

From two identities to True self

Posted by true_self - 28 May 2023 23:02

Hi everyone this is my **very first time** writing about myself on the forum.

I have now been posting on the forum for a while, and now I took my time to open my very own thread and tell my story.

Thanks to all my friends here who are constantly helping me, giving me inspiration, aspiration, motivation, positivity and ambition.

Special thanks to **Eerie**, **HMM** & **Cordnoy** (and acharon acharon chaviv my **wife**).

MY STORY - LIVING WITH TWO IDENTITIES UNTIL REVEALING MY TRUE SELF.

I grew up in a chassidish community & had a pretty regular childhood.

I was first exposed to inappropriate sexual behavior that took place between my close friends back in school when I was around 9 years old, but I was not physically involved (for the most of it) & have never been attracted to guys sexually.

In yeshiva ketana at the age of 14 a friend exposed me to a lot of adult information about sex masturbation etc. basically like many of us, my first exposure to this topic was not in the way it should have been.

Ever since then I started masturbating from time to time just for the pleasure it gave me, only after a while did I discover that it's a great sin (a friend also told me).

I wanted to stop masturbating so hard but unfortunately it was not going, every time after I masturbated I promised to myself that it's the last time. I used to count how many times I masturbated but eventually I lost track.

In those days my main triggers (this is what I remember now) where catalogues, magazines etc. (anything with lust images) and on the streets, (at some stage I can remember gazing at the same model in a catalogue repeatedly while m* I literally felt deeply connected with her, those images still come up in my mind with all the details from time to time).

As time passed & I kept on falling again & again, I started to realize that It's a serious struggle that won't disappear overnight, little did I know of what awaits...

As time went on I got on to the internet and browsed inappropriate images, it then continued to

videos and inappropriate sites and platforms. I felt like slowly being dragged into more & more of this unwanted behavior, and I did not have the tools to get out of it, I was trapped.

Almost 2 years ago at the age of 18 I was first exposed to real porn. At first it was a huge shock for my brain but later on I became more & more accustomed to it & eventually stayed up till very late at night to watch porn & masturbate.

Not long after that I b"h got engaged, 5 month later I got married besha tova, between my engagement & my wedding I almost didn't watch any porn, that made me believe that I can solve it by myself, after all this was the biggest secret in my life & I was not yet ready to open up to someone else about it.

The first few month after I got married I was completely clean from P&M & I thought that I've achieved true freedom; but very soon as the stressers came along the way I discovered that I was still imprisoned, It was very hard for me to face the fact that even after having an awesome marriage with such a wonderful wife I'm still watching this garbage...

It was already from right after my engagement that I started having challenging thoughts about sharing my struggle with my wife in the future; however I still couldn't imagine myself sharing it.

Today I'm married for almost a year. I did not have a typical shana rishona, (more details in the future beH) we had many challenging experiences together which made us grow stronger & better.

One night (19 mar 23) it was after 2 very tough weeks for me with a lot of stress, & I have been heavily engaging in porn & masturbation to a point that it occupied my head completely, I wasn't focused during the day.

My wife has a really strong intuition & she sensed that something is wrong with me, she had nudged me several times in the past to tell her what bothers me but I always got away with all sorts of explanations that it's nothing major, however at that point I felt that I can no longer hide it from her, I could no longer keep it a secret. The pain of living a life with two identities was already unbearable, I felt like an hypocrite & that I'm betraying my wife.

I did the unbelievable and shared it with my wife, to my surprise (or not quite, i did know her quite well by then) she was very accepting understanding emphasizing and comforting, It was a tremendously awesome experience, I sobbed myself out until I was dry from tears, and so did she (and yes I do recognize that I have tons of what to be grateful for to hashem for such a wife, and I am).

Previously I felt that I'm living a double life with two identities & if anyone would discover my dark side I would be done... forever, no respect, no love, no empathy... from here and on it all changed.

I find it that opening up to another person, and to even a anonymous community like GYE, and realizing that I'm not crazy or any different then my friends in real life, but actually a normal

human being like everyone, where the first and most essential steps of my recovery.

I'm not a hypocrite, I'm a beautiful and wonderful person that does many good things, and also struggles with the struggles of this generation (shoutout to Eerie).

I'm privileged to be part of a battalion of soldiers on the frontlines of the toughest battles against the enemy.

I look at my struggles and see the great opportunities that are hidden within them, and I reflect on how they have shaped me and made me who I am today.

I did not yet reach freedom but I did reach the path leading to freedom!

With the support of all my special friends out here I do it day by day.

I'm no longer alone.

I hope that some people can learn and gather strength from my story

More to come beH...

True self.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by chaimoigen - 30 Jan 2024 00:54

[true self wrote on 29 Jan 2024 17:38:](#)

Thanks for reading and understanding, comments and feedback of all kind are welcome!!!
Got a sponsor!

Starting real work tomorrow.

This place is getting really boring and unproductive for me (it's a part of my comfort zone and I use it to escape calling a friend), so I guess I'm leaving...

Continued hatzlacha buddies!

