Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by Hopeful2 - 09 Apr 2015 04:02

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I can't believe that I'm actually starting to post, especially about something I always thought I'd take with me to my grave alone. I've long ago (before I signed up for GYE) given up on ever beating this horrible disease. It seemed like a losing battle, so why try, right? But then I came across GYE and it's been beyond anything I could've hoped for. But let me first introduce myself to everyone and get to know each other. Everyone here seems so open and honest with themselves it's so refreshing....

I can't seem to remember when and how it all started but i can remember mast..... when I was 13 (maybe even younger I'm not sure) I remember doing it in the shower at home fantasizing about my next door neighbor -who was much older and I had nothing todo with ever, no girl friend or anything - who was just really pretty and I would get lost in fantasy. Lots of just looking at magazines, bikini clad women... And some more mast.....

And then the promises. The promises how I would never do it again. And the guilt. And how much of it! I would feel so horrible about myself. Years of trying to stop and years of feeling how Hashem must hate me, obviously didn't help, other then make a bad situation even worse. Later on in yeshivah I would to run to the bathroom to mast.... (can't remember the frequency) often and berate myself and try to stop but couldn't obviously.

I would buy newspapers. Even Jewish ones. Anything that had pictures of girls. I wasn't picky if it resembled a girl it was fine. I even had a book in yeshivah which was actually a holocaust book, that had some family pictures and I'd mast.... on those. And how I would feel so guilty that I'd mast..... I mean on a holocaust book!?

I'd beg and cry to Hashem to help me that He take away this nisayon, even if it meant never having kids. I'm sure you can relate...

Then came technology cellphones and movies. I'd buy a SIM card and surf for naked images on my phone and mast... Then I'd break the SIM card promising myself never again.... Yea yea.... Then go and buy some more SIM cards. I always wanted to break the phone out of frustration but was never able to.

Then I got married and whadda you know?? Marriage did not solve the problem! No chiddush here....

Just another incident I remember.... before I got engaged even before the shidduch was redt, I made a Kabbalah that I would abstain, as a zchus for myself to get engaged. It was so painful. White knuckling all day. Wrestling back and forth yes no yes no, and I wasn't even successful. I made it for about 4 weeks (longest probably ever, until now) and mast...even before I got engaged. Hashem did his part of the deal but I couldn't come thru,.... I remember not actually touching my eiver because I said I wouldn't, but I writhered in bed rubbing myself until I just let lose....

I was convinced I'd never have any kids as a punishment from shamayim. I believed Hashem hated me and so I grow up with a relationship with Him that if I'm good Hashem will take care of me and if not He'd hurt me very badly. A real childish way of thinking, but something I struggle with until this very day. I'm trying to feel His infinite kindness and mercy, but it's tough.

So I got married and have the most adorable kids. But my addiction didn't get better. Especially with an iPad at home that was filtered and not supposed to be at home in the first place.... It was then, about 4-5 years ago, then I started watching real hard core p..n and it just got worse and worse. Weekly, daily, anything stressful would send me straight to my iPad. It didn't help that my father passed away, which added loads to my plate and I just needed my drug even more then ever

After having been hooked on mast.. & p..n for so long I couldn't imagine ever stopping. Until I watched the GYE video last month. I said I gotta give it a try. I signed up. Took the 90 day challenge I'm up to 45! days clean. Never reached that, I don't think. I started reading the attitude book, the white book, the 12 steps, the forums, and it's all been such an eye opener for me. I now realize that porn comes after lust and lust means (for me) just looking at modestly dressed women who are pretty. I never realized how harmful just looking was for me. Then I realized that after every look came a fantasy. On that woman or about others. I have come to realize -thru GYE - that looking for me, equals watching porn. Cause if I look today I will definitely be watching porn tomorrow.

And as a result the past few weeks my eyes are sealed shut. I don't look anywhere I shouldn't. On the streets on the subways, I even took of my glasses when day last week, when I took the train to Manhattan. And I was like that's for frummies, c'mon! Be normal, but yea for someone as sick as me, I need to do that for my sanity.

