

My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 22 Sep 2022 01:20

Hello, Friends.

My name is iLoveHashem247. I am a married man with a supportive wife and three wonderful kids. Looking at my life from an outsider's perspective, you'd think I have it all. I own a renovated home on my own private road with lots of land, run my own business with which i support myself, am fortunate to be able to learn many more hours a week than i work, and am a popular and recognized member of my community - and I'm not yet 30 years old. But all this comes with a price tag - a lifelong struggle with addiction, mostly with marijuana and risky sexual encounters.

I had girlfriends in high school before becoming BT, and had shmirat habit challenges, like most teens. I struggled with SB and engaging in sexual activities at massage parlors but was able to be clean for at least 6 months before marriage. during my wife's pregnancy with our second child, i unfortunately reverted back to my pre-BT habit of recreational marijuana during the stress of a second pregnancy (the first one outside of the shana rishona "infatuation zone"), which in turn let down a rabbit hole of other issues... i had recently been visiting massage parlors, not for the sexual experience (i do not engage in any "happy endings" anymore, rather when i do succumb it is for the exhibitionism that i can indulge in without making a massive chillul Hashem). I am also very disappointed to admit that i had a sexual encounter with a shiksa who picked up a business card i had left at a restaurant i ate in, she sent me lewd photos and we met up one time (sept 12, '22) where she performed oral sex on me.

I am struggling to break out of these addictive patterns - i have recently filtered my home office desktop, my work laptop, and my smartphone i use to run my business (main issue was watching movies and free "live cams"). The crazy thing is that i am a person who has made such amazing changes in my life - in many ways, I am the kind of person i look up to and always wanted to become - but it is the sticky residue of my past life that I'm having such a hard time getting rid of.

I am sick of who I've secretly become and the double life i am living.

I want to be fair to myself, honest and equitable with my wife, and and terrified of the shame i will face when standing before my Creator on my day of judgement.

Well, that was deeply revealing and I have revealed to you, fellow strangers, that which i have not even revealed to my wife. To be fair though, i have been fully open with her regarding the guarding of eyes and marijuana addictions, but have never ever discussed the massage parlor or infidelity.

HELP!

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by foolie - 19 Dec 2023 19:32

The answer to your question

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by neshuma - 20 Dec 2023 17:37

Dear ilovehashem247

You are not alone, Here in GYE You will find many successful people in all ages who are suffering in silent for years, Thank god we can find here loads of tools for recovery, And BAZ"H get back our REAL life, Keep it up

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ilovehashem247 - 09 May 2024 13:29

hi guys

quick update, I've been working the 12 steps - primarily in AA but also go to one SA meeting a

week consistently

have been seeing gradual changes in the way i interact with those around me and my attitude towards life

I'm no longer always the victim

I'm also no longer always the instigator

working the 4th step (compiling a list of resentments, fears, and sexual damages to others) made me realize that i have a part in every machloket, and that that I have some consistent negative middot that are connected with most of these resentments.

clarifying what exactly they are as i do the 5th step (sharing with another person, in this case my sponsor) and not surprisingly, jealousy, rage, and ego are big culprits.

learning to live without the need for a high - whether from a drink, drug, or sexual [mis]adventure.

it's pleasant, and a bit unsettling. I can be ok with my wife grumping at me, and i don't have to get angry.

intensive personal trauma/addiction therapy and weekly marriage counseling is a big help in the process.

I'm getting financial aid in the therapies, which makes a big difference.

I'm nervous that i will drop these new behaviors after the initial excitement, but realistically i think it is feasible to stay on this path if i only remember 3 important facts:

1. I am an addict - powerless over drugs, alcohol, and lust (took me almost a year to admit that!) and that they make my life completely unmanageable
2. Only a power greater than my own self-will can restore me to sanity from my state of insanity, and that power is Hashem

3. He will relieve me of the obsession and grant me a daily reprieve if only i let him in to my life, and make an intense daily effort to life a spiritual life

there are 5 things i do pretty much every day:

1. Pray to Hashem right when i wake up that he should relieve me of my addiction for today and give me the strength and wisdom to do the right thing - to not drink, drug, or act out
2. read a "daily reflection," a little blurb from the AA literature with a message for sobriety
3. Call my sponsor between 9-10am
4. call guys from my AA/SA network early in the day, and as a struggle comes up throughout the day. goal is to reach out to 5 guys, sometimes i reach them and sometimes I don't and that's fine.
5. go to a meeting.

