

Struggling and need help (or hope)

Posted by babysteps - 13 Sep 2013 21:50

This may be a long one so bare with me;

I have only looked at this site for a couple of days now but I have not seen any other forum on which to express my problem and get any type of chizuk. I will lay it all out, get all of the dark things out there for the world to see in the hope that somehow I can find a solution, even if I don't think there is one. I will do this because I don't know what else I can do but I know I need to do something.

I am in my mid 30's, married with 2 children and I am seriously addicted to masturbation. Just as a background, I was abused by an older male cousin at a young age. I can't recall when it began or how long it went on for but I know I was around 9 when it happened and went on periodically for maybe a couple of years. It was then that I was introduced to M and have done it ever since. I didn't even need to view anything to get myself off (although it certainly makes the experience more enjoyable and addictive). It sounds so crazy when I think about it but I didn't even reach puberty when I was doing it.

Anyway, that was a long time ago and I have tried to block it out as much as I could. For the most part I have been successful, but the M aspect never went away. Unlike many abuse victims, instead of being scared of sex, I became hypersexed. I can't stop thinking about it, wanting it, needing it. At times I had fallen so bad that I indulged 3-4 times a day for several days, just to get that "fix". I see it everywhere I go, I check out every woman I see until I realize what I'm doing and I stop myself. It is so habitual that I don't even realize I'm doing it. Its also much more difficult to control myself since nobody dresses modestly anymore.

I am also a baal teshuva. I started to become more frum in my early teens and now I would describe myself as right-wing modern orthodox. I really don't like labels but they do help put things in perspective.

What prompted me to post is that it is erev Yom Kippur and I have been really trying to stay clean (not indulge in looking at things or actually M-ing) but it has been really difficult. Just before I started writing I had a thought to "just look at some pictures for a few minutes". So I decided it was time to post. I just don't know what to do with myself. In every other aspect of my life I am striving to be a better person. This holds true for ruchnius things as well. I have been davening with a minyan (almost all the time) for a second year and I began doing daf yomi since they began the new cycle and I have another chabura on shabbos.

However, I feel a tremendous weight on my shoulders because of this. How can I be such a hypocrite? How can I ask Hashem to forgive me when I know that its only a matter of time before I do the inevitable? I am not an openly emotional person but I have cried during slichos because I feel helpless in this struggle.

What makes it more difficult is the fact that my wife is not interested in sex. I had always felt that

things would be different when I got married. I know I can "hold out" for a few days, even a couple of weeks if I really apply myself, as long as there is something to look forward to. Unfortunately, we only have sex maybe twice a month. She would be fine with just once but she feels obligated after mikva and I am able to convince her at least one other time. The problem is, when it finally does happen it is not very good. I have tried to speak to her about it. I have tried to tell her how difficult it is for me to go so long without getting any but the end result is always the same - lots of excuses; she is always tired (at 9pm) or not feeling well or has a headache or stomach ache or any number of things) and nothing really changes. It is important to note that we are currently in couples therapy and have been on and off for a few years (married for 8). Now, I know that many people will say "of course she is not interested if you are having problems in your marriage". The thing is, this has been an issue since day 1. When we first got married she claimed that it was too painful for her. When I would suggest that we still "fool around" and not get into it unless she was ok with it, she just said she wasn't comfortable and that was it. I, in turn, felt rejected and that my feelings don't matter, and the frustration began to build. For someone who is so charged sexually, it was like living a nightmare. I think we managed to have sex maybe 5 times in that first year. Naturally, I turned to M as my "comfort". It was easy to rationalize that this would alleviate my needs without putting pressure on my wife. I believed it was ok because I was doing it for shalom bayis. But the addiction just grew. Now, even though the physical pain is not there (since she had children maybe?), she is still not interested. Its as if she has 0 sex drive and would be fine living in a convent. She has even told me flat out that she really has no interest in sex. In a recent session she told the therapist that all I want from her is sex, to which I replied "if that is all it would take to make me happy, why is it so difficult for her to go along with it?'. Her reply was "I am not a prostitute"! Who says that?

Anyway, I am going to cut this short now because I need to go to mincha soon. I will be going to say viduy and I will certainly feel so ashamed to stand in front of Hashem. What can I say? How can I ask for forgiveness when they say that part of tshuva promising to never do it again? I know I will. I know because it has been almost a week since I had relations with my wife and she will become a niddah in the next several days, during which it is very unlikely that anything will happen, and then its another 2 weeks before her "obligation" compels her to grace me with her presence. I know I can't last that long... and in the meantime I am just torn.

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Re: Struggling and need help (or hope)
Posted by AlexEliezer - 18 Sep 2013 00:40

I've always found tefilas zaakah very comforting and inspiring.

Unfortunately, the effects, like all inspiration, ultimately weren't enough.

I needed a plan.

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Re: Struggling and need help (or hope)
Posted by Sparky - 18 Sep 2013 10:09

welcome. This place is very special. Use it well. May I ask a question which I hope do not offend you: have you thought about trying therapy for the abuse of your youth?

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