. . . and back to reality...

To My Dear Friend True Self,

I am deeply glad to hear that you have found a pathway on which you see a new promise of hope. And I know that so many have found real Chayim in the 12 Steps- Alei Vihatzlach!!! You have my heartfelt Bracha.

Just want to make one point about GYE.

It is in the choices and struggles and realizations that you have discovered here, in this hallowed space, that have led you to where you are today. Had you not discovered what **wasn't** working for you here, had you not here encountered a reality in which you perceived that you are powerless - would you be where you are in your journey today?

A smart guy once said "the only real mistake is one from which we learn nothing".

The early steps of a trial and error process that leads to the right answer are necessary, and should not be disparaged, I think.

We are rooting for you.

Go then,

LiChaim

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Re: From two identities to True self

Posted by willdoit - 30 Jan 2024 01:18

[chaimoigen wrote on 30 Jan 2024 00:54:](#)

[true_self wrote on 29 Jan 2024 17:38:](#)

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Powerfull point!.. as usual..

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 30 Jan 2024 09:14

Thanks for your replies.

I agree that the whole GYE business was necessary for me and that I needed to discover what doesn't work for me before I can know what does, I also don't think that I made any mistake being on GYE, nor do I disparage this place. I don't know why you guys think I am, all I wrote was that 'this place is **getting** boring and unproductive **for me**', No, it wasn't always. But now since I've found the beginning of my path to recovery (here I was searching for my path, though in the beginning I thought *it is* my path) with real people (not just usernames and voices without faces) *staying* here is *no-longer* a part of *my* recovery.

I think it's also important for people to see that for some people (like me) GYE is a springboard to reach their recovery and not somewhere to remain stuck in. It's part of my journey.

I'm still very grateful for everyone that was here for me the past 10 month here.

I hope I was clear enough and didn't offend anyone, if I did, here's my sincere apologies.

Growing one step/day at a time...

striving to become my...

True_self

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by adam2014 - 30 Jan 2024 10:29

I am thinking the same thing. I am nowhere near ready to move away from GYE, but at some point in the future I assume that I will not need GYE anymore. This is an amazing vehicle to launch myself to my new life, but it is not my new life itself.

I would assume that is the approach of most people on here.

Maybe I will step away at some point and realize that I need to remain here a little longer, all you have to do is log back in and all the resources are right back at your fingertips.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by yiftach - 30 Jan 2024 10:56

[true_self wrote on 30 Jan 2024 09:14:](#)

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Buddy, thanks for clarifying!

Hope you wake up in the morning and praise the Almighty that He led you to the road of recovery...

Personally, I think there is **a lot** to be attributed to GYE.

A person cannot be stuck in their cocoon and be expected to become a social butterfly in a day.

There's so much guilt, shame and sadness within us and we can't just let the dam break free by going public with our stories. **There's a mehalech! Step by step...**

First you get a username. Still not ready to share too much, just post on other's threads. Finally, you have the guts to open ur own thread and begin sharing some details abt urself etc. etc.... BH you made it to where you're holding, by letting go of the final mechitzos and showing up in person! Ashreicha! Yet, GYE was still part of the process to get you to that stage!

Knock away!

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by chaimoigen - 30 Jan 2024 11:50

Thanks for the clarification.

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These days, many folks on GYE have taken the step from being merely an anonymous user name to making a call. Most guys use real first names and real numbers eventually. Then many have "graduated" to meeting others and creating genuine relationships, with first and last names known.

Dov's important distinction between secrecy and anonymity is true. Meeting people in real life is an incredibly powerful step in recovery. And secrecy is toxic.

However, forming genuine friendships and mentorship's that include real names, real mentors, and real life are even more real than SA meetings.

Not to say that this is for everyone, or that this aspect replaces other incredibly valuable aspects

of being in the The Program, because it doesn't. But today, many fellows on GYE are taking this powerful step , and therefore this critique does not apply to them.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 30 Jan 2024 12:04

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Absolutely! And yet sometimes we get stuck in a slightly broader cocoon (fake username...) and we need a push to get out of that too, If we wait until **we** feel that we have outgrown our cocoon, it might never come. In my case I got suffocated and suffered while still refusing to break out of my new addiction (GYE) and it was still not enough. I was told that I probably need SA, yet it was still not enough. I was told that I need to quit GYE because it holds me back from real recovery and it helped me to finally jump into an SA meeting yet it was still not enough to make me quit completely... as you see...

Every day you still se me posting means that I'm still not ready to give up my 'lust' for GYE.

Please don't get me wrong, I don't disregard the credit that my journey on GYE has in where I am today, I was not ready to show up to a meeting in-person before getting to post and talk on the phone and meeting you. But it's time for me to move on...

And dear Adam, I don't know you and the situation you're in, nor am I qualified to tell you what's good for you, but please consider the above. *For me* is was fear of going out there that fooled me that I really really still need GYE.

All the best! buddies.

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 30 Jan 2024 12:12

[chaimoigen wrote on 30 Jan 2024 11:50:](#)

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However, forming genuine friendships and mentorship's that include real names, real mentors, and real life are even more real than SA meetings.