Not looking has helped me take the battlefield away from porn, where I stand no chance, to a bit smaller fight, (still mighty hard, but doable) my thoughts. Anytime a fantasy thought pops into my head I remind myself, if I delve into it, I'll end up at the screen where I will definitely lose. It's also helped not have to feel as if I'm fighting and fighting and tiring out. I'm actually surprised, I thought it would've been much harder. The other times I've tried to stop were white knuckling and impossible. This time it's tough and hard, but it's about me not lusting. If I lust in my thoughts about other women I cannot abstain. However if don't fantasize, I stand I chance.

The past few weeks have been extremely stressful for me yet I haven't had too many urges to act out bh.

Its allowed me to finally feel good about myself and be closer to Hashem in many ways. Closer to my wife and kids. Much calmer with myself. This pesach I feel a real personal yitzias mitzrayim. Finally out of slavery. Finally some real hope.

Anyway I hope I didn't tire anyone reading this, it's just so exciting to be writing this out and I'm dying to get into the other topics around here but I figured I'd post here first. Reading the forums and everyone's tips and suggestions have proven to be a great help. So happy to be here Baruch HaShem.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by Hopeful2 - 19 May 2015 17:16

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shlomo613 wrote**:**

Hopeful,

I notice that you're on One day. How are things going? You will pick yourself up because you're out of isolation, you're engaging and we're together.

Cant seem to manage the stress levels and don't know how to properly handle my emotions....same old just a new day..

Hope

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by shlomo613 - 19 May 2015 18:12

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Well, you had an amazing run recently. That's money in your account. You will draw on it when you make efforts in the near future. And don't be disheartened over these falls and wonder what you've lost. It often goes like that. In our earlier conversation I think I quoted rabbi Tatz, that that's how the journey of growth invariably goes: You have that initial flash that illuminates your way, inspires you and shows you what you can achieve. Then it becomes dark again - and now it's your turn to stumble through the darkness in the direction you know you must take - to get to that destination you've already tasted. It's the bechina of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. Avraham being the light, Yitzchak being that dark long journey, and Yakov being when it comes together again - but now it's earned, it's yours and it's all the more real and greater.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by gibbor120 - 19 May 2015 19:33

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Dov has a pretty narrow definition of addict. This also tends to confuse a lot of people.

According to AA (and SA) as I understand it. Alcoholism/Sexaholism is a 2 part "disease" (one of the words I don't like).

1) Obsession of the mind - so you can't just ignore it

2) Allergy of the body - once you start, you can't stop

The 2 in combonation is what makes it so difficult.

If we only had the allergy of the body, we could just avoid it. Since we have an obsession, we keep thinking aobut it, until we give in. Once we give in a little, the "allergy" takes over, and we can't stop. No such thing as just one sip or just one "slip".

Hope this helps.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by shlomo613 - 19 May 2015 20:37

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Well in that case I'm an addict squared

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by serenity - 20 May 2015 04:16

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People need to decide for themselves, whether or not they are an addict. I'm pretty sure there is a lot of disagreement with Dov on the issue of people here being addicts or not. I really don't know the definition. I've read a couple articles that say there is no such such as sexual addiction. It's not a medically recognized disease as of yet, like alcoholism is. I've always known that I was a compulsive gambler, I didn't need to read the definition anywhere. I never thought I was an alcoholic, until after years of heavy drinking I realized how much it was affecting my health, my family and my life. Once I really truly decided to stop though, I did. I do go to AA and consider myself an alcoholic, but I'm not what the AA Big Book would call a real alcoholic of the hopeless variety. I drank heavily and foolishly, but haven't had a drink in 20 months. I do very actively attend AA and work the steps, but I don't struggle nearly as much as others. That's not proof in and of itself, because I haven't gambled in 14 months and I never went to GA. And when I did drink, I had some limits. Although toward the end, it getting bad. When I gamble I do not have any limits. I missed my own birthday party, missed countless family engagements, lied, cheated, stole, ate very questionable kashrus, have little need to eat at all actually, don't need sleep, lose all concept of time, blow off work obligations, ignore calls from work, family and

