

The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 25 Mar 2022 14:02

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WOW! Mi Keamcha Yisroel!

I've been hanging around here for a few weeks and I'm totally in awe at what's going on here. The battlefield of Klall Yisroel! I really find it hard to believe that for so many years I was struggling on my own when there was a whole world out there giving chizuk, tips and advice, fighting this battle together. So many of you have such profound insightful things to say! I'd like to tell my story, it's actually the first time I'm thinking of this aspect of my life as a story, and definitely the first time sharing it. I think writing it will be a help for me.

I'm 30 and I've been struggling for around 18 years. It started right from when I picked up the concepts of sexuality (actually from a classmate showing me a dictionary...). Throughout my teenage years in yeshiva I would be MZ"L frequently, at first feeling very guilty but as time went on those feelings faded. Although I never gave up the battle, I rarely managed to stay clean for more than a few weeks. I would fantasize quite a lot and had an irresistible pull to any inappropriate material (catalogues, radio music, books etc) I could get my hands on. During those years I didn't have any access to internet so didn't come across porn (other than when I was about 14 and I looked through a mag in a kiosk, until the storekeeper caught me and I ran for my life), but I for sure wouldn't have been able to withstand the burning desire that such an opportunity would trigger. May seem funny after what I just wrote, but I actually did very well in yeshiva; loved learning (I still do) and was considered a good bochur. Then got married and at first things were going good, for first two years of marriage I don't remember acting out at all. My pull to 'lower level' inappropriate material also lessened. But then the nissoyon of internet showed its ugly face and sent me flying, I was straight away onto porn. Although we never officially had unfiltered internet at home and even filtered only when my wife needed it for work, I found (or created) plenty of opportunities to access porn, and with time chat sites as well. That's where I'm holding now; it goes with tekufos. When I have a way of accessing the internet, I'm possessed by this ruach shtus that knows no limits or boundaries and walk around with this burning thumping chest bursting with lust... And when I have no access (like now, [I use a filtered internet suite]) I'm back to the person I want to be, focused on my learning and not acting out in any way and can easily forget that I have a problem. This past elul (!) I got a huge teiva to buy myself a portable wifi with the sole purpose of chatting to a girl who'd been spamming me (from a different internet tekufo). I can't describe the impossible internal fight that went on! I couldn't dream of doing it with Rosh Hashono 2 weeks away but the ruach shtus in me was absolutely desperate and was even secretly hoping that things would get more real than just online. I was dragged to the store (that's what it felt like) bought the device and kept it until 2 days before yom tov. Rosh hashono wasn't easy. But I got back to myself pretty quickly, until a few months ago when I realized a really easy way to get hold of an internet dongle, which triggered a powerful urge to get one, which I did, again after an internal battle (this time not as dramatic). I chucked it a few weeks later and was back to normal... until a few weeks ago when I realized the filter of the internet suite I use was totally down. Within 5 minutes I had downloaded porn onto a stick to view in private... And that's when I decided to look into GYE (I only learnt of its existence a few months ago from an ad I saw).

I don't know where or when the next nisoyon will pop up, but I know it will and also know I won't be able to withstand it, unless I do something about it now. But how can I fight a yetzer hora when it's not there? In my present matzav I have absolutely no desire for porn, think of it for what it is, empty trash that has absolutely nothing to offer me, but that's all meaningless once the ruach shtus takes over. (Of course I still have a YH and got plenty to work on, but I'm not overtaken with lust and busy with things I shouldn't be). I've sometimes held on to the internet instead of getting rid of it just to be able to resist and overcome it but it's a lost case. I've learnt from the GYE handbook that we shouldn't be fighting it head on, but I'm still not sure the right course of treatment for me.

Thank you for reading this far. It's amazing to be able to share all this with a non-judgmental growth orientated crowd that can relate to it all, only why didn't I hear of you earlier? I'm really hopeful of finally getting somewhere in this battle.

iwillmanage. B'ezras Hashem.

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 20 Apr 2023 10:41

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[iwillmanage wrote on 19 Apr 2023 23:40:](#)

[Eerie wrote on 19 Apr 2023 17:59:](#)

Wanted to share with the oilam.

I am BH up to 240 days, kein yirbu beH. I recently posted how BH this journey has been mostly much easier than I expected it to be, and in the past few months I have sometimes thought that I am past all this, I will never fall again. BH I still did not fall, but I learned again of my weakness and of all the safeguards we need in place.

One of the first I did when I started my journey upwards was that I made a kabbalah that I do not use an unsafe device, and if the need arises I will text my accountability partner before I get on it, and I will report to him when I get off. If I use it without texting first I will rip \$200 to shreds Yesterday I needed to use an unsafe device for something, and I texted my partner that I will be on. While I was using it I had a very strong urge to use it to "just check something, news maybe etc....", I really wanted to click on the browser, and the YH put up quite a fight, but what kept me strong was that I knew I have a partner to answer to.

