

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 - 13 May 2016 21:19

Ok so IMHO there's nothing wrong with quickly passing down there.

Perhaps you're too worried about it and here is what I want you to do

If you need to go down that hallway not a problem, just do and say this kabbalistic word very quietly so that Aryeh821 who may be walking the other direction doesn't discover you (unless you want him too)

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And from our local guru gevura there's another to be said if your truck gets stuck

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I think its a segula to say it 3 times, but that hasn't been verified

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 20 May 2016 18:57

Not much to add this week. I did a somewhat better job not looking at that house, although it's far from good enough. I've been able to keep my thoughts in check, for the most part, and my eyes are more controlled in general. Baruch Hashem, I learned very well this week, and of course that makes everything better.

I just read Shlomo24's thread. What a strong reminder that I can never assume that I'm cured.

He's been incredible and I'm sure he will remain that way.

Gonna daven for him today bli neder.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by inastruggle - 20 May 2016 20:23

Slow and steady progress is the way to go.

Yeshiva can introduce some challenges but for me it makes things easier (for the most part)

Glad to hear you're doing good.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 02 Jun 2016 18:37

It's Thursday bein hasdorim and I'm here for a quasi-emergency. This week has been rough. The weather is beautiful, warm and sunny, and the women are out. Everywhere. And those people in that house decided to build a deck, so now they and their daughters and their friends are clearly visible from pretty much everywhere on yeshiva grounds.

Basically, this has been my week: I want to look. I want to look. I wanawanawanawana look. Dang it I looked.

I haven't learned well this whole week, due to a couple of unrelated distractions and issues, so that makes everything worse.

I've been plagued with thoughts and fantasies, and it's been really hard to get them out of my head.

I did have a victory yesterday, when during seder, my mind went bezerk and staring and the gemara wasn't helping me shake them. I davened --twice-- and told myself to focus for just three minutes, and baruch Hashem I was able to do that and the thoughts and feelings left. But that was one ten minute triumph amidst a whole week of trudging through lust mud and quicksand.

It's especially rough by supper, when I really want to clear my head before night seder, and I love taking walks. But my lust loves taking walks too, because there's always the chance that we'll find some treats. In general, late afternoon/sunset is a really weak time for me. I wanawanawanawana look.

I'm here for another half an hour and then I'll be back tomorrow iy"H.

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 03 Jun 2016 05:15

Wow. I can soooooo relate! I go though periods like this as well. And this is what I try to tell myself when faced with this:

I don't want to look, because if I look I won't be satisfied. It will just increase my lust and fantasies and I'll want even more. Because in all honesty, why do *feel* I want to look? Is it just because women are pretty, like a sunset on the beach? No, it's because it gives fuel to my fantasies. I will be able to keep the image of that women in my head and fantasize all I want about her. And at least for me, I will be consumed by the lust until it brings me to masturbate. And then I will have a relief for a couple hours until the lust comes right back, ready for another round. And so ultimately I will have no rest from the lust. The only way to be *free* from lust is by not giving it fuel.

(On a related note, I found that after months without porn, even when I started lusting again I found it difficult to fantasize on anything as my mental image catalog was all faded. Once Shmiras Einayim got lax though it was suddenly replenished, giving fuel to my fantasies which ultimately led me to fall recently.)

So the bottom line is - do I want to be enslaved by lust or not? If the answer is no then I truly don't want to look!

I hope this makes some sense to you. Hatzlacha!

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 03 Jun 2016 19:32

[BenTorah.BaalHabayis wrote on 03 Jun 2016 05:15:](#)

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I hope this makes some sense to you. Hatzlacha!

Thanks for the validation; it really helps when someone says they understand.

The thing is, I seem to work differently than you when it comes to looking at women. Whenever I catch a glimpse of a woman I want to gaze at, it's like an itch, and when I scratch that itch, it feels so, so good.

But once I scratch that itch, I don't find myself thinking about what I saw. My fantasies are mostly creations of my own mind. Sometimes I'll recall things that I've seen, but usually not. And I don't masturbate, B"H. So looking at women is not a problem for me because of what it will lead to; it's the act itself that is the issue.

I want that pleasure of focusing and taking in the "scenery." I know my lust won't be satisfied,

but it still feels good in the moment. And I think there is a part of me that does appreciate the beauty, however weird that sounds.

Thoughts?

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by inastruggle - 03 Jun 2016 20:57

I relate to you. I also just get pleasure out of looking without fantasizing.

The chizzuk emails over the past few days were about this. I liked the idea in yesterdays email and I plan on using it.

