

My Journey Starts Today

Posted by AnonyJew - 22 Apr 2020 15:33

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Hi,

This is my first thread on GYE. I intend for this thread to be used as a log of my journey (to hold myself accountable and help others see what the process may look like) and a forum for conversations around the different obstacles and issues that will come up on this journey. I ask that if you're going through or have gone through something similar to please chime in and share your thoughts, advice and encouragement.

So here I am. I'm 29 years old and still struggling with shmiras einayim, shmiras habris and the weight of carrying my "secret" on my shoulders for some 18 years now. I've got a lot more to share but I will leave that for another post.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 02 May 2020 18:15

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Here is another great one (I think it was mentioned earlier by @Starting).

<https://guardyoureyes.com/forum/17-Balei-Battims-Forum/242970-Things-to-do-for-the-Mrs>

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by Singularity - 03 May 2020 03:52

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Yes, I am also scared of giving my son "the talk", I hope I'm somewhat clean at the time!!!! But if all goes well, a good hold in sobriety and recovery and praying to Hashem to give me the right words to say, I don't think I'd need anything else.

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My son's only 4, so I've got some time  
Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by starting - 03 May 2020 06:48

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Thanks for putting the links in. I was hoping someone would find them and put them in. I should have mentioned that in my post

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Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by AnonyJew - 03 May 2020 11:58

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Another update:

I'm now on day 12 clean. When they say every day is a battle, they mean it. I am finding though that it has become a bit easier. I have to remind myself that the way of the *yetzer harah* is to make you feel like you are winning in order to let your guard down. So far the biggest help in managing the urges have been the delay method (starting a 20 minute timer from the moment I get an urge and waiting for the urge to pass) and my CBA. I haven't even completed it but I found that even just focusing on the benefits section has been tremendously powerful. There are so many benefits to quitting and so few to keeping the addiction. I know it seems obvious but having gone through the exercise and defining the benefits really made a powerful impact into my mind.

I've also begun to speak more openly with my wife about my feelings. It's been a few days where I have been trying hard not to keep everything to myself but just be vulnerable and put my cards on the table. I don't mean in regards to this addiction, I'm still not there. But just in general in regards our relationship and raising our kids and life. To give some more context the past few years I've been struggling with *shalom bayis* and the worst part was that we have had a huge emotional disconnect. It probably has a lot to do with my issues but nonetheless it has been spiraling downward.

Yesterday after speaking with my wife for an hour or so she told me "I want you to know that I love you. I feel like we've been connecting again" I know it may seem trivial but it has been a long time since I've heard anything like that. Even longer since there was actual truth in the words.

I am so grateful for this recovery process. I'm not there yet but I hope to continue in this way. I already see a light at the end of the tunnel getting brighter.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 03 May 2020 12:18

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Wow! really inspiring.

I don't know what it was but something struck a chord in me. Hearing about peoples relationships growing stronger is very powerful.

Thanks for sharing.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by Singularity - 03 May 2020 14:40

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[AnonyJew wrote on 03 May 2020 11:58:](#)

Another update:

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Yes, having an affair with a woman on the computer screen does spell a bad case of shalom bayis!!

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Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by AnonyJew - 04 May 2020 03:22

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Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by Singularity - 04 May 2020 03:24

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I feel the stronger we share and are honest with each other, the better our shalom bayis gets. But you've touched on this point already.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today  
Posted by AnonyJew - 04 May 2020 11:50  
That wasn't very encouraging.

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I don't disagree with your point. I think part of my problem is that I've been lying about and hiding this dark side of me for so long that I've started to believe some of these lies to a certain extent. It's obvious that watching pornography is a betrayal to the mrs but for some reason I rationalized it to the point where I haven't even been viewing it as such.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by AnonyJew - 04 May 2020 12:09

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Hey everyone,

Checking in again. Today is day 13 clean so far. Last night was a real struggle. I saw something triggering on Tik Tok and put on my timer for 20 minutes. I played some video games to distract myself but I stayed triggered for most of that time. In the past 12 days that I was clean I don't remember ever having such a strong urge. I pulled out my CBA and reviewed the benefits of section I've completed and I was still battling. I tried jumping onto the forums here on GYE for a while but oddly I started to feel more triggered when reading some of the posts (maybe it was a bad thread to read at that time) so I logged out and hopped on my email. I listened to a few of the GYE chizuk broadcasts. I was still feeling a decent urge so I just called it a night and went into bed. I put my phone on my bedside table (just out of reach) and Baruch HaShem I made it. Honestly last night it was clear to me what I keep hearing.

