

My son came to me for help
Posted by cmh - 03 Aug 2017 05:03

Hi.

I've been struggling for about 35 years.

things have generally been improving- I've made lots of gedarim, loads of successful personal work.

i realised that I have addictive tendencies, and that I still find myself doing stuff that I don't want to do.

so i have joined GYE, I am really encouraged by all the people here fighting to be clean & neeman. it's given me a lot of strength- 10 days clean so far, it's BH going well. I wanted to consult with the chevra about this:

My son is 13.

He called me to pick him up in the car, he wanted to speak to me.

he was very upset- he'd fallen.

it took him a while, and lots of encouragement, and he eventually was able to say what had happened- hoz"l.

through the whole conversatio- even b4 he'd said what it was, I had given him messages tha loads of people fall, just gotta geddup & carry on- the yeser hora wants your soul, not the avera,

anyway, it was a good shmues.

a few days later I initiated a conversation- he accepted the invitation. We talked about chizuk etc, I encouraged him to take a definite step- like something he would do b4 he fell. he said OK

I realised that the nrg was coming from me- and I realised that it must come from him. even if it takes longer, he has to do his own journey. he has to be the one talking. he has to bring me in, or wwwhoever else will help him.

So I said- from now on, you come to me when you want to talk.

I'd be interested in feedback- should I offer him some accountability? make fixed times to talk?

I know that I'm the father, on site. No-one else can pasken this. but perspectives from other people with more & different xperieces might really help me.

?Thanks.

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by Markz - 03 Aug 2017 12:11

Welcome brother

Great questions

Are you at all interested in sobriety yourself

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by cmh - 03 Aug 2017 12:53

thanks bro.

yes, I,m interested in sobriety. since I started my 90 day chart 11 days ago, I've had tremendous improvement with thoughts, lookings, awareness of other "lets-run-away-from-reality" behaviours.

hoping to keep growing.

Hoping to keep living. With Hashem. With gratitude for every second, every experience, every

up, and every down. With tefilla, with cheshbon nefesh. Doing what I should be doing. Finding the rest of my areas that need improving.

Have a good minute, then another one....

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by Markz - 03 Aug 2017 13:37

Ok great!

Others have come here asking for advice how to fix others, e.g. Family they messed up, but themselves wasn't in the equation

Hey, taking it minute by minute sounds like things are tough

Addicts can do with living ODAAT

Non addicts can do with whiteknuckling One Week at a time

Keep On Trucking ;-)

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by lomed - 03 Aug 2017 15:02

Welcome CMH.

Thanks for coming here to help yourself.

Congrats on the fact that your son was able to confide in you. It must be that you are doing something right that he feels comfortable to talk to you about this. As you said it must take lots of courage for a boy to open up about this. It must be that there is some kind of open dialog that he was able to do it.

I would share what I think i would do when my son would come to me about this. it may sound different, but it may be helpful. When my son shares with me something he is going through, i try to share back with him, when i was young went through similar situations and how i felt. When my son gets punished in school for misbehavior, I will tell him that it must be hard for him, and i can relate, because when i was in 5th grade i had a similar story, and i will share it in detail. When my 3 year old was at the dentist and was afraid,i told him, that when toty was 3 years old i was also afraid of a dentist, and its k to be afraid from a dentist.

When a child of mine needed therapy, I did share with him that I am currently in therapy. This crates a healthy feeling about what the child is going through. He knows that his father is open to him about his challenges and his father for sure does not judge him and loves him unconditionally. I also make sure to assure him that I love him regardless of what he is going through.

So yes, non of my children has yet discussed with me that he is struggling with sexual issues. But if this will ever happen, i will be telling to him, that what he is going through is normal, and that indeed i am still struggling till today. then i would suggest somehelp if he needs it, or someone that he can talk to freely. I do not plan in being his mentor for these issues. Although BH my children confide in me in all their matters (and therefore i believe that most probably they are not yet struggling), i do feel that this matter, if it is a struggle, should be handled by someone outside of family and outside of school, as this should not interfere with their day to day life.

thanks for letting me share.

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by gibbor120 - 03 Aug 2017 21:23

Welcome! Tough question. I'm curious to hear what people have to say, and how it goes.

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by cmh - 04 Aug 2017 13:41

thanks for sharing.

you gave me something to think about, and keep my eyes on through these journeys.

Have a great shabbos.

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by gibbor120 - 04 Aug 2017 20:25

Lomed,

I can see how that may work for the dentist etc., but I'd be nervous to say I still struggle (except maybe wish shmiras aynayim). Those other examples are things you overcame. I think saying that you still struggle may cause a sense of yiyush instead of hope. You have to be careful how/what you say.

Also, I think children should have a sense that their parents are - I'm not sure what word to use here, not perfect, not infallible, but somehow better higher... they should look up to a parent, and I think we can show that we are human, but our children should still look up to us.

I'm not necessarily disagreeing. Just saying to proceed with caution and take it all into account.

CMH, It is amazing that your son spoke to you, and a testament to your relationship.

It's a tough balance to let your son know that it is something he should not be doing. It is destructive. It can be addictive. And at the same time. It is common, it happens, and he should not become depressed.

Parenting is the hardest job in the world. Yasher Koach to you for having an open relationship with your son.

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Re: My son came to me for help
Posted by hashiveinu - 06 Aug 2017 15:50

hi. as everyone has pointed out it is amazing that he opened up to you like that.

i really do not have the right to have an opinion on the matter, but some food for thought.

i think that you should proceed with caution. although you are very experienced with this issue, it may be a totally different issue than what you have. you are addicted and he is going through a stage almost every bochur goes through. its something that needs chizuk and some advice to help him pull through it till he matures. you will probably be more focused in helping him break it and make sure it doesnt turn into an addiction.

i agree with gibbor that a parent should be a role model in his childs eyes. but more than that, if he is so open to you he probably looks up to you and if he hears what you are doing he may not have the maturity to see it as a struggle that doesnt make you into a bad person. he may start to look down at you and not trust you anymore in this area at least. he also may stop trusting all choshive people and then he may stop talking to you and may even not want to talk to a rebbi. (am i being to extreme?)

my advice is that you should talk to a rov to guide you on how to proceed. even if you were embarrassed in the past to expose yourself, the focus right now is your child and you can even let the rov know that you are helping yourself already and just want his guidance for your son.

who knows? maybe helping your son is your chance to have a real tikun for what youve done in the past, and even a zechus for the future.

Hatzlacha rabba.

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Re: My son came to me for help

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 06 Aug 2017 16:42

Maskim to all of the above. As a suggestion, perhaps it would be productive to tell him that you too struggled when you were young, but not to mention that you still do so or how far it has gone. That should let him feel that you have empathy with him, while not giving him reason to look down on you.

Hatzlacha to the both of you!

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Re: My son came to me for help

Posted by Markz - 06 Aug 2017 17:05

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 06 Aug 2017 16:42:](#)

Maskim to all of the above. As a suggestion, perhaps it would be productive to tell him that you too struggled when you were young, but not to mention that you still do so or how far it has gone. That should let him feel that you have empathy with him, while not giving him reason to look down on you.

Hatzlacha to the both of you!

AND OF COURSE SHARE THIS POEM

And every day that you want to waste, that you want to waste, you can

And every day that you want to wake up, that you want to wake, you can

And every day that you want to change, that you want to change, yeah

Gevura will help you see it through...

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