Count the Diamonds! One trick that I have found helpful with the challenges of seeing improper and immodest sights in the street is making it into a game in my head. That is, I count the times that I need to look away. In other words, when I notice something improper/problematic and look away, I say to myself "that's one." A moment later, there's another need to look down, or away - "that's two." Then, someone is walking by and the Yetzer Hora says, "maybe take a good look to see if it's someone improperly dressed that you should look away from!" (don't fall for that trick) and, hopefully, I don't even look to begin with - "that's three." A bus passes by with a horrific ad - "that's four." Then, at the end, I've reached 12 or 25 or 100 or whatever, and I mark it down and reward myself when I get to a certain goal. Here's why I think it helps: The power of NOT LOOKING is something special and holy (even though it often doesn't feel holy at all - you're left with that image in your head and lusting emotion) but we know it IS something VERY special. It's been shared on the GYE emails that after looking away it's an "Eis Ratzon" - an opportune time to daven for something, based on the power of that moment of NOT LOOKING. We're told that "There's no greater Mitzva than avoiding a sin!" (Gemara in Kiddushin), which means by NOT LOOKING, you just did one of the greatest Mitzvos! Literally! If so, how can I not count how many SUPER Mitzvos I did on the way home? That's 5...That's 6.....That's 25.... Imagine giving Tzedaka or doing a super special Chesed 25 times in one day, and maybe in just one trip! What an accomplishment! And this is in a way even greater... So, make a goal and then celebrate those Mitzvos!! I believe that the reason this

is so helpful is that it reframes the challenge from 'no' and 'no' and 'don't look' and 'don't do an aveira,' which is hard and negative and feels like 'missing out' to something positive and energetic. Each 'no' is really a 'yes' - "that's another one", "and that's another one! Now I'm up to 54!" Each time one looks away is a ticket to greater Divine assistance, greater Kedusha, greater growth. Yes, it's so hard because naturally it doesn't feel that way - but by counting up and programming ourselves to view each 'looking away' as a powerful step UP of Kedusha & growth, suddenly the day or the trip etc. is suddenly filled with opportunities for such powerful Mitzvos and Zechusim and growth!

I find the blow it up method helpful for getting thoughts out of my head.

guardyoureyes.com/forum/2-What-Works-for-Me/102639-Blow-it-up#102639

Make sure to get someone's phone number for when you're in yeshiva.

Good shabbos.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 10 Jun 2016 21:14

[inastruggle wrote on 03 Jun 2016 20:57:](#)

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guardyoureyes.com/forum/2-What-Works-for-Me/102639-Blow-it-up#102639

Make sure to get someone's phone number for when you're in yeshiva.

Good shabbos.

I like that idea, thanks for sharing.

My mindset was much more positive over and right after bein hazmanim, when I was constantly connected to GYE. Being in Yeshiva has proven to be harder in some ways than being home.

I'm getting closer to asking for a phone partner. Still kinda scared.

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by markz - 10 Jun 2016 21:58

No GH05T is gonna pop out your phone and bite your ear

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Birshusi - 17 Jun 2016 04:11

[markz wrote on 10 Jun 2016 21:58:](#)

No GH05T is gonna pop out your phone and bite your ear

But what if the GHO5T knows me personally, or what if I don't like his personality, etc.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 17 Jun 2016 04:15

Over Shavuos I tried the "count the diamonds" method. Over the three day yom tov, I was zoche to acquire 31 diamonds. It feels pretty good, and that positive mindset helped take the frustration out of the struggle to not look.

Thanks ina.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 19 Jun 2016 22:35

I had a bad slip today. Not quite a fall, but a slip.

I was watching the Mets game and was checking out the other channels. There was a western movie on one channel, and as it turns out, an actress was prominently displayed, and she wasn't all that covered. Sorry for the detail, just trying to be honest.

I watched for a few minutes, guilty conscience and all, and even tried to look away while still watching. How stupid.

After about five minutes, I got up and took a shower. It took gevurah, and I know that if this was two months ago, I would've kept watching.

So I'm disappointed, but trying not to dwell on it and to just go vyter.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by BenTorah.BaalHabayis - 20 Jun 2016 04:37

I'm impressed. In some way it's harder to stop while the dopamine rush has already started...
And in addition, you didn't throw in the towel after watching for 5 minutes. You should be proud of yourself!

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by inastruggle - 23 Jun 2016 04:49

I can't agree more with BTBH

The gemara in kesubos talks about the concept of "yetzer albesha". Once we're in middle of the lusting it's really hard to stop.

Impressive stuff KUTGW!

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