I've found that what works best for me is to stick close to the guys who have what I want and to do what they do.

I've been told that there is no shame or guilt in being an alcoholic/addict, so long as we actively do something about it. We've all done some pretty messed up stuff while under the influence of [i]pick your poison[/i]. We didn't choose this. It is a G-d-given test to us, tailor made for us to reach our potential. But if we know that we can do something about it, and don't, then we are practically criminally negligent for damages we caused to ourselves and others.

Our families and friends deserve better.

WE deserve better!

Hashem expects us to work hard to accomplish our potential.

So from a stranger on the internet, here's a helping hand - if you're reading this today , then you - specifically - need to do something about your struggle.

It's ok to ask for help, and it's ok to cry about what's happened in your life.

Know that you are not the first to be going through this struggle, and in the world we live in today, definately not the last.

So pick up the phone or go up to someone safe and confide in them. ask for help. maybe you are not addicted, and maybe you've not yet hit rock bottom. but it's no fun to find out the hard way, let me tell you!

so good luck and farewell until next time,

ILH247

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by yitzchokm - 09 May 2024 20:28

Great to hear how well you are doing. I never went to SA meetings but from all the slogans I heard from others I can see that you are internalizing them well and you are on the right track. Keep up your good work.

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ilovehashem247 - 12 May 2024 20:29

in the past week, i shared the worst thing i ever did with two people - my therapist and my sponsor.

the weight is starting to lift....

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by jewizard21 - 12 May 2024 21:03

Amazing!!

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by levbasar148 - 13 May 2024 02:13

Hi,

thanks for your story and courage. I'd love to be in touch with you. You can email me at levbasar148@gmail.com

I'm also struggling with similar stuff.

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by jackthejew - 13 May 2024 02:56

Great to hear from you again! Catching up on what you've been through while I wasn't around on the forum much.

Sorry to hear about the rough patches. However, it's amazing to see the courage with which you keep putting in the inspiring work to better yourself. KOT!

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ilovehashem247 - 15 May 2024 15:47

Was in therapy yesterday and as we are trying to sort out my history and experiences, the

therapist made a comment:

"ILH247, it seems like until 12/13 years old your childhood was full of happy memories and idyllic and at a certain point it flipped and there is a lot of trauma. Let's try to identify what happened."

Two memories came up:

1. at 12 years old i managed to get an old junk PC from the garage computer parts bin to work, and hooked it up to the internet somehow (maybe via phone jack?). I tried downloading a movie on LimeWire in the early 2000's, and to my extreme shock, the file ended up being a porno. This was my first exposure to pornography. From that day everything changed, and instead of gently being introduced to sex and body parts of adulthood, I was exposed to completely explicit content in my vulnerable and innocent state. This is something that i cannot blame anyone for. I don't even have the option to be a victim here because nobody did it to me. It happened to me on my own. I am only able to be a survivor here - to own up to the experience and face it head on. this is extremely difficult for me, and I am in a very big turmoil right now. It's a very difficult and bleak emotional struggle and I am begging Hashem to carry me through. It's really hard!

2. my first memories of sexual behavior revolve around two sisters who were about my age - the older one exposed me to exhibitionism - told me to grope her in public (then again in my bedroom) when we were on the way to my parents' house from shul for Shabbat lunch (we were family friends and our parents were a block away. i don;t think i was even bar mitzvah then. This leads to a memory i have of being in these sisters' house, in the basement guestroom. I remember walking in, feeling uncomfortable, and that the sisters both had no shame of one another - but it's like a censored text - there is only blackness - lack of any imagery - beyond the door to that room. I completely blocked it out, i don't' know why, and that makes me very uncomfortable.

I am also dealing with some chinuch challenges with my young child, and still have the members of the cult i was formerly involved with slandering me and spreading false rumors about me. I've been starting to pray for the leader recently but right now i just want to crawl into a hole and disappear for a while.

I have no more of my former escapes - no drugs, alcohol, sex with self or with others outside my marriage, nor do i use my wife as a sex object any longer. I am trying hard to fill the void with G-d but it takes a while.

