

I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 20 Apr 2016 05:43

This post is over a decade in the making. A decade of struggling, falling, disappointing myself, and a whole lot of tumah.

The first time I watched porn was completely by mistake; actually it was more like mis'aseik. Someone in my house had been watching before me, and it was in the relatively early days of the internet when many websites used the Windows Media Player on the computer's desktop as their video platform. I, an innocent eight or nine year old, opened WMP stam, and up popped a video that, although not immediately apparent what it was, was clearly going somewhere. So I watched. And what I saw then remains to be the most explicit, obscene sight I have ever seen. An entire world had been revealed to me, one that I couldn't believe actually existed, but one that was just as intriguing as it was disgusting. I spent the rest of that Friday afternoon in my family's closed-door computer room, googling for more of what I had just viewed. What I ended up finding was eight year old stuff, but pritzus at its worst just the same.

I don't remember specific incidents after that affair; there must have been something. But a few years later, the iPod Touch came out, and I desperately wanted one, because it was cool new tech and I was a curious kid. My generous parents bought it for me, and of course made sure to remove the Youtube app and Safari. Shkoyach. A couple of sports apps later, and I had easy access to whatever I wanted to see, whenever I wanted to see it. Every night, I'd come home from school, and drown myself in whatever my imagination dreamed up. This went on for over a year, with me feeling worse and worse about myself as time went on, with numerous honest attempts to stop all ending in depressing failure.

[Agav, I always knew that I wouldn't cross certain lines. For some reason which maybe I'd be able to explore with the oilam here, I only allowed myself to see basic porn, but not the worst of the worst, if you chap what I'm saying...]

One night I had enough of myself. I went downstairs to my father who was in the kitchen preparing to go to sleep, and I said to him, "Can we talk?" He chapped right away. We sat down on the couch, and I told him how I'd been using my iPod ever since he bought it for me. Long story short, he was incredibly understanding and supportive, and I felt renewed. He took my iPod at my request, and that was that.

For the iPod, anyway.

We still had computers without filters, which meant that any time I was home when nobody else was in the house, I'd find myself in the same chair, finding more garbage to enjoy, and to suffer from. (I also found books in my house that contained everything I wanted to see, just in writing.) I still remember my Rebbi asking me once how my off-Shabbos was, and how difficult it was for me to just smile and say "Great, boruch Hashem." What a shahkrin.

But that issue would sort of fade, because my parents got a good filter, and I started to become more of a masmid and more attached to my learning in general, which I realize now is a tremendous neis considering all that my eyes have seen and my brain has absorbed.

But it was always there, a problem whenever I was home and alone, the draw to the computer magnetic and suffocating. Slowly it has become more of a constant mindset than a periodic struggle. Whenever I'm home, it's not a shailah of if I'll end up on the computer, but when, for how long, and how bad it will be.

My mind is now dominated by the desire to see an attractive woman, and when one does come close, I feel basically powerless to look away. It is so bad that driving is sometimes dangerous for me, because when you're in a frum neighborhood and there's a minivan coming your way, you can bet that the driver is wearing a sheitel and makeup, and I want to see. And even worse than that, this thirst for lust leads me to violate people's privacy, which besides for being extremely selfish, could land me in jail if I'm caught.

I've thought about all this for a while, and have finally admitted that this cannot be chalked up to normal male behavior, but rather, I have a lust problem, and I guess it could be an addiction. I can't go on living like this, because it messes with my basic functioning, menuchas hanefesh and my ability to shteig. I had planned to join GYE at the beginning of Bein Hazmanim, but I was so busy that I barely had time to sit at the computer. I naively thought that I might be okay. But first yesterday and then today, I caved (fell?), and it's clear that if I don't act now, I might never get this yetzer hora under control.

If you are still reading until this point, I can't thank you enough for getting to know me. I need the oilam here to help me become like you - focused and determined to remain pure in a world of shmutz. I really hope that I'll be here often, feeling the support of other Yidden that are fighting the same battle I am. Because I really want --and need-- to get myself under control.

