

Making myself vulnerable

Posted by progressing - 18 Nov 2023 19:08

Hi

I am married and in my twenties. I've had issues with porn since I was 13 years old, and I have been clean of the real thing for probably about 5 or so years now, and I am really proud of that. Unfortunately, I still really struggle with with other types of znus-related issues. I don't have a smartphone, and my computer is heavily filtered, but a walk down the street can be a real challenge for me, and sometimes I feel like a disgusting person who has the words PERVERT written on his forehead.

I have realized that I am terrified of being exposed as person who is not holding in a lechatchila place in his ability to withstand znus (I am a part of a community that takes these issues really seriously, so that really scares me), and that's my main reason for posting here. My hope is that some 'exposure' to the GYE chevra will let me get rid of some of the shame that I feel for present and past activities, and through that actually improve my shmiras einayim, because I know that the times that I am most vulnerable to the allure of znus are times when I am feeling shame.

I know that I am not giving over so much information about myself with this post, but it is a real challenge for me to be vulnerable at all here. I will say that until a few weeks ago, I really felt like I was progressing, but I have had a setback that has made me realize I need more help.

I hope that I will be able to say over my whole story once I have gotten more used to posting and once I see a real benefit from the posts.

Any thoughts or feelings re my situation will be appreciated.

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by ainshumyeiush - 18 Nov 2023 23:51

You are a tzadik!! Being clean from porn for 5 years!?! Don't let the yh tell you you're worthless because of what you look at on the street. Yes there's room for improvement, but don't think that doesn't make you strong. Its like saying youre bad at math because you don't know rocket science. That's ridiculous.

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by iwannalivereal - 19 Nov 2023 00:28

Shalom Aleichem and welcome to the community here!

Feeling shame is certainly a big part of the struggle, especially if you feel that your community strongly looks down on these things. Something that helped me tons was finding out just how many guys from my community (which also looks down pretty strongly on these inyanim) actually struggle with these things. There are guys here from literally around the world and from every type and stripe. This struggle doesn't seem to limit itself to any one part of klal yisroel, and just that knowledge can make you feel so much better. Stick around a bit, post a bit and little by little you'll probably get to know some of the awesome guys here, maybe build somewhat of a relationship with someone and you'll grow worlds!

Regarding shmiras einayim... I personally struggled with porn and masturbation in addition to the shmiras einayim. Recently with the help of many wonderful friends from gye I managed to break free and have been clean for more than 2 months. This was after having sunken really low and I had been watching porn daily for at least 6 months. Over the last 2 months however, as I was breaking out of the porn cycle my shmiras einayim has changed wonderfully as well.

Hatzlacha Raba!

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by 1day613 - 19 Nov 2023 01:09

Toxic shame is a real issue and can keep you stuck. I also used struggle with toxic shame. Being around GYE definitely helps you realize you're not a disgusting pervert and that these thoughts and feelings are normal and EVERYONE gets them. That doesn't mean you don't have to work on them, just takes the toxic shame away. I would recommend listening to the meaningful people podcast interview with Dr Shloime Zimmerman on discussing sensitive topics with our children it's really good.

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by bright - 19 Nov 2023 02:59

[progressing wrote on 18 Nov 2023 19:08:](#)

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I would say the first thing is to stop saying "znus related". The challenges you are deling with are normal and healthy. It is not related to bios asuros, which the terminology implies. (I know some sfarim use such terms. They dont mean it the way your yetzer hara wants you to think they mean.) You should be so proud of your 5 year cleanliness. It is a true treasure and Hashem loves you for it! It just goes to show the power of the yetzer hara of shiflus, that would have you ignore that. Without him, every time achallenge would come up, you would sing (in your mind) "wow, look where I have come, this is my challenge, not pornography, wow! Wow! I am so proud of myself that I am holding here. I am truly a gadol in this area! Lets take it to the next level!" I daresay you would be more successful.

I don't have a smartphone, and my computer is heavily filtered, but a walk down the street can be a real challenge for me, and sometimes I feel like a disgusting person who has the words PERVERT written on his forehead.

I feel so bad for you! Its so tough feeling not good enough. Its a terrible cycle. The reality is a big **tzaddik** is written....

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I think everyone in klal yisrael takes this seriously. Its a question of whether we wake up to the reality of the fact that people all around us, (even some of the people taking it "serously") are struggling terribly.

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As far as your past activities... sounds like you were yotze tshuva lechol hadayos vhiddurim. Hashem said Tshuva works..... move past it.

and through that actually improve my shmiras einayim, because I know that the times that I am most vulnerable to the allure of znus are times when I am feeling shame.

