

Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by youknowwho - 22 Sep 2023 14:39

Hello to my fellow GYE warriors!

I figured I'd give it a shot at introducing myself a little bit, as I've read many threads here and value the growth and journey of all the amazing people over here!

My original goal when I got to this website a few months ago, was to deal with my addiction to porn and masturbation. It was getting way out of hand and it really disturbed my quality of life.

Thankfully, I have hit 90 days and I am shocked and amazed at how this was even possible, I had already written myself off to be a porn watcher and chronic masturbator for the rest of my life!

This is no doubt due to joining this website, reading the forums, chatting, and connecting via email/phone to some wonderfully amazing people here, and I want to finally say a **huge** public thank you to you all!!!

I owe my newfound life to this place, and I hope I can continue staying away from p & m.

Due to the fact that I have been clean from p & m for a while, I will leave that part of my life out of my story (for now) and perhaps revisit it in a later post.

What I would like to address, with as limited details as possible, is that I have been struggling mightily with cleaning up the rest of my act while also struggling with my religious identity.

For a good period of my life (not from birth) I was involved in an extremist, abusive and controlling group.

Thank Heaven (and I praise Hashem for this every day) I am done with that.

But it resulted in a massive religious identity crisis, which I am still struggling through.

I wanted nothing to do with religion, I am numbed by many aspects of it. The pain in some areas is almost visceral, like being scalded when getting too close to a hot fire.

Certain things about our way of life are too painful, and I just dissociate from it.

What does this have to do with GYE and addiction?

Well, the truth is, that although I am free of p & m for a nice while, there are other things I have experimented with as I have gone through my journey.

I started watching movies, and saw hundreds of them, and many were literally soft-core porn

films.

(I must say that thankfully, I don't remember when I've watched a movie last, probably a half a year, but it's not so much "b'sh*tah," I just haven't got the brain space to put myself into a good emotional movie)

I started finding meaning in non-Jewish music. What can I say? I enjoy it, and nothing really moves me like that, I identify with the lyrics and passion. I'm not talking about outright prust music, but certain genres appeal to me and I cannot go back to Yiddish music, I have tried to and didn't hold for more than a few days.

I also started browsing YouTube as a mindless escape, and very often a clip of inappropriately dressed women pops in and I just watch it without feeling too guilty about it.

From a religious point, I understand that this is against the Torah, but I have no strength to care. I am close to Hashem, I talk to Him every day, and I feel that Hashem understands my struggles, my exposure, the sexual abuse and religious abuse that I have been through, and that He loves me unconditionally.

But from an addiction standpoint, If I truly want to "clean up", I know I can't be staring at shikshas/tic dances etc.

And I'm not even *talking* about the frum woman aspect, which I'm sure many people can relate to, I fall a lot with peeking glances at hot frum women and of course I should not be doing that, it's feeding the beast!

I know that addiction to porn and masturbation is like addiction to a drug, dopamine. I know that if I continue "feeding the drug", even in small quantities, I will not achieve full recovery.

But I am just so mixed up with it all, it's so hard to kick, and religious ideas don't talk to me. I don't want to identify as an Ultra-Orthodox Jew, I wish I could leave it all behind.

As part of the backlash of what I've been through, I've delved into Jewish history and have read stuff from non-traditional (read: non censored) sources, and I'm scared to death of the path open before me...I see corruption, dysfunction, and abuse and a load of BS in our "system", and coupled with the experience I had been through, it makes me want to run away from it all!!

If not for my wonderful wife and children, whom I love so much, I probably would have long ago left it all behind for a new life.

I feel trapped in my religious identity, not sure how to find solace and clarity, how to find a steady voice in my head to see through all the BS and serve Hashem as a true servant as I'm sure He wants me to be.

I feel trapped in the loop of feeding the little monster in my brain and I sometimes feel so alone and sad because even ideas, insights, and encouragements make me crazy.

I am sorry for sounding negative and embittered, but I'm just pouring my heart out, and maybe just by writing about it, it will feel better.

In any case, I hope to continue documenting these little ups and downs, and I look forward to continuing to be part of this amazing forum!

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by jackthejew - 03 Dec 2023 04:37

[foolie wrote on 29 Nov 2023 19:38:](#)

I suppose you can be a Bill, Charlie or George you know you are running out of options if these don't Appeal to you, you can be Frodo instead

I doubt we'd run out of characters that quick. For those (like me) who've said things they wish they could have back: *'Never forget Wizard Baruffio, who said 's' instead of 'f' and found himself on the floor with a buffalo on his chest.'* - Professor Flitwick

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by youknowwho - 03 Dec 2023 05:56

[jackthejew wrote on 03 Dec 2023 04:37:](#)

[foolie wrote on 29 Nov 2023 19:38:](#)

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Jackthejew, thanks for the laugh! And thanks to Hechochma for some exclusive unwinding material!