Yedidcha,

Birshusi

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by markz - 06 May 2016 01:02

Actually I love you guys - never forget that

As is well known, my blunt / sharp posts due to my mild aspergian traits have caused others to drop my karma, yet I'll continue trucking because my end goal is your success

I do not want to gate crash on this party, but I am misunderstanding something here

[Birshusi wrote on 05 May 2016 22:21:](#)

I'm love starved, I want affection(and I get both from my parents, but I want affection from a girl who I connect with. I don't think that needs any more explanation.), and if I can't have it, my mind is going to try to find the next "best" thing.

From my unprofessional understanding addiction is when the outlet is out of control

Perhaps you are not addicted (No unprofessional guy here can tell you).

However "if you can't have it, your mind is going to try to find the next "best" thing".

Is that ok for you? Is that 'not a problem' similar to the first point I raised in my last post here?

I can argue with your mom - you can't

[inastruggle wrote on 05 May 2016 23:56:](#)

It's really important to realize how **not** sick it is to fantasize and lust after women

I beg (on my knees) to disagree

So...

Karma down, and I await to hear your kind respond...

My knees are hurting...

Nu!!!

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Shlomo24 - 06 May 2016 02:50

I have what to say. But I'm not going to. If you really want to know then pm me.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by inastruggle - 06 May 2016 02:56

[markz wrote on 06 May 2016 01:02:](#)

Actually I love you guys - never forget that

As is well known, my blunt / sharp posts due to my mild aspergian traits have caused others to drop my karma, yet I'll continue trucking because my end goal is your success

First of all don't worry about your karma. I don't remember ever lowering anyone's karma. I hate the whole karma business to begin with but that's for a different time. This is way more important.

[markz wrote on 06 May 2016 01:02:](#)

I do not want to gate crash on this party, but I am misunderstanding something here

[Birshusi wrote on 05 May 2016 22:21:](#)

I'm love starved, I want affection (and I get both from my parents, but I want affection from a girl who I connect with. I don't think that needs any more explanation.), and if I can't have it, my mind is going to try to find the next "best" thing.

1) From my unprofessional understanding addiction is when the outlet is out of control

2) Perhaps you are not addicted (No unprofessional guy here can tell you).

3) However "if you can't have it, your mind is going to try to find the next "best" thing".

Is that ok for you? Is that 'not a problem' similar to the first point I raised in my last post here?

1) Aside from me not necessarily agreeing with you on what addiction is, where do you see any outlet being out of control? Of course he's love starved, he's a frum bachur. There's a huge difference between affection from a girl and affection from anyone else. As a frum bachur he doesn't get affection from any girl, hence he's love starved. Just like every other frum bachur.

If he means that this love starvation defines him then I might agree with you, but he didn't write that.

2) No one needs to tell you that you aren't addicted. I've never gone to a professional to make sure that I don't have a multiple personality disorder or OCD. You need reason to believe you have it, then you go to find out. Drinking alcohol every once in a while isn't reason to go to a professional to find out if you're an alcoholic. If you or someone else who knows you well suspects you're an addict then go find out. Or go for the heck of it.

3) Just because he's probably not an addict doesn't mean it's not a problem. That's why he's here.

[markz wrote on 06 May 2016 01:02:](#)

[inastruggle wrote on 05 May 2016 23:56:](#)

It's really important to realize how **not** sick it is to fantasize and lust after women

I beg (on my knees) to disagree

So...

Karma down, and I await to hear your kind respond...

My knees are hurting...

Nu!!!

If you're on your knees then try surrendering, two birds with one stone and all that. Do you have a prototype of the surrendering carpet yet?

I should clarify that I don't mean excessively lusting and fantasizing. Also I do see how it would be sick in the way that having your animal self controlling you is sick. But that's really a more torahdig kind of sick than a gross kind of sick.

