

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 Machshovo Tova - 26 Jun 2012 20:47

[dov wrote on 26 Jun 2012 20:42:](#)

There are two sides to everything.

How true! I think I'll laminate that for my wallet.

MT

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 26 Jun 2012 20:56

I think I'll laminate it on a Möbius strip.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 26 Jun 2012 21:09

Excuse my ignorance - I dunno what a Möbius strip is. But since "There are two sides to everything", make sure to put it on both sides.

MT

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by gibbor120 - 26 Jun 2012 21:24

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%B6bius_strip

ayin sham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by gibbor120 - 26 Jun 2012 21:24

[Gevura wrote on 26 Jun 2012 20:56:](#)

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 26 Jun 2012 21:24

Great ha'aros Dov regarding how we utilize our wives in our struggles.

Now that I think about it, maybe there was a certain sense of wanting my wife to feel some of my pain (in some weird way) and not just to come out clean. Maybe there was that need for some company in the misery.

In any event, it has been very helpful for me in the process. She knows to be very careful about what is brought into the house and when we are at our in-laws who have tv's....she doesn't let me stay there alone without her.

Every situation and marriage is different.

We definitely need to clarify what are intentions are before getting our wives involved.

Thanks!

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Dov - 26 Jun 2012 21:42

I know guys whose wives slowly become their yetzerhora police. It's horribly sick, leads to dependence on the wife and to the wife's anxiety about her man. Far worse than that, it leads to the wife starting to believe she is powerful enough to control and save her husband. Nobody can save anybody. Chaza"I say "ein apotropus l'arayos".

I have also met some guys who basically convince their wives that they need to be sex candy-machines for them, so that their yetzer horas will not get the upper hand, c"v. I have heard some rabbonim say as much, too.

And some kallah teachers have been known to **teach** that to their students. Gevalt. **Now that may be OK for normals (the majority) - but it is tragic for the poor wife of a sexaholic.** I personally think it is also sick and destructive, and a horrifying twisting of what the gemorah means when it says she is "matzilas min ha'cheit". Gevalt. It is substitution of one sick dependency for another - if the husband is a sexhaolic (and that is not that common, but I know a few hundred, at least!). Instead of ruining the marriage by *one*-sided lying, it perverts the

entire marriage. And in the end, it does not work, either!

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Re: hey there didn't mean to get so hot and heavy abt that. But got carried away....again...
Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 26 Jun 2012 22:36

[gibbor120 wrote on 26 Jun 2012 21:24:](#)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%B6bius_strip

ayin sham

Hope you're not offended, but I try not to surf the internet unless it is extremely important (is it?).

MT

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by E-Tek - 27 Jun 2012 01:08

[dov wrote on 26 Jun 2012 21:42:](#)

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No, I needed to hear this... Kol Hakovod.

Edit: I saw something along these lines in Shaya Ostrov's book "The Menucha Principle in Shidduchim, Dating, and Engagement". It really spoke to me, one of these days I will transcribe it to my post, BL"N.

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

Posted by gibbor120 - 27 Jun 2012 19:20

[Machshovo wrote on 26 Jun 2012 22:36:](#)

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ayin sham

Hope you're not offended, but I try not to surf the internet unless is is extremely important (is it?).

MT

Nope, not important. But in case you are curious.

The Möbius strip or Möbius band (UK /ˈmɔːbiʊs/ or US /ˈmoʊbiʊs/; German: [ˈmøʊbiʊs]), also Mobius or Moebius, is a surface with only one side and only one boundary component. The Möbius strip has the mathematical property of being non-orientable.

A model can easily be created by taking a paper strip and giving it a half-twist, and then joining the ends of the strip together to form a loop.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 28 Jun 2012 00:26

The y"n is really incredible. I mamesh spent the entire day in the beis medrash yesterday. I had a fantastic day of learning with no hava amina to slip, let alone fall. Out of no where, I just started thinking. It was still pretty early, my wife was fast asleep and I just got an intense urge to go out and do something crazy. I PM'd a few guys, still a little hesitant to pick up the phone and call. Baruch Hashem, I got caught up in some work and by the time I was done, I went straight to sleep. As I was falling asleep, I felt like I was missing out on something that could've been awesome. But when I woke up, I had that sigh of relief when my son ran into my room and I was able to look at him in the eyes.....with no guilt. Thanks guys.

I know, I know. I need to just start calling already and get over it.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Dov - 29 Jun 2012 00:16

Sounds like success to me....(beautiful!)

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 03 Jul 2012 00:08

I am happy to say that I finally broke the ice.

I spoke to someone over the phone for the first time during a struggle.

Even if it was only for a few minutes, being able to hear another perspective on the matzav was beautiful and something I never experienced before.

I never invited someone else into that part of my life....but it was awesome.

Shkoyach Gadol to all you tzaddikim.

Iy'h we will continue to fight this together.

Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by obormottel - 03 Jul 2012 04:17

Make it stick by repetition.

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