Lesson learned: I still have a YH (surprise, surprise!) that is very powerful! And having an accountability partner is invaluable! So thank you Hashem for friends that stand by me and hold me strong, and thanks to my accountability partner for everything!

Thank you for sharing that! Kol hakavod for pulling through on the nissoyon! We really can't take any breaks and let the guard down.

Can I ask, if it c"v ever comes to it, that you give me the money to rip up?

I don't fully get the inyan of shredding good cash. I understand that there's a psychological effect of some sort and it's a lot more painful than just donating to tzedoko, but is that extra pain necessary to achieve the desired effect. Have there been reported cases of the YH convincing guys that it's actually a mitzvah to go on that site because you'll get the zechus of giving tzedoko as well? It's not that it bothers me what someone else does with his money, it doesn't. It's only that it was nogaya for me today. I also found myself with an unfiltered device and I hadn't made a plan for the scenario. So the YH used the age old tactic of putting me onto the slippery slope by getting me to search for something as ridiculous as 'kosher pics of women' (badatz porn or something?). Bh I didn't slip further (maybe the pictures that came up were a damper) but I decided to make myself a kenasa to donate to GYE if I do that again. Should I change it to ripping up the money instead? I'm not sure that it sits well with me to waste the money like that. (Like we shouldn't waste seed. K, we'll leave that out).

Hey. I'm not sure why I'm getting so into something that's never gonna actually happen. Hopefully.

OK. So GYE just got a nice donation. (Not for porn, just for following my tayvas for a minute)

Would having to shred it have made it harder to fall? Not so sure.

Mabe I needed a larger knas. Not so sure either. I think I just needed to feel the pinch once for it to have an effect.

But more than knosos, what I need is a change of mindset. Even though I've stopped acting out with P&M, I haven't really shifted my focus to other things. Shmiras enayim on the street has now become a much bigger issue and fantasizing about random girls passing by has never really been my nissoyon. (This ogling actually feels really petty and small minded every time. But I still do it for some reason. Suppose cuz I like it). Previously after getting rid of access to porn I would have made the conscious decision to get back to what's important and leave all the garbage behind me. For some reason that didn't happen this time. It could be partly because now that for the first time I've made some solid moves to breaking free (spoken to people, accountability) I'm hesitant of making such conscious decisions which I've made so many times before as they may just be covering up where I'm really holding, and sooner or later the lust will pop again. This time I want to really be rid of it. But maybe I should be harder on myself and more demanding, otherwise nothing's going to move. I don't know.

(It could also simply be that I've fallen lower over time, which is probably true.)

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 20 Apr 2023 11:23

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It is normal and expected to "start noticing" people on the street after breaking free from watching pornography. The subconscious is desperately looking for its fix and will try in any way possible to get you aroused. If it can't get you to hyper stimulate with the thrill of online imagery, it settles for the "boring" real life street sights. Once you realize that it is part of the normal recovery progression, and that there is no need to panic (why am i suddenly attracted to every woman in the street? I must still be a rasha/sicko), you will iyh be able to calmly look away as you go about your day.

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by Eerie - 21 Apr 2023 00:14

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Hey, my friend, please! Why all the harshness? Yes, be honest with yourself, but skip the

harshness. You got so many things to be proud of. Yes, you still have work to do, like all of us. But keep smiling, will ya?

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 24 Apr 2023 03:32

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[Hashem Help Me wrote on 20 Apr 2023 11:23:](#)

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One of the best things about biking is that when you see a female entity in the distance to keep the eyes on the road and focus on breathing and pedaling and then when I cruise by, I think in my head "yes! you sicko, you didn't get me to look at you, I won"

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 24 Apr 2023 08:29

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[Eerie wrote on 21 Apr 2023 00:14:](#)

Hey, my friend, please! Why all the harshness? Yes, be honest with yourself, but skip the harshness. You got so many things to be proud of. Yes, you still have work to do, like all of us. But keep smiling, will ya?

I'm really not sure what harshness you're referring to, Eerie.

On the contrary, I'm actually very easy on myself, maybe too easy, and that's exactly the point I

was trying to make in my post. Besides for my early teens when I was just starting out with these issues, I have hardly done any of the self-bashing or feel the strong negative emotions that are 'supposed' to go with my behaviours. I would sometimes wonder what's wrong with me that I feel so ok in my situation and don't feel depressed and meyuash and a rasha like everyone says people like me do. Still now, when it comes to gazing in the street, I basically do what I want without giving it too much thought at the time or afterwards. So I had this soft, almost fleeting thought that maybe it would do me good to be more demanding of myself, and I decided to concretize it in a post. (It actually had an effect because the first time I went out after I posted it I had a thought 'maybe I shouldn't look at that', and looked away. Unfortunately, that hisorerus soon faded, but who knows, maybe this post will have the same effect again.) Realizing that im ein ani li mi li isn't being harsh on oneself.

