

The Real Me

Posted by proudyungerman - 03 Jan 2024 04:12

Even after all the work I have done thus far, to take this step is painful. (Although I know it will also bring relief and much good advice! Yes I am looking forward to it!)

My story - the full story:

(I hope this isn't too long. Even though it probably is. Sorry, it's gotta come out somewhere.)

I was a very temimusdika kid who had no clue what went on between husband and wife. (I remember learning about the parsha of sotah and having to ask my mother what a sotah was...)

In 8th grade a friend of mine introduced me to the wonderful world of the paid phone lines. At the time I didn't really understand what was going on.

Later on towards the end of ninth grade I discovered the experience of being ?????? ??? ??????. I was taken aback and didn't fall again until succos bein hazmanim. From that point on it was downhill and quick. I spent the next 6 years with tremendous struggles in this inyan. At some point I realized what it was that my friend was showing me back in 8th grade and I included that in my struggle (just the opening messages - I never dreamed of actually talking to a random lady.) All the while I was learning in a prestigious yeshiva and doing very well there. I remember opening up to a very close friend and to a Rebbi of mine about the struggles with ??? ??????. They were both ????? me, however, nothing seemed to work. Even when I tried to throw myself into my learning it always ended in a fall. I think the longest I went in yeshiva was about a month. At some point in third year beis medrash I realized that the struggles and temptations had lessened in a serious way. I still don't know why, but that's the way it was for a while. After I got married and BH that seemed to be the end of it. Phew! Fast forward 6 years...living in a small out of town community...in Kollel...learning and involved communally...I find myself looking at inappropriate pictures and reading inappropriate articles online. This was a first for me. Help! (Yes, the Kollel didn't have the proper filters, otherwise I wouldn't have been able to access them. At home I didn't have my own computer, we have had techloq for years, and I don't know the password to my wife's computer.) I was pretty confused as to what was going on. I had no idea why I was doing this besides for...it's enjoyable. I decided that as I am trying to fix the filter situation in the Kollel I was going to get myself a computer with a filter to use while I am at the Kollel. As I was trying to convince my wife to agree to me having a computer it ended up coming out. Now my wife knows. I reached out to a Rebbi of mine. He gave me some advice which was basically helpful. For a little while. Fast forward one year. A few months ago I was feeling really tempted and then...I did it. I ended up calling one of these phone lines and talking to some ladies. This went on for a few short weeks until I realized that this will destroy my life if I don't get help and FAST! I reached out to some of my Rebbeim who in turn directed me to a therapist. I have been working with him for a few months and have seen some real improvement. I know that my case is pretty mild but I came here to get some chizuk from my Holy brothers, some guidance and mussar from some mentors, and some advice from anyone who has good ideas.

Looking forward to hearing from y'all!

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proudyungerman@gmail.com

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by youknowwho - 10 May 2024 02:32

[Heeling wrote on 10 May 2024 02:20:](#)

[proudyungerman wrote on 08 May 2024 13:43:](#)

(For example, going to the shver for the whole Pesach is NOT insignificant...)

I think we've discovered who the character was in that great story in the Pesach Ami Story Collection...

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by proudyungerman - 10 May 2024 13:12

[Heeling wrote on 10 May 2024 02:20:](#)

[proudungerman wrote on 08 May 2024 13:43:](#)

(For example, going to the shver for the whole Pesach is NOT insignificant...)

The truth is that I meant to put a laughing emoji after. I forgot. I wonder what that means...

Warning: Spoiler!

To be clear I really did enjoy Pesach, I got some Chizuk for my *Neshama*, and I do like my in laws...

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by proudyungerman - 23 May 2024 02:50

As summer is upon me in Burma, I have been noticing a general weakening and blechy feelings. I have some thoughts going through my head as to why.

Here goes...

1. No nice way to say it. People in the summer don't get dressed. Especially the lower echelons of society, and there's a lot of them in these parts. (In fact, I'm surrounded by it on all sides of my neighborhood.)

2. I am having a hard time getting back into my learning, writing, and rewriting. (I feel like I just need a good kick in the pants for that. Alas, I'm getting older and can't kick myself...)

3. I have neglected the real, internal work that begets real, lasting change. I have not spent nearly enough time focusing on the lessons that I learned when I first got here and spoke to HHM and then CO.

4. I am unsettled. I do not know if I will be here in Burma next year or in Baku. I may also end up in Bangkok. I don't even know if I'll be able to stay here in Burma. If I can't, where shall I go? All this doubt leaves me drifting, finding it challenging to anchor myself down...

5. For some strange reason, I seem to always be tired...

So what am I going to do about it?