Also objectifying women is a bit sick. I don't think that lusting after them in necessarily objectifying them though.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by markz - 06 May 2016 03:23

1) As a frum bachur he doesn't get affection from any girl, hence he's love starved. **Just like every other frum bachur.**

Is this last line an assumption or fact?

2) I don't think that lusting after them in necessarily objectifying them though.

I'm begging on my knees, to differ about this too

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by markz - 06 May 2016 03:46

Ok... Let's do this

How about we all chill...

Even if my knees are **OUCH**

Lets try you and I to learn all the pages in the Sugya of [Objectification](#) in whatever niggun you like. Check it out [here](#)

~~There will be a farher...~~

Let me know if you discover any chidushim there (jokes don't count)

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by cordnoy - 06 May 2016 03:53

[inastruggle wrote on 05 May 2016 23:56:](#)

I completely agree with what you wrote. There are a great many things that should be credited to the fact that you're a 21 year old man. It's the strongest tayvah we have. Just because I have a tayvah to speak lashon hara and sleep late doesn't make me an addict even if I have a lot of trouble with it.

It's really important to realize how **not** sick it is to fantasize and lust after women. It's natural and it means that we're healthy men. We also have to control it because the torah says so.

It's very important not to label yourself an addict. You need a mental health professional to do that not 20 questions that some guy wrote. You wouldn't diagnose a physical disease with a questionnaire you saw online (I hope) and you shouldn't diagnose a mental disease with one either.

Just because someone isn't an addict doesn't mean he's not using porn and masturbation to soothe himself. It's a lot harder to control ourselves when we're tired, hungry, stressed, and feeling bad about ourselves.

You're here to get back in control of yourself. Picking up good attitudes and getting support from the oilam here is a great way to do that. Use the great resources that are here.

Someone who isn't a professional who tells others that they're addicts is a shoteh rasha v'gas ruach.

Sorry, this is written in an absolute manner, so I can't keep quiet.

1. If one fantasizes and lusts after women/men, it can be sick; it depends on the level and degree. And that's important.

2. We need to control it because the Torah says so. True. We also need to control it, or it will control us and ruin our lives.

3. I don't think you need a mental health professional to label an addict, but it should not be taken lightly either. Answering twenty questions can help, but there is much more as well.

4. There is definitely great resources here.

Everyone should keep on sailin'.

B'hatzlachah

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by eslaasos - 06 May 2016 04:11

Birshusi (can I say Birshuscha?),

If I may humbly suggest, instead of questioning whether you are an addict, perhaps just ask yourself whether you have a "problem" with lust, i.e. do you have a hard time controlling it or does it sometimes control you. Do you (repeatedly) engage in thought patterns and/or behaviors

that are unhealthy/destructive, although you know you don't want to? Assuming (based on your posts) that the answer is yes, the next question is what to do about it. Maybe this should be discussed with a Rebbi or mentor who actually knows you, and has the experience to be able to advise you. Is that an option for you?

(Off on a tangent for a minute - IMHO, that is an opportunity bochurim have that most married guys don't have access to. (Maybe Lubavitch with their mashpia system, I don't know a lot about that). As a bochur I had a smart, Torahdige mashgiach who was willing and able to give me time to discuss any issue that was bothering me and he taught me more than anyone else in the world about life.

I have friend with a doctorate in psychology who has been working in chinuch for a few years. He is extremely smart, insightful, has common sense and experience. Yet I have seen him be mevatel his daas completely to the Menahel he works for, who I doubt has ever been to college, but has the experience and qualifications that more than make up for it.)

So, back to you, is that an option for you?

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by abie - 06 May 2016 05:16

[eslaasos wrote on 06 May 2016 04:11:](#)

Birshusi (can I say Birshuscha?),

Whoever knows why he's called birshusi, raise your hand or say Aye.

