

I surrender...now what?

Posted by Strugglesincehs - 02 Jul 2012 17:52

I surrender...now what?

Has anyone experienced what I just experienced? The last two weeks have been awful for me. In a span of 14 days, I think I have fallen more than 5 times. It's almost as if my yetzer hara (whatever this thing is...) knows that I am seriously contemplated a commitment to GYE and it's trying to get a few more rounds in prior to the door closing. Does that make any sense?

About 6 weeks ago, I was at a conference for work and was in the middle of a really good streak. It was about 21 days since my last fall and I was determined that this was it. While I was familiar with GYE and had read some of the posts, I was not an active user. Needless to say, I did not make through the conference without falling and I decided that I would educate myself about GYE and get involved.

I started by signing up for the 90 day wall and daily chizuk emails, but I never made it past the 21 day spot. I am truly frustrated at my inability to control myself and the more I read in the daily emails from Dov the need to give over the fight to Hashem and let him fight the battle, the more it makes sense to me.

You see this has been a struggle since high school. I am struggling with the internet for almost a decade and a half. I am exhausted by the fight. I am married with two children and I can't believe I am still struggling. I never thought that this would continue after I got married

It all started when I received a laptop as a gift when I was 13 and a friend came over to show me what he "discovered" online. Once my friend (maybe not a such a great friend after all) showed me how easy it was to access all this inappropriate material, I kept on coming back for more. Throughout high school I would either use my laptop or shut the door to the computer room to surf the web when no one was home. Sometime I would "courageously" (I am being cynical) print a picture and take it up to my room.

The struggle continued all through high school even though I became pretty frum in 11th grade. I became serious about my davening and learning but I always lived with the guilt of this sin.

When I left to yeshiva after high school, I experienced freedom. There was no access to the internet so I couldn't do anything if I tried. I grew and grew in torah and yiras shamayim and felt great about myself. But it was a lie. I couldn't live the rest of my life in a bubble. It wasn't going to happen and so when I came back to the states for College, I reverted back to my old habits.

I am married for a few years, I am kovei itim latorah, I try and daven with a minyan three times a day, and I still struggle with this addiction. How do I stop it? Help me. Layout the yellow brick road for me...I surrender.

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by jack - 02 Jul 2012 18:42

there are MANY yellow brick roads open for you, take the one that works for you. I'd like to give you MY version of the road. at this beginning stage, do not think of any reasons why you should be clean - there are none. simply do it because r' guard wants you to do it, i want you to be clean, everyone here wants you to be clean and G-d wants you to be clean. for now, that's the only reason to be clean.

even if you surrender, it is still hard work. Hashem wants YOU to do

the work - in my mind, there is no other way. so roll up your sleeves, get the phone # of someone you can speak to, and be prepared for some hard work. people have criticized me for 'white-knuckling' it. so be it. in my mind, there's no other way. you are not alone - don't try this by yourself - you almost surely will NOT succeed - do you need me to tell you this? come to this site, go to meetings, phone groups, get someone to speak to, and realize that big rewards await you WHEN you finally succeed. and don't give up - NEVER give up - no matter how many times you fall. falling is part of the process - learn something new each time you fall. and put that lesson you learned about why you fell into a little bag and refer to that bag often. of course, try hard NOT to fall, but you will, everybody does. but be ready for the pain of withdrawal. if you want to call me, let me know.

jack

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 02 Jul 2012 19:25

"I surrender...now what?"

It has been said by some sagely people around here that surrendering means that we realize we are not in control, which means we cannot go our merry way and expect to stay clean. We need to be extra careful to avoid all possibilities of anything that might trigger us. We need to avoid any access to unfiltered internet. We need to guard our eyes on the streets as well as indoors. We need to filter our minds from triggering thoughts. And most of all, we need to understand that ultimately only Hashem can protect us and keep us safe and clean, so we need to talk to Him and acknowledge that He is our only hope, and we need to ask Him to help us survive. With Hashem's help, we will surely be successful.