Not to say that this is for everyone, or that this aspect replaces other incredibly valuable aspects of being in the The Program, because it doesn't. But today, many fellows on GYE are taking this powerful step , and therefore this critique does not apply to them.

Didn't chap this. The program is not only the meetings, It's getting a sponsor and working the steps (btw I doubt that the relationships made here include Steps 1, 4 and 5). Yes there are guys who mope around from one meeting to the next and the program doesn't work for them! The meeting is only step ZERO (as described in the white book).

If I misunderstood you then just leave my comments.

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[true_self wrote on 30 Jan 2024 12:12:](#)

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Yes, you did misunderstand my comment.

I did not mean to state or imply that making friendships on GYE and having productive in-person meetings and mentorships is a way to join or fulfill the 12 Step Program. It is not. And it cannot substitute for The Program, for those that need it.

But it is its own work. And it's worked for a lot of people. It may be step Zero in The Program, but it's a lot more than that for a lot of good guys. I'm not trying to be argumentative or get into a useless discussion. I respect the 12 Steps tremendously.

My point was merely to say that it's not accurate to characterize GYE wholly as "hiding behind a secret username" because that's not true for a lot of us.

As Cordnoy pointed out in his first impactful post on my thread, and I'm eternally grateful for that post, secrecy isn't honesty. But meeting real people is. So I went and did it. And honestly facing your mistakes, with a real person who knows your name and a lot about you is far, far more than step zero. Even if he isn't my sponsor, he still changed my life. At least that's how it was for me. And that's the only thing I actually definitely know- what's working for me.

I love you, True Self, and I wish you an ocean of Hazlacha and Bracha and blessing, whether or not you keep in touch. I hope you find what works for you, and a path to a glorious future full of brilliant todays.

I hope you do stay in touch!

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by willdoit - 30 Jan 2024 16:17

Every day you still see me posting means that I'm still not ready to give up my **'lust' for GYE.**

Is that a fetish of some sort??

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by eerie - 30 Jan 2024 18:39

[adam2014 wrote on 30 Jan 2024 10:29:](#)

I am thinking the same thing. I am nowhere near ready to move away from GYE, but at some point in the future I assume that I will not need GYE anymore. This is an amazing vehicle to launch myself to my new life, but it is not my new life itself.

I would assume that is the approach of most people on here.

Maybe I will step away at some point and realize that I need to remain here a little longer, all you have to do is log back in and all the resources are right back at your fingertips.

Hi Adam! I'm here for a little while, not terribly long. But I've been here almost every day, seen LOTS of posts, spoken to lots of people, most of them on the phone, and even have been

fortunate to meet a few of the heroes that visit here. And all that has made me think a lot about the point you are making.

Many, probably most people, that come here, feel that they will fix their issue, and then they can go back to their 'regular' life, fully healed and recovered, and totally forget about GYE.

My view is that it's really not so simple. There are greater and more experienced than I, and I may be wrong, I'm just sharing my impressions.

Maybe for a lot of people it is true that after a little while they can just forget about this whole thing and move on. But I have seen so people who came, did great, moved on, and then came back with a bang.

So, my suggestion would be that even when a person feels that he's not gaining anything from this site, he should keep up with friends he made here, especially ones that he feels fill the mentor role for him. Check in from time to time. Call. Shmooze. Don't ever become complacent

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Posted by eerie - 30 Jan 2024 18:44

[chaimoigen wrote on 30 Jan 2024 11:50:](#)

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I know you were not suggesting anything about True-self, Reb CO, I just want that to be clear to others

Just for the record:

True-self has been open with others here, and had 'graduated' to using his real name etc. And all that we can offer here, as real as it can be, doesn't seem to be right for our dear friend. Some people need the 12 steps program.

Please, True-friend, keep trucking, break free, and don't forget to SMILE!

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 30 Jan 2024 20:50

[chaimoigen wrote on 30 Jan 2024 14:04:](#)

[true_self wrote on 30 Jan 2024 12:12:](#)

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I hope you do stay in touch!

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Dear Reb Chaim, It seems to me that the misunderstanding between us is only growing and deepening, so I think I'll drop it here. I don't think there's any point of argument between us anyways.

I love, respect and admire you and your opinion (I'm actually honest now!), please keep doing your gevaldige job here on GYE for the many that need it. Keep on promoting opening up beyond the forums, I think it's important for guys to know that many proceed to phone calls, real first names and meeting in-person beyond this forum.

True self.

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Re: From two identities to True self

Posted by adam2014 - 31 Jan 2024 11:23

I 1000% agree with you.. I personally went from lurking in the shadows just reading posts for a long time, to finally posting my story. I gave my real first name (or did I?? LOL) and have had one on one chats with some of you. I have not taken the next step to a real phone call or an actual meet-up. I hope to get to that point some day.

The toxic secrecy that you speak of is with my wife for me. Not having her in my corner for this battle is heartbreaking and I would love to have her support that she would undoubtedly give me.

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