

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

=====
=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by E-Tek - 01 Aug 2012 15:18

Yeah, and keep texting!
)

Hatzlacha!
Meir

=====
=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by alexeliezer - 01 Aug 2012 16:05

The first step, after admitting we're addicted, is being willing to give it up -- our lust, that is. That is the critical attitude, the turning point -- a true willingness to live without lust. It seems like you're finally getting there. Wishing you continued Hatzlacha,
Alex

=====
=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by mifatfait - 06 Aug 2012 00:00

(You can call too.

Avrohom,

I'm one of your's ardent admirers, I regularly check your's thread to see what's up. It's been quiet here for a while, how are you doing?

Your brother,

Chaim

=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 29 Aug 2012 00:11

Chaim -

I know I'm like 3 weeks late, but I just saw your post now. When i saw your post, I realized that I never knew that there were others who really read my posts and gained from it. I feel guilty for not being more consistent. The truth is, a few days before you checked in, I had a fall. A pretty big fall for me at least. I was really upset with myself as I had been making great strides in my fight. I had so many opportunities to back out of this fall but I opted in. After a few days of just calming myself down, I thought I needed a little break from posting so often. As I have mentioned before, I felt like all the attention placed on the struggle through my posts was making it difficult for me in some respects. I took Dov's advice and am trying to just "live in the solution". Even though it might be premature or superficial, I am trying to be or at least act like the clean person I had always dreamed to be. Honestly, I have found the struggles to be much easier to win like this. Its as if I have been looking at myself so far above this shtus that it would be so beneath me to be nichshol. B"h I have been completely clean (like not even taking second looks on the street) for 4 full weeks since that fall.

So, I apologize for not keeping you up to date on my struggles and falls. But b"h things are really great right now.

All the best,

Avi

=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by E-Tek - 29 Aug 2012 19:29

AVRAHAM!!!!!!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU POST!

Just saying.

Meir

=====

=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by mifatfait - 30 Aug 2012 06:36

Avi,

Great to see you back, and even better to hear your'e doing good.

I know what you mean about the danger of getting too into posting, I remember in the beggining that more than once I ended a clean streak by getting too deeply involved. I think lv'e gotten used to it by now, but it's always healthy to take a break sometimes and "work from home". Even Dov took a vacation several months ago fro a while.

Much continued hatzlochoh, and keep on davening to Hashem to help you stay clean today!

Chaim

=====

=====

Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 12 Oct 2012 02:06

Baruch Hashem....70 days clean today.

Its been great so far but trying not to think about it too much or get caught up with the number.

Thanks for everything.

All the best!

Avi

=====

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

Posted by mifatfait - 12 Oct 2012 08:03

WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

=====

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

Posted by alexeliezer - 12 Oct 2012 15:50

Awesome! Thanks for the update.

One day at a time.

=====