Hatzlacha - and welcome aboard,

MT

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Dov - 02 Jul 2012 21:23

Dear 'strugglesincehs',

You posted a beautiful post a few weeks ago. I guess the past two weeks since then were the awful 14 days you are referring to above. Interesting, BF Skinner (not a very 'nice' fellow, but smart) showed that we all have this thing called the "Extinction Burst" before any real change occurs from an old habit. Like the guy who waits for an elevator for a while, hits the button again...waits...and then hits the elevator button a few *extra times* **just** before he gives up and leaves the elevator. Extinction burst.

You may be experiencing that, just as you started to take some real action to give up your 'elevator'...after all, we all feel that our sex and fantasy are an elevator to our little 'heaven', don't we? You certainly haven't been so *stuck* to using it because its *no good*, right?

So here is what I posted back to you last time, June 20th-ish (and others posted back a bunch, with you in mind on that thread, too) :

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 for 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!!

Hatzlocha taking the next real steps, chaver...

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Avraham613 - 03 Jul 2012 00:03

Hey bro -

Your story is eerily similar to mine.

Here is a link to my story....www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=5441.0

read it and let me know what you think.

Maybe we can help each other out and struggle with this together.

Don't give up.

avraham

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Strugglesincehs - 03 Jul 2012 05:30

Abe (you remind me of Lincoln who was Honest Abe):

I have to thank you for helping me open up and post for the first time on the site. Your story was so similar to mine that I felt I had to comment on your thread.

I feel a real keshar to your story as well. It's funny because I was at one point in time considering smicha and being a rebbe. Part of the reason I dropped it was because I could never look a talmid in the face if I did not break this habit (it was not the main reason I dropped

out, but reflecting now in this very open forum for the first time, I can finally admit to myself that that was part of the reason.)

How does this phone thing work? I, like you, really want to kick this thing but am hesitant to the steps that I know I need to take. A phone chaver would be great in those weak moments where I just cave.

Update: I have to fly tonight and I hate airports. So easy to fall in airports. But since I feel good about my commitment to GYE, I am doing great. It's a night flight so no contacts, just glasses. I love wearing glasses (I actually hate glasses and rather wear contacts) bc I can take them off and not see pritzus. While standing in-line at security screening woman behind took off her sweater and was not dressed enough. Instead of looking, I just took off my glasses and ha, I couldn't look even if I tried. And u better believe that I tried. But I couldn't see.

I'm shaking my head to myself. What is wrong with me? I take my glasses off and I still try to look. I got a long way to go...

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by jack - 03 Jul 2012 12:28

dont feel bad that you have a long way to go - feeling bad is a trick of the yetzer hara.lie to him just like he lies to you - you're allowed.

in my mind, surrendering means recognizing that your desires are nothing - what Hashem wants is what's important.and He wants you to be healthy.recognize that you have to put what Hashem wants into your own heart, and remove your own wants - not an easy task.

Hashem split the sea only AFTER nachshon jumped in up to his neck - not his ankles, or knees, or waist or even chest - his neck.what mesiras nefesh! Hashem needs to see that you're serious, and THEN He'll step in.WE have to take the first step, and maybe the 2nd, 3rd and fourth steps also.of course, I always say i could be wrong.

jack

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Dov - 03 Jul 2012 16:35

Per Jack - I like the "lie to him like he lies to you" idea - I've done it a bunch. It's just **Humility**. Being able to respond to the voice that says about recovery ideas and giving up lost opportunities, *"that's just the craziest, stupidest idea I have ever heard! It won't work anyhow, cuz if I don't do xyz now, then still I'll fail in it tomorrow or the day after! Crazy!"*.... Sometimes the *only* way I can respond to that is with a shrug of my shoulders and a quiet, humble, *"I don't know, good question...but I just have to trust and go on."*

I do not understand dinosaur bones that well, either.

I have no use for the "[b]Af al pi chein, damnit![/b]" of defiance of the 'Y"H' - but the calm, trusting "af al pi chein," of humility that is a sign of starting to walk with G-d - that does me just fine.

Re: [Strugglesincehs wrote on 03 Jul 2012 05:30](#):

I'm shaking my head to myself. What is wrong with me? I take my glasses off and I still try to look. I got a long way to go...

