

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 - 12 Jun 2023 14:54

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[iwillmanage wrote on 04 Jun 2023 20:59:](#)

[Bigmoish wrote on 04 Jun 2023 17:47:](#)

TL/DR: I watch/ed porn and masturbate, therefore I am a loser.

Sorry, what's a loser?

Sounds like some fictitious concept thought up by a guy with lots of imagination..

I take that back.

True or not, makes no difference

It feels as real as can be, as real as me

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 12 Jun 2023 14:57

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When you find yourself in a pit, the first thing is stop digging.

Sounds so simple. Why's it so complicated?

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by chaimoigen - 12 Jun 2023 15:14

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I'm pretty new here and I am just reading your thread now. You have tremendous insight and honesty, and so much growth . There are a lot of intelligent conversations with real substance.

You have come many, many, miles from the beginning of your journey. I have a lot to learn from you, chaver...

I feel that maybe it could help a little to stop and feel some rachmanus and empathy for the poor guy who keeps digging in the pit....

You are a special Neshoma and you have what it takes to make it out....

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Re: The story of my struggles

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Posted by Eerie - 12 Jun 2023 23:14

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If only it were so simple, my friend. If only. What if the pit has some sweets in the soil, and you feel good each time you find one? What if you get a rush of adrenaline every time you dig a little deeper?

My friend, give yourself some slack. It's really tough. But you are tougher

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by chosemyshem - 22 Nov 2024 13:46

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[iwillmanage wrote on 17 May 2023 13:58:](#)

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

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 much I wanted to, I couldn't find the self – control I needed to hold myself back. The power of connection here is huge.

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.

But See

[iwillmanage wrote on 22 Nov 2024 10:10:](#)

It's worth mentioning that even in the 'post HHM era' there are those that don't find recovery until joining SA. I think there's a risk here of people not making progress, falling again and again whilst being injected with the constant chizzuk boosts of 'you're winning if you're fighting' and the like, and they're sure that if the HHM method works for others it must work for them too. It doesn't occur to them that for whatever reason, they're case might be different. That was my experience in any case. Being in touch with HHM daily for months but not breaking free (although I was 'clean' for a few months), I didn't dream that I was different to the others who it was working for. Better off, in fact. I'm grateful to him and others for suggesting that I join SA where I found my path to recovery. I'll be celebrating 6 months in a few days.

R' I Will Manage perhaps you can clarify the change - how the "HHM method" worked for you, how it didn't work for you, why you decided to move to SA, and how SA helped in a way that the HHM method didn't?

I think there'd be an enormous toeles to the rabim.

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 27 Nov 2024 10:08

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Some nice questions, Shem, though I'm not sure answering them will be as much of a toeies as you make out. I'll only be adding to the great cholent of experiences to be found on the forum and confuse the oilom even more as they try to figure out the question of all questions, 'Am I an addict?'. It's so easy to try and match one's own experience to the stories you read about on the forum, but the truth is the picture you get from reading someone's posts doesn't begin to portray who they actually are or the true nature of their struggles. I know I would have saved myself a lot of agmas nefesh if I would have focused more on myself and what works for me instead of seeing myself in terms of what I read about here. There's a lot of aspects to my story, I personally don't want to go into great detail of all my deviant and depraved activities, nor can I give you an accurate picture of the reckless risks I was taking daily or how my obsession was taking over my life in every way.

I joined SA because HHM advised me to. Dov, cordnoy and my Rov also strongly advised it, (although as far as I could see, they all had their own take on me and SA). I didn't want to go, I didn't think I had to. But I went, and came to see why they were right.

You've brought me back to this thread, but I hadn't been planning on revisiting it. Reading those posts you quoted on reaching 100 days reminded me of those confused and troubled times when I felt horrible in myself, sad and helpless. I was very superficially clean, the obsession was growing massively, and when I did fall again I experienced the obsession with an intensity like never before, (there's the toxicity to lust, especially strong after abstaining for a while). So thank you for the opportunity to reflect a bit on how I've progressed since then. In SA I began to face myself, accept myself, I learnt what honesty was and also underwent an in-depth ego deflation. I had thought I was 'it'. Better and different to the rest, could do the heck I wanted and immune to the consequences. I faced my relationship with Hashem, my wife and those around me, and it's only beginning. Occasionally it feels like I'm putting myself through my own soul-surgery without painkillers, but the rewards are priceless. To live grounded in reality, free from the hellish obsession and all it brings one day at a time. And to experience growth from where I'm at.

If not for anyone else, there was toieleles for me. So thanks!

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 30 May 2025 09:25

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Celebrating a year today.

A true birthday of sorts.

With immense gratitude for the past.

ODAAT going forward.

Trudging along, one step at a time, my eyes are focused on the ground in front, holding my balance as I clamber over the obstacles in my way. Occasionally the path is smoother, but I look up to a road that stretches ahead, further then I can see. But today I take a glance behind, I'm surprised at how far I've come. The landscape of a year ago is so different to what surrounds me today, a view I hadn't known existed or dreamt I'd ever see. I don't take too long a break, the terrain today is particularly rough. But I've been invigorated with a new energy, some fuel for the stretch ahead. I've seen that change is possible.

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