I am powerless to break free. Only Hashem can help me out of this. I am totally dependent on His help. On the other side of that I'm so grateful and feel so blessed that He gave me another day clean. That's one more day that proves Hashem hasn't given up on me. If He hasn't given up on me it means that He believes in me. He believes I have potential for greatness. I cannot describe the energy and pride that waking up to another *clean* day generates. It feels great.

On another note I spoke with my wife about some of my issues with dealing with anxiety and how in the past I used to turn to various things to help me cope - some healthy some unhealthy - and that lately I've been noticing that I am having a very difficult time with anxiety. I told her I don't think I'm coping properly and it is reaching a point where I am having trouble functioning properly, meaning to say I am not meeting all my responsibilities. I asked her what her thoughts were on me seeing a therapist and she was surprisingly very supportive. She encouraged me to go even if just to hear them say "you don't need to be here". I've started to do some research and found a local therapist who specializes in anxiety but also specializes in porn/sex addiction. I'm thinking about scheduling an appointment to try it out. I've never done therapy before and I'm very nervous but almost every single person I've spoken to or heard from so far who has gotten out of this was in therapy.

What is the *olam's* thoughts on this? Is individual therapy mandatory in recovery? Can it hurt? How do you pick a great therapist? What questions do you ask?

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by AnonyJew - 05 May 2020 13:12

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Hello again,

*Hodu Lashem Ki Tov Ki L'Olam Hasdo.* Today marks the start of day 15 clean which means that I have made it two weeks by the kindness of Hashem. I cannot believe I have made it this far and I am excited and hopeful for the future.

I can say that it is getting harder to stay clean day by day. In the evenings I am starting to experience more of an urge and it is taking a serious amount of work and willpower to stay out of it. One thing I wish I could do better is to ask Hashem for help when I'm experiencing the urges. The 20 minute delays and the CBA are extremely helpful but I would like to include Hashem in the process since ultimately I cannot do this without Him. If He wants me to be clean I will be.

In another odd turn of events I experienced two nocturnal emissions last night and I wasn't thinking about triggers or my urge when I went to bed. I also don't remember having any dream whatsoever last night so the cause is a mystery to me. I also hardly ever experienced this before in my life. I've had a few here and there but usually it was associated with explicit thoughts going to sleep or I had an explicit dream. I was thinking maybe this is the beginning of my body going through some kind of withdrawal. Is that a thing? Did anyone else experience something like this and what advice can you give me?

I just want to clarify that while I did experience these emissions and I was with my wife once since I started this journey I am still counting it clean because I am working on breaking free from porn and masturbation. Those are the things I am clean from.

Another thing that has gone well recently is I spoke to my wife again yesterday about getting a therapist. I told her after our last discussion that I tried doing some research and found one that

is close by and will also do virtual sessions. I mentioned that he works with anxiety issues. I left out that he also works with porn addiction. To be fair, I probably won't bring it up in our first few sessions anyways. I'm not sure how long it will take to get the courage to tell another person face to face.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by AnonyJew - 06 May 2020 12:24

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Hey everyone,

I think in my last post I got the days wrong. Today is currently day 15 clean. I have completed my CBA and the urges are definitely coming at me stronger than ever. Nonetheless with Hashem's help I have been able to stay clean.

I have a lot going on in my life right now with all the uncertainties that the Corona Era has brought and that is creating a lot of anxiety for me. My go-to coping mechanism was always to engage in *zera levatalah* which was accompanied by pornography. Now that I'm not doing that I am finding a hard time finding other activities to help me cope. I'm also finding it harder to sleep at night.

I recently got a new book called *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg that was strongly recommended so I'm hoping I can get absorbed into that book and I also recently formed a new *chavrusa* to study *Halacha b'lyun* so maybe the added learning and reading will help keep my mind off of things.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by AnonyJew - 10 May 2020 14:41

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Hey everyone,

Today is day 19 clean. Nothing really new to report. Shabbat was relatively uneventful. I've recently started a chavrusa to study Tanya with and that has been helpful in inspiring me to work hard. Tanya was one of the sefarim that really helped inspire me way back when and it's really awesome that Hashem arranged it so that someone would request this chavrusa. I haven't relearned the Tanya in almost 10 years now.

?I also had an interesting discussion with my wife on Shabbos about how I'm starting to realize that one of my biggest issues has been that I hold myself to this unrealistically high standard of who I think I should be. Then I convince myself that everyone else is expecting that of me too. When I don't live up to it in even the slightest things I start to feel bad.

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Re: My Journey Starts Today

Posted by Dave M - 10 May 2020 18:06

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Hey AnonyJew. I haven't been on in a while, but just read through your thread. I'm very impressed with how hard you are working and willing to make take a hard look within. Keep working hard and I'H you and your wife relationship will keep growing stronger and stronger.

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