1. Really not sure. I try to minimize my comings and goings, however, I am not a hermit. I also must go to the store, sometimes. (I actually have walmart+ already and I love it because in my area Walmart is a terrible store. I am not sure if I should get the same thing for some other

Worth it or not?)

I know there's been discussion about the two basic ways of dealing with this. Either ignore/move on/don't make a big deal or de-objectify/humanize them. I personally find the first method very challenging and unsustainable in the long term, especially in the summer. The problem is that I haven't managed to nail down the second method yet. It is something that I find very hard. (To be totally honest, I find it especially hard when I am surrounded by people who are at the bottom of the totem pole of society. The way they act doesn't make me want to look at them as humans with parents, friends, etc. who care. (Do they even care? Sometimes the way they act doesn't lend itself to that impression. Please don't judge me. These are my feelings at the moment, whether right or wrong.)) I would love some suggestions as to how to internalize this outlook on people in general.

I also need to spend some time each day being ?????? about the fact that I really do want to learn, how **fulfilling** it feels to put in a good seder, how helpful it is in every aspect and area of my life (especially the reasons why I am here to begin with). I also need to remember that I have the freedom to choose this. It is in my hands and I can choose which direction my day will take. Yes, some days are harder than others, and some days are simply murderous, however, the choice is mine. Only mine.

stores, to minimize the need to go even more, being that finances are tight. Like Kollel tight

3. There's only one way.

DO THE _____ WORK! STOP BEING LAZY YOU PROUDYUNGEMAN AND THINK!

Lest you think i am being hard on myself...well I am! Ha!

I need to keep thinking about the idea of what true intimacy is, remember that heady feeling of freedom to choose a better path instead of forcing my eyes, etc. (Sorry, too tired to elaborate more now.)

4. Not quite sure how to deal with this...(yeah, i know, i gotta work on my bitachon...thanks)

5. Umm...ok...get to sleep earlier. There. I said it.

Now I have to actually do it.

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by eerie - 23 May 2024 20:17

About the old-fashioned nisayon of not ogling over the women we come across, be they overdressed or underdressed, I think there's another point that was not mentioned. The proper way, I think, is to balance ??? ????? with ????? ???. Yes, you gotta be on guard. You can't make believe that they are not there. On the other, you can't be uptight and obsessed with their presence, as that just makes us want to see it even more, and even if we didn't look, we are there, 'looking', the whole time. So there needs to be a balance of awareness, know your surroundings, and don't look where you know you shouldn't. When you see something inappropriate, don't let it get you down! Super important- Celebrate your wins! Keep reminding yourself how much you do to make Hashem proud- and that should make you a proudyungerman!

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by proudyungerman - 27 May 2024 01:42

As the tsunami of obscenity starts to grow, and the pit in my stomach is growing accordingly, I decided to do some serious thinking.

I have been finding the summer to be a real challenge for me. I knew it was coming and honestly wasn't sure how to prepare.

I can't have a very hard time learning seforim about shmiras einaim. (I tried in the winter to prepare for the summer, but it didn't go.) I learnt them a lot when I was bochur as I struggled tremendously with ?????? ??????. I still have a bad taste in my mouth (and heart) from the utter failure that I felt like by my total collapse in the face of the onslaught. This still hurts me today, as it is painful to open a sefer to learn about a topic that always needs chizuk, especially as I now have the proper tools to fight and win.

I need to dig deep inside myself, and find it within me to view my bochur self as ok. As having value. As not being a total, abject failure simply because I didn't watch my eyes, I was ???", and I called phone sex lines.

Exactly the same thing that HHM made me do (and CO helped me actualize) to my current self just a few months ago.

Except that it's painful. It's painful as I write this, to revisit all the wrongs done. These are things that I'd rather forget (for now. Until I can realize how they are actually for my good.) and not think about. Things that I wish I could fade out of my subconscious.

But I know the truth. If I want to remain the person that I want to be, that I am now, I must do the work. I must dig deep and feel the pain.

My actions have consequences and this is the price I must pay to remain the person I want to be. The person I need to be.

So I will. And I know it will hurt, it does already.

I know I have friends to count on, they've been there for me already.

But it hurts.

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by chaimoigen - 27 May 2024 11:06

Hey! Be careful about the way that you talk about my friend!

please remember that success breeds success and failure breeds failure. No only were you never a "total, abject failure ", it was all the seeds you planted during those years that helped you rise up and become the proud Yungerman and Talmud Chochom you are today, clean and strong, striving and growing.

Sure, you made mistakes, and regretting them is proper. But do not loath and devalue that Bochor that you were. He was not a fraud or a failure, he was a fighter, who had not yet managed to fully succeed. He has now grown up, and he deserves a hug. And embrace who you are today, who is special, and is the same guy.

