

Hi, I'm syataDshmaya

Posted by syataDshmaya - 16 Apr 2013 03:54

Hello fellow members of the forum,

I am very excited and very nervous to be starting the 90 day program with Gaurd Your Eyes. I am a college student at a top University in the US, and I started becoming frum 3-4 years ago. When I started watching pornography, I was at best ambiguous about whether it was morally wrong or not. I was embarrassed about it, but I did not feel very ashamed. As I have become more religious, started keeping kosher, wearing tzitzis, davening regularly, I have internalized a sense of moral purpose and a connection to HaKadosh Baruch, and my life has changed tremendously. I feel it has filled a giant gap that I have always been looking to fill. I plan to attend Yeshiva for at least two years in Israel after I graduate from my University at the end of the year.

But, to my chagrin, the problem of pornography has not naturally gone away with my growth in Torah. I feel terribly guilty when I act out, my davening is effected for weeks afterwards, I develop anxiety that effects me through out the day and reduces the quality of my sleep. I hate that now that I am very sure that I want to stop, it is so difficult. I know that many people look up to me in my circles for being the only baal teshuvah they know, and I like feeling like a leader. But it kills me when for weeks I feel I am living a double life.

I think the route cause of my draw to pornography is a feeling of loneliness of which I sometimes despair. But it becomes a vicious cycle when pornography produces anxiety, and prevents me from feeling like I can really connect with people and be honest about myself. I have searched for programs online for months, buy only now did I find Guard Your Eyes. I left my apartment where I would be alone in my room with my laptop to go to the library, where I could do my homework in a public place. At the Library I began practicing exiting inappropriate searches: typing in the first part of an inappropriate search term, stopping, and exiting the page, and repeating. Then I would say to myself, "You don't need this, Hashem loves you." When I began typing this into the google search bar as I whispered it to myself I noticed that "Guard My Eyes" popped up as a link on the page, and by Divine assistance, the link caught my eye. I really hope this works.

=====

Re: Hi, I'm syataDshmaya

Posted by nitzotzeloki - 16 Apr 2013 17:35

Welcome aboard.

=====

Re: Hi, I'm syataDshmaya
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 16 Apr 2013 18:08

[syataDshmaya wrote:](#)

... I really hope this works.

Hi there syata...

Welcome and good luck. They say "It works if you work it". So please stick around, read up and see what you can use as your own personal plan.

Hatzlacha

MT

=====

I have/had a dream...
Posted by syataDshmaya - 16 Apr 2013 18:09

This summer I was living in the Frum community and interning at a homeless shelter/rehabilitation center. I somehow managed to refrain completely from pornography and even masturbation completely for the entire time. I used to think it was because I was living in an environment with less tumah, but now I think it was also that I was working in an environment that was designed to support addicts - after I saw that Rabbi

Twerski say that having a support group is essential to overcoming addiction.

One night this summer I came very close to acting out, but stopped and went to sleep, begging Hashem to help me fall asleep without the "help" of the aveira. I had the most incredible dream that night - it felt like a prophecy. I dreamt a young man came to me and threatened me at gun point to rob me. Knowing that it says "v'chai bahem," I told him to take whatever he wanted. As he was walking away, I got the impression I could outsmart him, so I walked up next to him and said "take my cash, but you might as well give back my credit cards and my IDs, since it will be a hassle for me and I will just cancel them anyway so you wont be able to use them." He agreed and opened my wallet to give them back. At that moment I noticed that he saw the bencher in my wallet, and I told him "you don't want to take that." He said "why not?" I said "bad things happen when you take a Jew's bencher." He said "like what, will I have an untimely death." I replied, "no, you will have a slow and painful death." Hearing this, he was so frightened that he gave me back the whole wallet and ran away! Then I woke up.

With G-d's help, I was able to understand the dream some time later. The robber is my yetzer harah. he tells me "if you don't do this aveirah, you will not survive." So I go along. But then I told him to take my cash, take my short term currency, but know that in the long term, I will not continue to do this. You cannot take my Identity, and my credit cards. He agreed. When he saw my bencher, I knew I could do more.