You are very perceptive. Kudos to you. Again the znus word though... thats the shame talking.

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Wow, good for you! Super brave and courageous.

I will say that until a few weeks ago, I really felt like I was progressing, but I have had a setback that has made me realize I need more help.

Posting about that setback will probably be very very helpful.... when your ready.

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by eerie - 19 Nov 2023 18:59

WOW!!!! I think if you stick around you might get nominated to some high-ranking position in

Welcome my friend! stick around, there's much to learn. And one major thing is to lean to accept yourself. Don't beat yourself up! Work on yourself? Absolutely! Smack yourself? Absolutely not! Leave the smacking to HHM...you'll soon learn, my friend:)

Keep posting ad KEEP TRUCKING!

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GYE. I mean, 5 years clean, before you even came here???!!!!

Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by cordnoy - 19 Nov 2023 23:39

[progressing wrote on 18 Nov 2023 19:08:](#)

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Welcome to the club.

There are many good folks here (not includin' myself in that group) though.

I know you don't wanna be vulnerable, but I am completely clueless - you are 5-years' clean from the real thin', but not from the znus-related stuff. I see some people givin' you advice already, but I have no idea what it means.

So my only advice is to stick around; there's lots of good tips on this website.

Godspeed to you

#IStandWithIsrael

#BringThemHomeNow

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Re: Making myself vulnerable
Posted by tp1 - 20 Nov 2023 03:14

Welcome and good for you for joining up and putting in the work.

I would like to echo what was said earlier about stopping to use the word znus.

especially considering that you are clean for 5 years.

that being said thoughts and things popping into your head is a constant struggle for myself and it's a matter of mental perspective.

you can either play ostrich and bury your head in the sand forever without going outside or you can figure out a way to not allow it to affect you to the extent that it has until now.

feel free to reach out and keep us posted.

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by HeChochma - 20 Nov 2023 05:41

Welcome!!!

First of all, I'd like to commend your courage in posting despite the tremendous pressure and fear that makes you want to keep everything bottled up inside. It's really very brave of you and clearly not something you took lightly. So, Hats off to you on that one!

There is a lot of great advice in the posts above - and I can't really argue with any of them - you do sound pretty awesome!

That being said, a journey to change a deeply held way of looking at yourself and your actions, could, and probably should be a slow process. So stick around and keep posting!

If I could add in my two cents -

1. Shame researcher Brene Brown points out that the single most powerful way to get rid of

shame is to share the source of the shame with an understanding friend. Ironically, the research points out that most people describe the feeling of shame as a "sucked and crushed into self" feeling that makes you want to do absolutely anything BUT share the source of the shame with someone else.

GYE offers a lot of wonderful and understanding friends with absolute anonymity. It's obviously a challenge for you nonetheless, but I would strongly recommend IMing the different people that hang out here - particularly if you like their posts and relate to them somehow. And definitely keep posting!

2. The book "The Battle of The Generation" by Hillel S has been a game changer for me personally when it comes to addressing the feelings of shame related to this struggle. There is a link to the book in my signature. There is also a thread here that does 2 pages of the book daily, and everyone tries to post once a week about something they connected to in the book. That link also in my signature.

Most of all,

Welcome -

we're happy you're here

we're happy you've shared

stick around and don't be scared

you'll meet friends here that care

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by progressing - 20 Nov 2023 21:33

Thanks for all the posts. This place feels warm, but not in a fake way (I thank Cordnoy for that). Hopefully, in the next few weeks, I'll post more details about my story. Thanks again

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 24 Nov 2023 14:44

Welcome. Just came across this thread. Hatzlocha. When you are up to it, maybe post what exactly your challenge is so the chevra can comment appropriately.

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Re: Making myself vulnerable

Posted by chaimoigen - 24 Nov 2023 18:03

Welcome.

You seem honest and courageous. The road is less lonely and easier when walking together with others. Please stick around!

As you haven't shared exact details it's hard to comment, though there are a lot of special points in the great posts above. We are looking forward to getting to know you better, friend.

Id just like to add one general idea. Have a natural urge shouldn't be a source of shame. It's ok to feel that you want to do something, even to feel that you want to do something wrong. In most cases, having those urges is how the Rebono Shel Olam designed us, or the result of our nature in combination with the situation in which we find ourselves. What the Rebono Shel Olam demands of us is to control our **actions** , to control our **responses** to our urges and desires. Feeling shame or guilt for having a desire is most often misplaced.

Looking forward to getting to know you better!

Here's a warm hand!

Gut Shabbos,

Chaim Oigen

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