And about the summer, I think it's fair to say that just do the best you can on the streets. That's all that's expected.

The perfect is the enemy of the good.

You're a good man. Regardless of if you are or were or ever will be perfect. And you'll get better, step at a time. Relax, and learn Shtark, friend.

Here's a warm hand,

Chaim Oigen

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by Muttel - 27 May 2024 16:52

At the risk of echoing chaimoigen - woahh!!!

proudyungerman, if I took your approach, I'd be a nothing, total abject failure to the tenth power!

imagine someone who excels in 50 midos and is a tremendous ?????? ????, but is lacking in ????? ??????????. He needs to have the nicest house, car, suit, etc. Would you say he's an abject failure?? I'm not comparing a nice house to P&M, nonetheless, there's what to think about... We need to compartmentalize our failings and not superimpose them on all our accomplishments. Failure in one area doesn't translate into erasure of all good things we've accomplished.

Now, YOU tell this to ME when I kvech that I'm a nothing!

With much love and admiration,

Muttel

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by proudyungerman - 31 May 2024 01:45

I want to share a small, but sweet victory I had recently in my shmiras einayim struggle.

[Edit: Suffice it to say if you live in Burma then you'll know why the Kollel has a significant challenge.]

(BH that feeling has accompanied me a large part of the day. It's something I'd like to work on realizing and carrying around more, as it's helpful in all areas of life.)

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Re: The Real Me
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 31 May 2024 03:28

Hero!!!

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Re: The Real Me
Posted by Muttel - 31 May 2024 14:27

Keep these posts coming! So inspiring to see such victories by a brother - victories through everyday life.

Keep making us **proud** of this **yungerman!**

With tremendous love and admiration,

Muttel

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Re: The Real Me
Posted by amevakesh - 02 Jun 2024 10:53

That's where and how the battle's meant to be fought. One of my biggest pitfalls in this fight was the way I would rationalize my lust. It's not so bad, it's not _____ (fill in the blank with whatever), I'm only looking at _____. What I didn't understand is that lust is lust, even bite sized pieces are harmful, and one does not have to be drowning in it for it to compromise the life you could and should be living.

You could have looked and justified it with a thousand excuses. You would still have your streak. No one would have known. Yet you said no, because you're looking for something more than just breaking free. You're a Proud Yungerman looking to soar, to connect with that infinite light that warms, lifts up and envelopes one who allows it in to his heart.

Suppose someone is 250 pounds overweight, high blood pressure, diabetes the works. He goes to the Doctor who tells him that unless he changes his diet quickly and drastically, something's gonna give, he's not gonna last much longer in this condition. He find it exceedingly difficult to change his eating habits of many years, but he has no choice, his current lifestyle is incompatible with long term life.

What about someone who's 30 pounds overweight? He doesn't have the same struggle as the first guy. He can walk up a few flights of steps without huffing and puffing. His health is not compromised, is not in danger, can participate in most day to day activities, and generally he can actually have a decent quality of life. However, he cannot run the marathon, to do so, he must be in tip top shape. His eating habits have to be near perfect, he must exercise regularly, push himself to his limits, and only then does he have a chance of being a serious contender. **Restricting** himself to eating healthy foods, and subjecting his body to a daily regiment of exercise, will allow him the **freedom** to participate in any activity he wishes to.

Had you looked at those pictures, perhaps you would be able to function. Maybe you would even be able to Daven with some Kavana and do some Mitzvos. The fact that you pitched your battle at this point shows that you're seeking something more then the ordinary. Your looking to transcend, to allow your heart and mind to be infused with thoughts so sublime that are sensitive to even the smallest amounts of impurity. But to accomplish what you are doing day in day out demands a higher standard, one you are meeting and beating day by day. You're a spiritual athlete that's holding up the world, and we're so thankful to you for doing so.

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Re: The Real Me
Posted by adam2014 - 07 Jun 2024 10:29

A victory is a victory and you should cherish every single one of them!! Great Job!!

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by proudyungerman - 10 Jun 2024 23:51

Since the beginning of my journey here on GYE I've always had a dream of reaching out to some of my Rabbeim from Yeshiva and bring them into my world of this struggle, so they can see what I've gone through. The hope is to bring some awareness to the issue and facilitate help for some of the others who need it so desperately.

So, with the guidance of a special GYE Rebbi/Mentor, I've been patient (not my strong point...), and finally have hit the right time.

Here goes...

????? ??"? _____ ??????",

My experiences over the last half a year or so are compelling me to reach out and share some very personal information. I am doing so because I feel there can be tremendous toles in you knowing these details to be able to help. It is difficult to write this email, yet I am compelled by the thought that others will not have to suffer as I have. Obviously, I trust that you will safeguard the confidentiality of this email fully.