I feel worried, confused, and scared.

Thanks for reading...

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by chooseusername - 15 May 2024 17:40

[ilovehashem247 wrote on 15 May 2024 15:47:](#)

I have no more of my former escapes - no drugs, alcohol, sex with self or with others outside my marriage, nor do i use my wife as a sex object any longer. I am trying hard to fill the void with G-d but it takes a while.

I feel worried, confused, and scared.

Thanks for reading...

I read through alot of your thread recently. Your strength and resolve to work on yourself is incredibly inspirational. Hearing about the traumas you went through as a youth, and seeing that despite that you are growing so much as a person, is remarkable.

Can I just ask something? In the beginning of this thread you wrote that on the outside your life is perfect, but underneath you struggle with a whole host of addictive behaviors. Was your life so excellent then and problems have cropped up now, or was it just that your various escapes covered over everything? Just from what you've shared it sounds like the former, and it seems

as if the yetzer hara is on a no holds barred campaign to overturn your progress.

Just an observation. Keep on setting the bar for the rest of us!

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 15 May 2024 19:26

Can I just ask something? In the beginning of this thread you wrote that on the outside your life is perfect, but underneath you struggle with a whole host of addictive behaviors. Was your life so excellent then and problems have cropped up now, or was it just that your various escapes covered over everything? Just from what you've shared it sounds like the former, and it seems as if the yetzer hara is on a no holds barred campaign to overturn your progress.

Just an observation. Keep on setting the bar for the rest of us!

Great Q, and thought provoking as well. I think that the best way to frame it is that by the external societal standards of the world I grew up in, i was doing well. Like i mentioned originally I was (seemingly from the outside) financially secure, married with a growing family, involved in charity and institutions, and set for materialistic success.

as i am realizing more and more now as i progress through this journey, life is always full of challenges. Just that before I started my recovery journey i would play down the struggles and ignore/avoid them with drugs/sex/alcohol. I also believe that as i progress through life, the challenges only get bigger. more kids = more chinuch challenges = more financial pressure. Hashem doesn't change, He always has and always will provide me my basic needs until i do no need them anymore. most of what i call needs are extras and i am working hard on internalizing that.

but back to the point - no, it is not that now i have bigger problems. i didn't get more molested by my babysitter now that I'm digging it up and working through the experiences and how it affects my life. the wreckage of my past is the same. But me avoiding dealing with things growing in the dark spaces of my soul - owning up to the incidents where others will probably be in therapy at some point because of what i did to/with them - that only allows the bitterness and darkness to grow. working through it is excruciating, but once it's out, I am then a transformed person.

So no, my life did not get worse, and yes i was ignoring the issues i needed to deal with by escaping from them.

I was so anxious and worried and stressed from digging up the skeletons in my soul that I have been non stop gassy for more than a day, i felt like i want to vomit all day today, and I've been dazed and confused for at least a week.

but this is how i get through it.

i can choose to ignore my problems and then live my (hopefully long) life un-worked on and not fulfilling my G-d given mission in this world, or i can put on my big-boy boots and get to work.

It's the long short way.

So far, - for me - it works.

and i will keep on trying because i know that i have only two choices:

1. change
2. die

i don't want to die.

hope that made sense.

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by frank.lee - 15 May 2024 23:02

Makes tons of sense. I feel you.

May you gain menuchas hanefesh quickly, in the best way!

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by chancy - 16 May 2024 19:27

Dear ILH247,

If i could hug you and hold you tight while you release all the bad mamories from your mind and your body, I would. So imagine im doing that.

I feel your pain, I might not know exactly what you went thru and now reliving, but i have my share of emotional issues.

It is hard letting go of our pacifiers after so many years. For me it was Porn, Masturbation, Fantasy, Movies, etc.

For you its some others, but the idea is the same, we used those things to make us numb and forget.

When we leave those behind, we are faced with the full truth and it hurts, it hurts like a MF!

Hashem gave us great capacity in overcoming our pasts, everything can be healed at least enough to not hurt anymore.

Good luck Tzaddik.

=====
=====

Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 02 Jun 2024 23:34

6 months

Warning: Spoiler!

=====
=====