friends. My sex addiction is comparable to my gambling addiction and almost all the above applies, except the stealing. I risked my life, health, family and reputation. I was mechallel Shabboss. I spent countless hours engaged in compulsive sexual activity with absolutely no way to stop once I started, day after day. I missed countless days from work. I'll give you an example of powerlessness from another SA that I am close to. He is a highly regarded professional in an advanced position in a major institution. He would masturbate at work in a location that he could easily be walked in on. He risked his entire career. He has had unprotected anonymous relations with people he doesn't know at work related conventions. Just two examples.

Now just because you haven't gone that far doesn't mean your not an addict. Oh and since you . Actually I'll paraphrase from the AA Big Book. You don't have to have drank as much as we have, to be alcoholic. And, if someone knows they have a tumor (chas vishalom)they don't wait for it to spread to remove it. The Big Book talks about actual and potential alcoholics.

You really need to read the 1st 4 chapters of the AA Big Book if you want the AA definition of an alcolholic or sexaholic.

The main point of my comment above was, try everything here progressively and see what helps.

As to what can hurt by going to SA, I'm really not totally sure. Personally I'm not really sure I agree with that. What I would guess is I (really these are just guesses - it may all be malarchy):

want some quotes.

1. You can be exposed to behaviors that your not familiar with

2. You will be exposed to people way worse off than you, and maybe conclude u are okay

3. Although SA in anonymous, you are putting yourself out there. Why do that if you don't need to.

4. If SA doesn't help it could discourage you

5. While most people I have met seem to be up and up, there may be predators there

The other issue that it's a basic program principal that we don't push people to SA. They have to choose it. Push em before they are ready, can hurt their chances of ever getting recovery. We come to SA because we are desperate and whipped and feel totally powerless. we seek a power greater than ourselves. We don't work on character defects, we ask God to remove them. It's a different approach. When I came to SA, it because I thought I had no other choice, It was SA or jail.

Anyway enough of me, read the first four chapters of the Big Book and read the White Book.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by yiraishamaim - 20 May 2015 15:00

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serenity wrote**:**

I've always known that I was a compulsive gambler, I didn't need to read the definition anywhere. I never thought I was an alcoholic, until after years of heavy drinking I realized how much it was affecting my health, my family and my life. Once I really truly decided to stop though, I did. I do go to AA and consider myself an alcoholic, but I'm not what the AA Big Book would call a real alcoholic of the hopeless variety. I drank heavily and foolishly, but haven't had a drink in 20 months. I do very actively attend AA and work the steps, but I don't struggle nearly as much as others. That's not proof in and of itself, because I haven't gambled in 14 months and I never went to GA. And when I did drink, I had some limits. Although toward the end, it getting bad. When I gamble I do not have any limits. I missed my own birthday party, missed countless family engagements, lied, cheated, stole, ate very questionable kashrus, have little need to eat at all actually, don't need sleep, lose all concept of time, blow off work obligations, ignore calls from work, family and friends. My sex addiction is comparable to my gambling addiction and almost all the above applies, except the stealing. I risked my life, health, family and reputation. I was mechallel Shabboss. I spent countless hours engaged in compulsive sexual activity with absolutely no way to stop once I started, day after day. I missed countless days from work.

Truly incredible you have climbed many mountains.

Hillel is the model that the poor can learn

Yoseph is the model for withstanding lustful temptation

Rabbi Eliezer is the model for learning even with vast wealth and investments.

serenity is the model that even multiple addictions can't stop a person from succeeding.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by shlomo613 - 20 May 2015 17:06

Wow serenity! Thanks for sharing. It makes me want to read your thread all over again (my memory is bad).

I think Dov has let out a fox among the chickens and a whole bunch of stuff is coming up (not sure if the analogy is good but hope you understand).