I have experienced growth in areas in which I have been challenged in a way that I want to share. For many years, dating back to eighth grade, I struggled in ?????? ??????. My struggles actually did not start with ??? ??????, rather it started with a friend of mine introducing me to phone sex lines. At the time I had no idea what it was, but the memory was there.

At the end of ninth grade I discovered ??? ?????? and after that, it wasn't long until I was stuck in it, for most of my bochur years. At some point later, I don't recall exactly when (sometime during 11th grade probably) I "rediscovered" those wretched phone lines. I used them for years, just listening to the messages.

When I got married, I thought I was good. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. Last year I started looking at inappropriate things on the computer at the Kollel where I am. (The filter was not at all up to par.) I reached out to R' _____, spoke to him and was more or less fine. Until this winter, when I started speaking to people on these lines. At that point I reached out for more serious help. I went for therapy, with limited results. The therapist was good, but....

Then I found a website called Guard Your Eyes (GYE).

Here I was cured, I found the help I needed.

The incredible value of this website and community cannot be overestimated.

I want to try to explain what GYE is and how it helped me. (And many others.)

GYE is an organization which helps people who struggle with inappropriate sexual behaviors. Their website includes access to information, programs, mentors, guidance, and more. There are people on the site who have stories of challenges that range from less severe to mine to people who have been compulsively watching pornography, other negative behaviors, and even people involved in serious sexual addiction. Some members even suffered for decades!

One of my friends from the site spent many years as a bochur and yungerman using every spare second during bein hasedarim for pornography - and he was headed down the slippery slope to worse... Through the help he received on GYE he is completely clean for almost a year now, and has grown in every conceivable way! That's just one story...

For me, there were two crucial parts that helped me.

1. There's an anonymous forum where people can post their stories. I posted my story, got tremendously helpful feedback, and got connected to mentors. These mentors are people who have been down the same road as me, while at the same time being Rabbaim, Menahalim, and Talmedei Chachamim ???????. They guided me through the steps necessary in order to reach true cleanliness from these behaviors. These were certain practical steps as well as certain ideas and outlooks that needed to be tweaked, changed, or simply discarded.

The guidance and hadracha of these special people has my changed my life, and enhanced my Avodas Hashem not only in ??? ???, but more so in ??? ???. (There's a big focus on Shalom

Bayis, too...)

2. The power of a real friend. There are a large number of people on GYE, a number of them like minded Bnei Torah who are trying to grow in their Avodas Hashem and are desperate for a way to defeat this terrible YH. I connected with a number of people (not all like me - some "regular" working people who are also desperate) who have been invaluable in helping me defeat this monster. I am in touch with some of these people almost daily.

BH I am currently clean for close to 6 months and I am a changed person. My marriage is incomparably better, my learning is light years ahead of where it was. I am now a greater, more healthy person than I was before, and with a real, true value for the person that I am; my struggles do not define me!

I guess the idea behind this letter is to raise awareness on two aspects of the issue.

1. There are a tremendous number of people in the "yeshiva community" who are suffering silently from a monstrous YH that they have no clue how to escape from. I have friends from R' _____, R' _____ (both of them learnt in _____ (yes, that yeshiva...)), _____, and I even met up with someone from (my yeshiva). If I had to guess, there are probably a number of bochurim currently in yeshiva who are struggling.

This YH spares no one - some of my mentors are a Menahel, a chashuve Rav, a Shoel U'meishiv - and there's more. Trust me, I am there! I am sure you know some of the people on the site.

2. There is actual help available! There are answers, and people have changed completely and become completely clean. Many people had gone to therapy that hadn't helped, whereas GYE did help. (My friend from above is one example.)

I beg you, please don't underestimate the help that a person can get there!

I am putting myself through the extremely difficult experience of writing this letter for one reason. No one - not a bochur, yungerman, marbitz Torah, or a Baal Habayis - needs to go through the hell of struggling with these nisyonos, and the guilt and shame that come along with them alone!

He should be able to get help. You are in the position to help advise such people - there are probably more than you know, even with all of your experience.

Please look further into this and send those who are in need of help to this place where they can find help, community, growth and Yeshua.

I am happy to discuss more at any point.

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Proudyungerman

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406-219-8398

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Re: The Real Me

Posted by yiftach - 11 Jun 2024 00:06

I have no idea why this post brought tears to my eyes (well, it is the wee hours of the morning).

Gutsy, but beautifully written!

Go on my friend, the world needs people like you! Unfortunately, there's a major lack of resources that many mechanchim have in this field. You're fixin' it, one Rebbi at a time!

Gut Yom Tov!!!

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