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by Eerie - 24 Apr 2023 20:28

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Keep sharing, my dear friend. And I'm confident that as you keep shteiging, and you keep watching your eyes, the sensitivity you are looking for will return. In a way you are blessed, because for many of us it's a real battle to not feel meyuash. So don't search for bad feelings about yourself. But the sensitivity will come, beH, as you keep soaring

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 16 May 2023 20:15

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100 days clean!

Nice round number, a time to reflect a bit. Bh the journey so far has been pretty smooth – I haven't been on the verge of falling or faced crazy urges that I couldn't control. It seems that opening up to someone on the phone and being answerable and accountable to him was all I needed to keep myself on the track I want to be. As long as I was in it on my own, however Well, in that case, call me up and I'll give you some harshness. much I wanted to, I couldn't find the self – control I needed to hold myself back. The power of connection here is huge. (Opening up used to seem to me like a big monster. What a mistake! There was nothing to lose and everything to gain.)

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At the same time, the journey hasn't always been easy, more in the emotional way. Especially at the beginning but still a bit now, the prospect of once and for all 'signing out' and saying goodbye forever to something that has been part of me for so long, given me so much enjoyment and been some support in difficult times has been difficult. But who says it has to be easy, (it can hurt like hell, but that's ok – Grant). It's a small price to pay for being able to live life the way I truly want.

It also came as a surprise the extent to which I'm dependent on masturbation to regulate my feelings. I always thought my main issue was porn, and masturbating just tagged along. But while I have hardly had urges for porn (probably because access is hard), hardly a day has gone by without some degree of urges to masturbate. But now, instead of covering the issue with the feeling of release, I can get to sort out the core of the problem. (Just one example, a chavrusa who was a major trigger – great guy but terrible match, way way quicker and smarter – has finally been changed. It's made a massive difference to my whole day. There've been more such 'perks'.)

So the journey's begun but not yet over. Supressing the lust in one place will make it pop up somewhere else. I've noticed that on the street and the bedroom. But we'll take it as it comes, one step at a time.

Finally, thank you to Hashem Help Me for the continuous care love and support to someone you don't know and have never met, what you're doing is mind-bogglingly amazing. I wouldn't have managed without you. And thank you to all my great friends here for all your support throughout.

IWM

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 17 May 2023 13:58

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I should have been clearer about what's helped me, maybe it'll help others. It wasn't just the 'opening up' on its own, the effects of that would have faded long ago. It's the daily accountability; keeping the connection alive and knowing that I'll have to send a text of how the day went makes me think twice before I act on a whim to get my fix. I can say with almost certainty that if not for that I'd be right back to where I left off 101 days ago, there've been many opportunities for that.

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Re: The story of my struggles  
Posted by Grant400 - 17 May 2023 21:23

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[iwillmanage wrote on 16 May 2023 20:15:](#)

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IWM

100 days. That's huge. Very huge!

I just reread your first post, and comparing that to where you are today is amazing. Worlds apart - that was only made possible by your own supreme discipline and confident decisions.

Taking years and years full of less than desirable habits and throwing that all away for a streak of sanity and control shows what kind of man you are.

Kudos to you! Keep on streaking and keep on posting!

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 18 May 2023 08:41

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Hey Grant! I appreciate that so much! Yesterday was a difficult day for me, you might call it 'brutal'. I was feeling very down and dispirited. The fact that what I thought was a big achievement seemed to be being ignored by others didn't help to say the least. So your warm words of appreciation mean a lot more then you (or I) might have thought. Thank you!

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Posted by Grant400 - 18 May 2023 19:15

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You did get a bunch of thank yous, but I'm not sure why no one thought it a big enough accomplishment for a comment. It's definitely from the bigger ones around here!

Keep on rocking!

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by Heeling - 18 May 2023 19:41

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Dear IWM,

I'm taking it personal and want to apologize for not giving you the shout out you deserve.

100 IS AMAZING! what a number!!!! its truly incredible that you reached that number. (I'm glad you didnt stop at 90). 100 is a round number but all the struggles and success aren't round at

all, great job. Keep Strong.

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by Eerie - 18 May 2023 20:37

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My dear friend, WOW! 100 days is massive! And, like the insightful Grant pointed out, it's much more than the days, it's the growth inside of you, which I know is tremendous work. BH your hard work is paying off. Keep inspiring us all!

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by yitz23 - 18 May 2023 20:46

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Wow 100 days!

You inspire me!

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