You serenity are prompted to (again) be real and admit your wrongs; a bunch of us are thinking if we're addicts, and how to dish out advice. And I'm also doing quiet thinking.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by shlomo613 - 20 May 2015 17:17

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serenity wrote**:**

There is a lot of stuff to do here on GYE. I rarely see anyone who talks about what they are doing. Have they implemented all the tools? Do they go to the phone conferences? Have they read or are they reading all the advice from the official people here? Have they read the Big Book and the White Book? Are they in therapy? Do they have a web chaver? etc etc etc The only thing I generally hear is 90 day chart, posting in forums, filters and TAPHSIC.

The one really helpful thing that most people are unwilling to do is pick up a phone and talk to someone.

Wow! A very interesting observation. It seems to break the orthodoxy of what I understood the GYE institution to be. I kind of thought that it was all about 12 steps, sponsor, white book, phone conferences and as groups.

That notion of mine had been cemented early on when I posted what works for me, I was basically told "each to his own". This kind I got me to understand that GYE uses the SA system - and if you want to do something else on the side under the counter that works for you, then do your own business and keep it your own business.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by shlomo613 - 20 May 2015 17:20

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serenity wrote**:**

I think this sheds a little light on the part that I said I'm not sure I understand. As I said above Dov isn't labeling anyone in his comment. He's saying here, I think, that even if Hopeful2 for example is an addict, if he isn't ready for the solution SA has to offer, then it could be detrimental. An essential principle of SA, is that people come when they are ready.

I 100% get this point of Dov - and as explained by you serenity.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by shlomo613 - 20 May 2015 17:24

Hopeful2 wrote:

shlomo613 wrote:

Hopeful,

I notice that you're on One day. How are things going? You will pick yourself up because you're out of isolation, you're engaging and we're together.

Cant seem to manage the stress levels and don't know how to properly handle my emotions....same old just a new day..

Hope

Hopeful, This statement above has been on my mind. I want to help you. I want to give you something to run with that would help. But I'm not sure what would help **you**.

What do you think is causing the stress? Is it something outside of you? Is it something you can do something about? Is it your internal emotional life that you think is the main cause?

Shlomo

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Things are tough, thanks for asking

Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by serenity - 20 May 2015 18:45

Thanks for all the kind words. I'm not trying to define what an addict is for anyone else. Just trying to share my experience. I'm definitely not trying speak for or define GYE and I don't think . I do think I'm guilty of giving too much advice at times. It's healthier for me and for everyone else to stick to talking about my

experience, strength and hope,
Warning: Spoiler!

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by Hopeful2 - 21 May 2015 00:09

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serenity wrote**:**

People need to decide for themselves, whether or not they are an addict. I'm pretty sure there is a lot of disagreement with Dov on the issue of people here being addicts or not. I really don't know the definition. I've read a couple articles that say there is no such such as sexual addiction. It's not a medically recognized disease as of yet, like alcoholism is. I've always known that I was a compulsive gambler, I didn't need to read the definition anywhere. I never thought I was an alcoholic, until after years of heavy drinking I realized how much it was affecting my health, my family and my life. Once I really truly decided to stop though, I did. I do go to AA and consider myself an alcoholic, but I'm not what the AA Big Book would call a real alcoholic of the hopeless variety. I drank heavily and foolishly, but haven't had a drink in 20 months. I do very actively attend AA and work the steps, but I don't struggle nearly as much as others. That's not proof in and of itself, because I haven't gambled in 14 months and I never went to GA. And when I did drink, I had some limits. Although toward the end, it getting bad. When I gamble I do not have any limits. I missed my own birthday party, missed countless family engagements, lied, cheated, stole, ate very questionable kashrus, have little need to eat at all actually, don't need sleep, lose all concept of time, blow off work obligations, ignore calls from work, family and friends. My sex addiction is comparable to my gambling addiction and almost all the above applies, except the stealing. I risked my life, health, family and reputation. I was mechallel Shabboss. I spent countless hours engaged in compulsive sexual activity with absolutely no way to stop once I started, day after day. I missed countless days from work. I'll give you an example of powerlessness from another SA that I am close to. He is a highly regarded professional in an advanced position in a major institution. He would masturbate at work in a location that he could easily be walked in on. He risked his entire career. He has had unprotected anonymous relations with people he doesn't know at work related conventions. Just

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want some quotes

The main point of my comment above was, try everything here progressively and see what helps.