He asked my "will I have and untimely death," - in other words, will I not have the opportunity to grow and stop doing this aveira in the future, will I die before I get the chance? I responded that that is not the reason to stop now. Rather, by being involved in arayos, you are separating yourself from Hashem, and that is not called life. Life with these arayos is itself like a slow and painful death! To this my Yetzer Hara had no response.

This victory lasted a good while, but when I got back to campus and stress and loneliness came back, and the environment was impure, I fell again. The first time I fell after that extended period of time my body was literally shaking with fear as I typed into my laptop, but somehow I still did it... I hope I can get back to that level.

=====
=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by gibbor120 - 16 Apr 2013 21:53

Welcome syataDshmaya! Your story is far from unique. You hit on a number of important points and realizations. It's nice to have you with us. Stick around.

=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by syataDshmaya - 06 May 2013 18:34

Boruch Hashem! I am still sober. It is a tremendous feeling. I feel a kesher with the Ribono shel olam like never before, and having shifted into thinking about this challenge as my primary avodah has truly enriched my life. I no longer feel like I am living a double life. I am trying to incorporate all of my feelings and thoughts, even the darkest ones, into a fully integrated picture of myself, and using everything I have to serve Hashem. It is definitely not easy. Especially since I separated with my girlfriend recently. But I am trying to face the pain with my head held high, knowing that life is not one dimensional, and being modeh to Hashem that he knows what is best.

So far, making shvuahs once a week has been working very well. In fact, I even had a dream where I wanted to act out, but stopped because I didn't want to break the shvuah! Reading the daily emails and participating on the forum has also been essential. I really feel that I am not alone, and I am so grateful to have the opportunity to learn and share with so many holy yidden.

GYE has taught me that acting out is a symptom of deeper problems, and that in order to heal we must treat the disease itself, not just the symptoms. One lesson that I am beginning to learn about myself is that I suffer from perfectionism. That is, I have been trying to get good grades, learn torah, make friends, other things, in order to cover up some other stuff that is hiding away inside. I don't know what that stuff is, but I am going to therapy and hopefully I will learn more. The problem is, I was trying to love myself because of, or on condition that I achieve. Don't get me wrong, the achievements I've been aiming for are worth while, especially torah learning, but they cannot be a condition for me to love myself. Any condition, even torah learning, is ultimately suicide because there is no end to torah learning. I could be the gadol hador in learning and still tell myself - "but I am not yet like the Vilna Gaon." With that approach, instead of learning as a means to connect with Hashem, it becomes a reproachful confirmation that I'm not good enough, because the more I learn, the more I see how much more there is to know. I'm going to start working on loving myself unconditionally, for no other reason than the fact that I am made b'tzelem elokim, and the I have a Yiddishe Neshama.

=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by gibbor120 - 06 May 2013 20:24

Dr Sorotzkin has some great stuff on perfectionism! It really helped me A LOT! Click on the link in my signature for his website.

Thank you for sharing your progress.

Hatzlacha Rabbah!

=====
=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by syataDshmaya - 08 May 2013 00:48

I had a fall this morning. I've been having trouble sleeping lately, and I'm totally exhausted. The Yetzer Hara cornered me first thing in the morning, while I was try to fall back asleep while I was waiting for my alarm to go off. I was barely awake, but conscious enough to call it a real fall. I tried to resist, but I was feeling so tired, and feeling hopeless. My girlfriend and I are fully separated now, and she was my best friend for 6 years. This was my first fall since I started the 90 day chart 20 something days ago. Thank G-d, there was no internet involved. That REALLY makes me feel terrible.

I think I hadn't fully committed to stopping M^{***}, even though my commitment to stop P^{***} was dead serious. I did include M^{**} in my shvuah though...

I had been davening recently, asking Hashem to help me love myself unconditionally. Maybe this happened so I could have an opportunity to do that. But it very hard for me to find the balance of loving myself unconditionally and still pushing myself to grow.

I'm having a really rough day. I can barely get out of bed. Any encouragement or advice?

=====
=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by gibbor120 - 08 May 2013 01:08

ENCOURAGEMENT: KOT KOT KOT KOT!

ADVICE: KOT KOT KOT KOT!

=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by syataDshmaya - 08 May 2013 01:39

What does KOT stand for?

