- Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 20 Jun 2012 12:15

Avraham and struggling

kol hakavod for coming out with it.

Although I'm older than you guys my experiences are similar

although when i was in high school we didnt have internet.

but the mz"l hounded me from high school until a year ago!

that's over 30 years!

that's over 20 years of marriage without telling my wife!

avraham, you are fortunate to be able to come out with this on a forum and to your wife.

the tools are here on this site to overcome this YH

keep posting about your struggles

it helps you to clarify where your challenges are coming from and to be able to deal with the problem more effectively.

B'Hatzlacha!

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 20 Jun 2012 13:48

Welcome aboard 2 additional tzaddikim on GYE!

Stick around, and the Koach Horabim well be beneficial to all of us be"H.

Hatzlacha

MT

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by 5shekvow - 20 Jun 2012 17:12

Thankyou for reminding me why i fight the yetzer hara. When i was younger, i too had access to everything and no one knew. Thankyou for sharing.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by obormottel - 20 Jun 2012 18:34

Avraham, thank you for posting all that! It seems to be a very honest account of a common problem.

I relate to a lot of your story, from beggining to masturbate (and looking forward to it as the best part of my day) from a young age to deciding to become frum(er) and never do it again and all the way to thinking that getting married would cure me and slowly slipping into the same habits shortly after getting married.

Kol Hakovoid for getting serious about it and taking action to stop it.

Don't let an occasional fall drag you down. You're capable, and G-d loves you and wants to help you. But I would suggest taking an accounting of why it is that you can't stay stopped and then taking a corrective action. The GYE Handbook maybe helpful in this regard, but surely posting and sharing here will give you the neccessary feedback and encouraging that even your loving wife can't give you. And Yasher Koyach for not dumping all your past misdeeds on her: it surely would hurt her more than it would help you.

Hatzlocho,

Mottel

P.S. Strugglingsincehs (cute name), welcome to the forum. As you can see, you're in the company of like-minded folk. Go ahead, and start your own thread in this section, so you can get personalized chizuk and feedback tailored to your individual needs. Glad to have you

aboard.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 21 Jun 2012 01:21

Thanks for the response. It became a struggle sometimes to know what to tell my wife and what not to. I still struggle with that sometimes.

Today was scorching hot outside. The summer is not going to be pashut at all. Everywhere we turn is another nisayon....literally.

Its not even that we are looking for it, its just everywhere and it has its impact. I am definitely nervous about how the summer will go.

Thanks again,

Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by obormottel - 21 Jun 2012 07:29

don't worry about the summer. Just stay vigilant today.

M.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by alexeliezer - 21 Jun 2012 14:42

Avraham,

Good to have you on board with us.
Sounds like overall you have had success and are heading in the right direction.
I hope you'll stick around the forum and share your ideas with us fellow strugglers.

I notice that you are still struggling and sometimes falling.
Giving up looking at women was hard but do-able.
Giving up lust itself is a much deeper struggle. When I feel myself being pulled in the wrong direction, when I feel like I'm wanting to start slipping, I find it helpful to verbally surrender my lust to Hashem, asking Him to take it from me, and saying "I don't want to lust, I only want You and a relationship with You and Your Torah, and appropriate attraction and interaction with my wonderful wife."

Hatzlocha!

Alex

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 21 Jun 2012 15:44

[Avraham613 wrote on 21 Jun 2012 01:21:](#)

Today was scorching hot outside. The summer is not going to be pashut at all. Everywhere we turn is another nisayon....literally.

Its not even that we are looking for it, its just everywhere and it has its impact. I am definitely nervous about how the summer will go.

Experience shows that it is quite possible to go thru the summer streets safely. But there is only one fool-proof way to do it. And that is, to be totally resolved to guard (y)our eyes and not to 'sneak a peek' at all. Once a person drops his guard, even once, he will find it much harder to get back on track, because 'once' can become 'once again' and 'once more'. So when it gets hot out there, remember - one lick on that ice cream cone may be one lick too much.

Hatzlacha

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Dov - 22 Jun 2012 16:45

Dear **Avraham613** and **Strugglesincehs**,

Thanks for your great posts! Consider getting a few people from the forum you will *speak* with on the phone every day. You do have a real habit, whether it is technically an addiction or not is not the issue right now. Please, please do not get lost in that side-issue.

If you want real success, take real steps rather than only hidden, virtual ones. Kol hakavod fro posting! Now I hope you get friendly and familiar with other guys on this forum, and when you find a guy with whom you can really talk - ask him for his cell# and make your avodah *real*.

The difference from taking these little - but real steps - will be huge. It's what the Kotzker meant when he said that "pischu li pesach kechudo shel machat" only works if it is me'eiver le'eiver - *through and through*. A small step that is real is far, far greater than a huge step that is *not* that 'real'.

Alei v'hatzlach!!

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 22 Jun 2012 20:50

Dov - .

Its a zchus to have you write to me personally. I feel that in some strange way you have been a Rebbe of mine for the past 2 years. I read your material pretty consistently and I cant thank you enough for all your chizuk.

I am definitely ready to make my recovery real. I am anxious to find someone I can call and shmooze with. I know it might be tough in the beginning but I can deal with that.

My only questions is how to find someone? I have signed up for the partner program but nothing came out of it. Any suggestions would be great.

Thanks again for your time.

Have a great Shabbos everyone! Thanks for a great week.

All the best,

Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 25 Jun 2012 02:10

Shalom Chevra -

I felt a need to post the following story:

My wife and I have been trying to have another child. For some reason (obviously a good one) it took much longer this time around than with our first child. It was nearing the 1 year mark of trying which granted, is not a terribly long time but something we had never experienced before baruch hashem. Of course it takes a greater toll on the wife and my wife was preparing herself for that inevitable news.

However, last week we found out that baruch hashem she is expecting. Last week also happened to be the first time I ever publicly (yet anonymously) shared my entire life story on the forum. Last week was the first time I ever commented and followed threads on the forum. It would be insane for me to think that these monumental events in my life occurred the exact same week coincidentally. I felt that Hashem was sending me a strong message: "You made some big steps, here is a gift.....now don't look back".

Thanks for all your help and chizuk.

All the best,
Avraham

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