Now that I'm here, I might as well say it as it is...

"Messrs. Moony, Wormtail, Padfoot, and Prongs"

"I solemnly swe @r that I am up to no good...."?

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by chancy - 05 Dec 2023 15:42

Rabbi Voldy (Im trying different names for you, since youknowwho is too long)

I didnt mean to set your brain on fire, trust me, I barely scratched the surface there. All I wanted was to give you a little taste of the unknown.... It doesnt do to dwell on loss and death as nothingness, it makes all of this seem pointlessly painfull and painfully pointless. So I wanted to show you there is some much going on after death, we cant even comprehend! So no, we are not gone once we die, quite the opposite, we come alive!

Now regarding the HP books, I belive its a great thing, Or it was great for me, the only time i didnt think about lust was when i read the HP books. It pure fantasy but has alot of bravery and friendship and love. I took a lot of those books. One line i still use till today "Of course it all happened in your head, but why in the world would that mean that it wasnt real?"

Voldy, please stick around, we love having you here! Dont go moldy.....

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by ?????1 - 05 Dec 2023 17:02

I AM I'm sorry to hear all that you go through

i can feel your your pain

i can really relate to your story/ Experience

Although i am clean already with watching reel porn on Official sites

i can find myself looking for good romance movies and in the end i find myself

watching like p*** on a movie i don't feel any Guilt at the time watching but sometimes i find myself after that with Guilty feelings

like why did i do this

i try in the last few days not to be online in the late night hours because then i have most of my urge's coming up i find only one real help that helps me

this is speaking to Hashem not only at a Specific time

more like any time have a urge if i have my mind on the spot i would say

"totally i know i am powerless against the thoughts that i am thinking or what i want to look

i am asking for your help without you i can't do anything so please help me i should be able to get through this challenge"

most of the time it helps but without that it's a 99% that i will let my urge's to become reality

so i am wishing you the best

and i keep you in mind

we are all in the same struggle

but with GOD'S HELP WE CAN GO THROUGH THIS

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by chaimoigen - 05 Dec 2023 17:08

[youknowwho wrote on 03 Dec 2023 05:56:](#)

Now that I'm here, I might as well say it as it is...

"Messrs. Moony, Wormtail, Padfoot, and Prongs"

"I solemnly swe @r that I am up to no good...."?

I trust that your version of "no good", Tom, is one that merely manages mischief, not one that inflicts soul-tearing harm...

Remember, "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light"...

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by youknowwho - 05 Dec 2023 21:08

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like why did i do this

Reb Shloimeh,

Thanks for the heartfelt post, I appreciate it!

Regarding watching movies, I totally relate to the struggle! I've gone through many (sadly, inappropriate) titles the past two years, binge watching till the wee hours of the morning.

It always starts with the mind claiming it needs to unwind, and ends up with guilt, wasted time, or even worse levels of acting out.

Though, as of the past many months, I haven't watched any movies, and am happy to report that I haven't died of my injuries (yet, maybe it's harder to kill Voldemort?)

These days, when my emotions are harassing me that they need to unwind, I indulge them with the fascinating and informative voice of David Attenborough of BBC Nature.

The only side effects of this rather fascinating show is that as I watch the Great Yellow Bellied Lizard stride effortlessly across the rivers surface, I find myself falling asleep much earlier than I would have in the old days....

There's still much work to do. I need to delete some nasty stuff that I've purchased in the past that's still lurking in my watchlist library. Not up to that yet. We'll see.

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by youknowwho - 05 Dec 2023 21:29

[chaimoigen wrote on 05 Dec 2023 17:08:](#)

[youknowwho wrote on 03 Dec 2023 05:56:](#)

Now that I'm here, I might as well say it as it is...

"Messrs. Moony, Wormtail, Padfoot, and Prongs"

"I solemnly swe @r that I am up to no good...."?

I trust that your version of "no good", Tom, is one that merely manages mischief, not one that inflicts soul-tearing harm...

Remember, "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light"...

Moldy Voldy.

Chancy, I *like* that! Nice ring to it.

Mischief Managed, Reb CO, no worries! I unwittingly ran into Professor Snape in the

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by true_self - 05 Dec 2023 22:12

[youknowwho wrote on 05 Dec 2023 21:08:](#)

There's still much work to do. I need to delete some nasty stuff that I've purchased in the past that's still lurking in my watchlist library. Not up to that yet. We'll see.

What are you waiting for?? Before I blocked YouTube I thought the same, but if you don't change anything, nothing will change, in order to get to there you need to go a little bit out of your comfort zone, jump into the cold waters (speaking to myself as I still need to change things too), with Chanukah coming up it could be a great moment, don't let it pass. (If I'm pushing you too much just flush).

Lets do this together!

Please keep us posted.

Rooting for you my dear hero!

True self.