=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by Pidaini - 08 May 2013 11:36

KEEP ON TRUCKING!!!!!!!

and i would like to add to that KOMT (monster)

It's forward, without looking back!!

[syataDshmaya wrote:](#)

Thank G-d, there was no internet involved. That REALLY makes me feel terrible.

I'm not sure why, but I experienced, and have read others had the same too, that as we stopped watching porn the YH started bombarding us with fantasies, those were much stronger struggles for me not to masturbate to them, than to go watch porn when i first stopped.

Encouragement: I think that you might want to take on Mr. E's idea and flip it around, 20 some days porn clean, 1 day masturbation clean!!

Advice: Same as Gibor, feeling down will not get you anywhere (if anything it only makes us feel good about ourselves, "hey i must still be really holy cause look how bad i feel" so that we can do it again,-just a thought)so KOT KOMT!!!

=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by syataDshmaya - 12 May 2013 19:07

Thanks for the help guys.

Its amazing how much I am learning about myself throughout this process. Before GYE, I was only trying to treat the symptoms, but now I'm trying to cure the disease! (although I think I will always have to be careful about lust, no matter how long I've been clean). I used to think I was humble, but now I think that it is a real struggle for me to admit that Hashem is really in control. I've been speaking to Hashem every day, just about basic things and in my own words. When I haven't slept well, I say "Oy, Ribbono Shel Olam, please help me get through the day." I find the more I reach out to Him, the better I feel.

The other day I was feeling very down, having built up anxiety about breaking up with my girlfriend and about exams, and insomnia. I almost felt hopeless, but not totally. I had been speaking so often with Hashem, really trying to rely on Him in a tangible way, that I was able to reach out to Him again when I really needed it. I was dangerously close to a fall, browsing

through titles of movies that would hurt me a lot if I watched them because I was desperate for some comfort. It was like my hands were moving the mouse on their own, and I was watching in terror. But Hashem had mercy on me, and gave me the chance to reach out. I said, "I don't know how I'm going to feel an hour from now, I don't know if I'll be able to sleep tonight, I don't know who I'm going to marry or when, I don't know what kind of career I want, I don't know how I'll make a living. But I do know that I don't want to fall, I do know that I just want to keep coming closer to you, Hashem. I don't want to fall away from you. Please help me! I can't do it without you! I am powerless without you! Please!"

Just like that, the desire fell away. Hashem pulled me out of the quick sand, and I got through the night without a fall. It is so much better to rely on Hashem than to rely on man. Even if I could muscle through my Yetzer hara, which I clearly cannot, it wouldn't help me in the long term. The void cannot be filled with grandiose delusions about my own greatness. The void can only be filled with Hashem. That's the only thing that's real.

=====
=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by syataDshmaya - 12 May 2013 19:15

I've also started to see why my torah learning has not helped me fight this. My motivation to learn was a feeling that if I gain enough knowledge, become a talmid chochom and a tzadik, then I will love myself. I've been working on changing that, trying to love myself unconditionally. That way, when I motivate myself to learn it comes from a desire to do good, to enrich myself, to understand G-d's will, etc. I have gotten the chance to have small tastes of what its like to learn when you know that whether you get it or not, whether you will remember it or not, you are still going to love yourself no matter what. **It is a completely different kind of activity.**

=====
=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by syataDshmaya - 13 May 2013 16:49

It occurred to me that I've been drinking coffee more often and having difficulty sleeping since I committed to stop watching shmutz. It feels kind of like withdrawal. But this is strange, since I have stayed clean for this long many times without feeling these symptoms. I think this is actually a very good thing. It shows the power of commitment. In the past, I just happen to have not watched shmutz for however long, but now I am actually giving it up, and letting Hashem into my life. Even if I fall, the time that I've gotten through without a fall since I started GYE is a

I used to think my dark side was too dark to ask Hashem for help, that I was so evil that the only way I could have a chance of not going off of the derech was if I stopped on my own. Now I see, not only that I was wrong, but that it is precisely in the darkest places of my soul that Hashem is waiting to fuse a special connection with me.

=====

Re: I have/had a dream...

Posted by gibbor120 - 13 May 2013 18:41

Thanks for some wonderful posts!

=====