(Birshusi, don't give it away)

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 06 May 2016 05:36

I wish I could have been around tonight to be part of the conversation while it was happening. Tomorrow I'll digest and respond to everything iy"h.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by inastruggle - 06 May 2016 06:06

[markz wrote on 06 May 2016 03:23:](#)

1) As a frum bachur he doesn't get affection from any girl, hence he's love starved. **Just like every other frum bachur.**

Is this last line an assumption or fact?

2) I don't think that lusting after them in necessarily objectifying them though.

I'm begging on my knees, to differ about this too

1)Obviously I didn't interview every bachur. Maybe there are some who don't feel that way.

2)How is saying you'd like to have sex with a girl saying she's a sex object? You can respect her intelligence and humanity and still like to have sex, it isn't necessarily a contradiction.

The main thing is that you seem to agree to everything in my post but two lines.

[cordnoy wrote on 06 May 2016 03:53:](#)

1. If one fantasizes and lusts after women/men, it can be sick; it depends on the level and degree. And that's important.

2. We need to control it because the Torah says so. True. We also need to control it, or it will control us and ruin our lives.

3. I don't think you need a mental health professional to label an addict, but it should not be taken lightly either. Answering twenty questions can help, but there is much more as well.

1. Please see my above post where I clarified what I wrote

2. *Addicts* need to control it because otherwise it'll control them and ruin their lives. Normal people are fine.

3. I agree that there are extreme cases that don't need a professional. If a guy is homeless and divorced because of alcohol then he's an alcoholic. If he get's into fights with his wife because of drinking he should see a professional. Who do you think should decide if someone is an addict?

You can seriously hurt someone by deciding he's an addict (that includes hurting yourself). Please explain why someone shouldn't spend \$200 to get evaluated by a mental health professional who spent years in school and internships, before giving himself a diagnosis that will change his life.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by cordnoy - 06 May 2016 06:09

If normal people don't control it, there is a good chance they will become addicts.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by inastruggle - 06 May 2016 06:22

Debatable. The definition of a normal person in this case is someone who doesn't have the urge to use it excessively. I'm not an alcoholic, I don't even like alcohol. I need to control myself when I drink a l'chaim on shabbos, I have no urge for the second half of the shotglass.

What do you say to point three?

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by stillgoing - 06 May 2016 07:08

[inastruggle wrote on 20 Aug 1974 17:24:](#)

2)How is saying you'd like to have sex with a girl saying she's a sex object? You can respect her intelligence and humanity and still like to have sex, it isn't necessarily a contradiction.

Ina, i'm gonna have to go with Mark on this one. We can't approach marriage like that. The ideal (non-objectify love based) relationship between a husband and wife is filled with respect, love, and caring (granted, that these are not always in ample supply), having relations are then used to solidify that bond and commitment to each other that is already there. Having s with a girl without that setting is simply to satisfy our own sx drive. By using her for that, i would say that yes, we are treating her as a object.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by stillgoing - 06 May 2016 07:28

Personally, it makes no difference to me if a professional would label me an addict or not. Currently, I do consider myself an addict. The reasons are two fold.

#1 is What I do, (Do I only have improper thoughts, or do I act on them as well)

And #2 is How often I do I act on them.

What I do is act out, mzl, search images etc. - not "normal" things. How often is very often. I've been on the chart for about a year now and have very little to show for it. I've went to great lengths and expense to get my "fix", so I consider myself an addict.

By realizing this about myself, I learn that no matter how sober I feel right now, and no matter that I have been clean for a week, I know that I can't trust myself didley squat. I'm an addict who will go back for more at (almost) every chance I have, so I have learnt how to avoid many triggering situations.

This helps me.

I'm not depressed that I'm an addict, I can learn and do mitzvos and Hashem loves me like anybody else, but I need to know my weaknesses so that I can deal with them properly.

And if a mental health professional were to evaluate me and tell me that I'm not an addict, will that change anything? I will still be the guy who runs to p*** etc.

This is how it helps me. To each their own.

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