That's beautiful. It proves that your problem is not 'your eyes', as some shmiras eynayim folks would have you believe. Just as the problem is not really 'the internet' for so many of us porn lovers (and haters). The problem is in our heads.

And that means work, prayer, more work, surrender (humility), more prayer, more work, and more surrender. You are not alone amigo!

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by alexeliezer - 03 Jul 2012 18:02

[dov wrote on 03 Jul 2012 16:35:](#)

That's beautiful. It proves that your problem is not '*your eyes*', as some shmiras eynayim folks would have you believe. Just as the problem is not really '*the internet*' for so many of us porn lovers (and haters). The problem is in our heads.

Agreed. Just as an alcoholic's problem isn't alcohol, but is in his head.

Just as the alcoholic can only hope to achieve sobriety by complete abstinence, a lust addict must abstain from lust, and this must include shmiras eynayim. No shmiras eynayim, no shmiras hamachshova, no sobriety. Then there is plenty of additional work to be done in my head and in my relationships.

Shmiras eynayim isn't everything, it's just critical.

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by jack - 03 Jul 2012 19:41

anyone try to diet out there? you know the main problem in not being able to lose weight? it's the attitude. they look at the scale after 2 minutes of dieting and they say - aw, this is not working. and they go and binge. give it a chance! change takes time.and throw out the scale for -- sake. maybe, maybe 2 lbs a week.any faster than that and you'll come tumbling down in a very short time.slow & steady, and expect falls.and get up.when i started here, a very big saying was 'sheva yipol tzadik vkom'.what's the pshat? 2 choices:

1 - you only become a tzadik after falling and getting up

2 - the true tzadik falls but keeps getting up.

maybe they're both pshat.

jack

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Strugglesincehs - 08 Jul 2012 06:30

So last night before I left the office, minutes before shkia, I fell. I was the last one in the office and it just pounced on me. I thought about it all shabbos and have decided to take the steps necessary to avoid that type of impulsive behavior. I am getting filters. I just finished installing the k9 filter on my ipad. I contacted the GYE help desk to get license # for k9 filter for my computer. Baby steps.

On a side note, I just read Avraham's post about falling more after being involved in GYE. I find the same thing happening to me. I found Dov's response to be very insightful.

Avraham (or anyone else out there)- how do I get a phone buddy to call in times of need? Is there a hotline number?

Just trying to stay positive. Just the thought of there being a place like GYE where I can read about other people and their similar struggles makes me more sane.

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Strugglesincehs - 13 Jul 2012 05:58

Tomorrow is day 8. Very excited to have made it through a whole week. I installed a filter on my ipad but still have no filter on my computer. Waiting for a license number and password so I can set it up. I'll be honest, I have a concern that the filter will slow down my work productivity because it will slow down my internet connection. Does anybody have experience with this? Is this a legit concern?

The filter on my ipad really slows down the internet so it can be frustrating at times. I guess that is the price to pay for safety. The filter has prevented me from sinking into the old patterns. A few times this week I was using my ipad and I felt an urge. But since it was not so convenient to access the material (I would've had to turned Safari back on and deleted k9), I decided it was not worth the trouble. This happened at least twice! Thank you GYE for inspiring me to put on a filter. I feel like I'm on the road to recovery.

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by alexeliezer - 13 Jul 2012 14:34

So good to hear!

One day at a time.

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Strugglesincehs - 15 Jul 2012 05:16

Sometimes I feel like I am in control. This past week for some reason was a pretty easy week. No urges no close calls. Why can't this continue forever? I almost feel like i don't have an addiction. Is this the calm before the storm?

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Re: I surrender...now what?

Posted by Newbi - 15 Jul 2012 05:30

Shalom.

Congrats on maintaining a week. You must realize first off that Hashem helped you. It's wasn't "kochi viotzem yadi" my own strength. It was Hashem that helped you,

Any way I have found that sometimes after a good week we tend to think we are all clean, and we drop our guard and lessen the intensity of our prayers. So plan ahead be prepared that although you had a good week it's ver poss that the yetzer hara was just giving you time to relax so that he can destroy you. Never forget this!!! And keep davening to Hashem, that he should keep you/us motivated and prepared.

Hatzlacha rabba

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