

Hello

Posted by longsleeves - 31 Dec 2014 21:48

Hi,

I am so glad that I have found this website, as I'm hopeful that it will help me with this struggle. I have so many questions and I am confused and pained by this issue. There is so much for me to write that I hardly know where to begin. I will not be able to put all the information in one post. Rather, I will start out and overtime I will try to cover all the topics involved. Let me begin by clarifying my status with this issue:

Regretfully, I masturbate on a relatively regular basis. It happens in spontaneous on-off episodes. Meaning, I will do it for 3-4 consecutive days and then stop for a few days (sometimes even a couple of weeks). The clean period, between episodes, is usually extended when I am extremely busy, dating someone, or when I feel closer to God (e.g. around Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). Ultimately, it winds up averaging to about 3-4 times a week.

I practically only masturbate if I get access to porn that I can download onto a device, which I can then watch before going to sleep. It is for this reason that I do not have access to the Internet in my house. Similarly, I have heavy restrictions on my laptop and smartphone. Furthermore, in the situation that I do discover ways around any of these filters, I tweak them accordingly so that I don't stumble from the same issue again. However, if I ultimately want to access porn, and subsequently masturbate, then I will find a way. Meaning, I have done everything that I can on the "outside" and now I must try to fix the "inside" (i.e. personal decisions).

In order for you to appreciate my subjective struggle, you must comprehend my personality and the way I "tick." I have struggled with an anxiety disorder ever since the beginning of high school (I am currently 26), specifically, general and social anxiety. Baruch HaShem, I have (relatively) recently discovered Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), which has helped return stability into my life. However, the nature to irrationally and excessively worry has become ingrained into my personality.

Consequently, it has become particularly hard for me to manage my anxiety with worries that involve masturbation. Meaning, despite my success in overcoming social and general fears, I have had less victory with the worries that involve masturbation. Primarily, this is due to the fact that my therapist is not frum and subsequently discussing religious anxieties with him does not prove to be productive. Furthermore, it is easier to identify, and then dismiss, irrational thoughts when I can openly discuss them with my (close) friends and family. Masturbation however, due

to its personal and sensitive nature, becomes more of an internal battle where my conscious is the only voice of reason.

The worries and anxieties revolving masturbation are primarily problematic after the fact. Meaning, sometimes I worry that HaShem no longer likes me and that He will cause bad things to happen to me. For example, recently, due to certain symptoms, my doctor ordered a series of tests. He wanted to rule out a certain type of cancer or tumor. Thank God, nothing too serious was found, but throughout the whole ordeal I experienced many anxieties that revolved masturbation. For instance, when I masturbated during the period of days that I was waiting for test results, I would assume that God was going to punish me with terrible results. I believed that God was judging me more stringently since He was expecting that, while waiting for these life-dependent results, I could refrain from this sin. I would think that I was a terrible, irresponsible person who cannot sustain even in these crucial times. In other words, the circumstance garnished higher consequences, as more was expected of me.

This concern of immediate punishment presents itself in other areas, such as shidduchim. For instance, if I masturbate while in the middle of pursuing a shidduch, I am concerned that this will cause the match not to work. I think to myself, "if I was truly serious about getting married, and earnestly wanted to find my wife then I would prove this to HaShem by refraining more often from masturbation." Furthermore, even when I reassure myself that this is not how God works (that I am normal man with sexual desires and HaShem understands), I am always worried that I have somehow recently excluded myself from this understandable, forgivable level of masturbation. In other words, I will tell myself, "even though I have been OK until this point, now that you masturbated so many times this week, you are no longer OK with God and He will consequently actualize those dreaded results" (e.g. cause the shidduch not to work).

Incidentally, this worry about masturbation affecting a shidduch is currently plaguing me. Meaning, after refraining for two-and-a-half weeks, I slipped-up and masturbated last night. Additionally, I recently started dating this girl that I kind of like. I am afraid that HaShem will cause the shidduch to fall apart as a result of my negligence with masturbation. Is this thought rational? Is it accurate for me to believe that my success in finding my spouse is directly (or indirectly) linked to my accomplishments and failures with my battle with masturbation?

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Re: Hello

Posted by gyeadmin - 21 Jan 2015 22:53

test

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Re: Hello

Posted by man - 21 Jan 2015 22:55

test

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Re: Hello

Posted by Shlomo24 - 22 Jan 2015 23:16

thinking about if you are an addict or not will not help you in your sobriety. how about take it like this, sa has helped many men and women stop acting out sexually, it doesn't matter if you call yourself an addict or not, just try to work the program to the best of your ability. thinking about things is not going to help. as we say in sa "at first i tried to think myself into the right acting, but now i act myself into the right thinking". doing positive actions towards sobriety will help you with masturbation and porn (coming on gye is positive, getting a filter for your devices is probably also necessary).

hatzlacha.

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Re: Hello

Posted by Watson - 23 Jan 2015 04:00

[longsleeves wrote:](#)

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Wow, you reminded me of this part of my addiction that I had forgotten about. I remember feeling so strongly that if I feel Hashem was going to stretch out His hand and punish me. I was so certain of it.

This of course increased my worries, anxieties (I have SAD too) and guilt no end, which hardly helped.

I remember hearing in shmuz that we are not on the level that we can see a direct connection between our aveirohs and the punishment. That level is reserved for tzaddikim gemurim. But I couldn't believe it. I just knew that Hashem was punishing me for my wickedness.

Now I realise that I couldn't control myself anyway. I was and am completely powerless over my addicton. I can prove that because for years I tried everything in my power to stop acting out and I could not. So I have been forced to accept that I am an addict. **I am not a sinner trying to repent, I am a sick man trying to get well.**

That realisation was a total game-changer. It changed my outlook on the problem and it changed my outlook on the solution.

As it happens I got engaged and married even though I was still in my active addiction.

Not that that's relevant. What's relevant for me is the need to work my program one day at a time. I just can't handle huge philosophical conundrums. I need my program to be simple.

I have no idea if any of that is helpful to you, but thank you for being helpful to me.

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