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by chaimoigen - 11 Dec 2023 17:14

Expecto Patronum!! (It's possible that mine takes the shape of a phoenix. Or maybe HHM)

Now you can come out. The dementors are all gone.

How are you, Chaver ? Miss your insight and illumination.. Freilichen Chanuka.

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by youknowwho - 11 Dec 2023 19:49

[chaimoigen wrote on 11 Dec 2023 17:14:](#)

Expecto Patronum!! (It's possible that mine takes the shape of a phoenix. Or maybe HHM)

Now you can come out. The dementors are all gone.

How are you, Chaver ? Miss your insight and illumination.. Freilichen Chanuka.

Thank you, chaimoigen.

Oddly enough...lately, my Patronus seems to be wearing a bikini...

No, I did not call anyone. (though I do love all of youse!)

Didn't exercise (hence, my "dad bod" beer belly is still fully intact)

Didn't read anything (I probably should read TBOTG)

Not taking a cold shower. (Yeow!)

Was not in the mood of all that.

I was in the mood of being alone.

What I did do is take a lonely and solitary stroll in the Forbidden Forest to talk to my Father and beseech Him to give me clarity...

In the words of vehkam on a lonely thread of mine a while ago:

"Perhaps share your struggle with your Creator. He is always with you, even when you want to be alone. He created the struggle and He is rooting the hardest for you to overcome and grow from the experience."

Thanks to all of you for your continued support, seen and unseen, heard and unheard, it means the world to me!!

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by chaimoigen - 12 Dec 2023 01:25

Vehkam says it best.

That stroll sounds achingly lovely.

Speaking of timeless, immortal literature, there is a wonderful Frog and Toad story in where Toad is frantic with worry because Frog has left him a note that he wants to be alone. Toad thinks that Frog no longer wants to be friends. I won't spoil the story, for all who have not yet read this great work by Arnold Lobel.

But at the end, Frog and Toad both sit on the small island in blissful quiet, enjoying being **alone together....**

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by youknowwho - 13 Dec 2023 18:15

Okay, Reb Chaimoigen, I actually had to look that up and actually *must* share this wonderful story!

Here goes:

Alone

Toad went to Frog's house. He found a note on the door.

The note said, "Dear Toad, I am not at home. I went out. I want to be alone."

"Alone?" said Toad. "Frog has me for a friend. Why does he want to be alone?"

Toad looked through the windows.

He looked in the garden. He did not see Frog.

Toad went
to the woods.

Frog was not there.

He went to the meadow.

Frog was not there.

Toad went down to the river.

There was Frog. He was sitting on an island by himself.

“Poor Frog,” said Toad. “He must be very sad. I will cheer him up.”

Toad ran home. He made sandwiches.

He made a pitcher of iced tea. He put everything in a basket. Toad hurried back to the river.

“Frog,” he shouted, “it’s me. It’s your best friend, Toad!”

Frog was too far away to hear. Toad took off his jacket and waved it like a flag. Frog was too far away to see.

Toad shouted and waved, but it was no use.

Frog sat on the island. He did not see or hear Toad.

A turtle swam by. Toad climbed on the turtle’s back.

“Turtle,” said Toad, “carry me to the island. Frog is there. He wants to be alone.”

"If Frog wants to be alone," said the turtle, "why don't you leave him alone?"

"Maybe you are right," said Toad. "Maybe Frog does not want to see me.

Maybe he does not want me to be his friend anymore."

"Yes, maybe," said the turtle as he swam to the island.

"Frog!" cried Toad. "I am sorry for all the dumb things I do.

I am sorry for all the silly things I say. Please be my friend again!"

Toad slipped off the turtle.

With a splash, he fell in the river.

Frog pulled Toad up onto the island. Toad looked in the basket. The sandwiches were wet.

The pitcher of iced tea was empty.

"Our lunch is spoiled," said Toad. "I made it for you, Frog, so that you would be happy."

"But Toad," said Frog. "I am happy. I am very happy.

This morning when I woke up I felt good because the sun was shining. I felt good because I was a frog. And I felt good because I have you for a friend. I wanted to be alone. I wanted to think about how fine everything is."

“Oh,” said Toad. “I guess that is a very good reason for wanting to be alone.”

“Now,” said Frog, “I will be glad not to be alone. Let’s eat lunch.”

Frog and Toad stayed on the island all afternoon. They ate wet sandwiches without iced tea.

They were two close friends sitting **alone together**.

End

Am I the only one out there smiling like an idiot after reading this?!

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by chancy - 14 Dec 2023 19:45

Yes, I assume you are the only one..

I didnt smile at all.

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Re: Trying to clean up while struggling religiously
Posted by chaimoigen - 15 Dec 2023 01:16

I'm smiling like Frog who is not lonely!

The stories are immeasurably better with the illustrations.

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Alas. No sharing of pictures on GYE.