As to what can hurt by going to SA, I'm really not totally sure. Personally I'm not really sure I agree with that. What I would guess is I (really these are just guesses - it may all be malarchy):

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5. While most people I have met seem to be up and up, there may be predators there

The other issue that it's a basic program principal that we don't push people to SA. They have to choose it. Push em before they are ready, can hurt their chances of ever getting recovery. We come to SA because we are desperate and whipped and feel totally powerless. we seek a power greater than ourselves. We don't work on character defects, we ask God to remove them. It's a different approach. When I came to SA, it because I thought I had no other choice, It was SA or jail.

Anyway enough of me, read the first four chapters of the Big Book and read the White Book.

Hatzlacha!

Fantastic stuff serenity! And really amazing how far ahead you are I mean battling gambling, alcohol, lust, gosh wow!!

You're right when you say everyone needs to decide for themselves if they're addicted or not. But I think it's a disservice to tell people that they aren't addicts just because you haven't fallen to xxx. Just like you quote the book. "You don't have to have drank as much as we have, to be alcoholic".

While not everyone is on the same level -up or down- I'm struggling like hell (like most people here)and would do anything to stop (Like most people here). Yes it might take me a while to get to a 12 step program for example, but that doesn't mean I don't want to stop. What's the point of telling someone they aren't an addict??

But all philosophizing aside, I must get some real work done. I must get under control. I fell again this Sunday and I still haven't utilized all GYE tools, why?? What am I waiting for?

Hope

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by Hopeful2 - 21 May 2015 00:21

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shlomo613 wrote**:**

Hopeful2 wrote**:**

shlomo613 wrote**:**

Hopeful,

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Hope

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What do you think is causing the stress? Is it something outside of you? Is it something you can do something about? Is it your internal emotional life that you think is the main cause?

Shlomo

Things are tough, thanks for asking

Thanks for the concern shlomo, it's really kind of you. If it where only one thing.... It's just life in general, while I believe I have a very full plate, I believe every human being is fighting a battle. And probably more then one. That's just life. And so when things get to overwhelming, I just retreat into my cocoon and act out,and that carries me over until the next time:(

It's my unhealthy way of reliving my stresses and releasing negative energy, and just making it

Hope

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by gibbor120 - 21 May 2015 17:38

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Hopeful2 wrote**:**

You're right when you say everyone needs to decide for themselves if they're addicted or not. But I think it's a disservice to tell people that they aren't addicts just because you haven't fallen to xxx.

1) Dov is generally careful not to tell anyone they are (or are not) addicts.

2) Dov always says there are no "levels of addiction", meaning, someone that is "just" chronically masturbating - may be an addict, and someone who frequents prostitutes - may not be.

I think there are levels of addiction as far as how hard it is to stop. Some addicts may only act out once a week and may have an easier time stopping than someone who can't go a whole day without acting out.

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Re: Found my way home thanks to GYE
Posted by serenity - 22 May 2015 02:58

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Here is the exact quote "To be gravely affected, one does not necessarily have to drink a long time nor take the quantities some of us have." AA Page 33.

Ditto to everything Gibbor says in his comment.

From my personal experience of being told that I wasn't yet a compulsive gambler at a youngish age by a GA guy, giving me the green light to continue gambling. (Grammar ?) So I've always considered that a disservice, as you put it. The other side of that coin is he could have told me I was a compulsive gambler and sent me to GA. If GA didn't work, maybe it would have spoiled 12 step programs for me in the future. I do have to say, I'm still on your side. But the most important thing is action as a famous GYE scholar said "But all philosophizing aside, I must get some real work done. I must get under control. I fell again this Sunday and I still haven't utilized all GYE tools, why?? What am I waiting for?"

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