

Where do I start??

Posted by markj3905 - 23 May 2024 16:15

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Hi all, I'm hesitant to be here but know I need to.

Here is my story....

I began as a kid looking at magazines my mother brought into the house. As I got older I started using the internet (dial up aol in those days) and "tripped" on some content. As a Bochor in BM I got involved with 900 phone lines, and continued during shidduchim.

I more or less stopped when I got married, but my old habits came back a few years into marriage. Once I started working, I had full access to technology and money, and the freedom of my own space and schedule. At that point 900 calls weren't doing it for me anymore and I began camming.

I've been camming now for many years and recently felt like I needed more (part of the addictive cycle I assume). I joined a few social media platforms, and made some new "friends". What scares me about this new development is that I've been faced with strong temptations to meet with some of these people in person - a dark place I haven't ever gone yet, but fear that it's too easy to fall into.

This new development has forced me to realize that while I'm "comfortable" continuing my cam habits (sadly), it's leading me to dangerous areas that I know I don't want to be.

I now realize two things: 1) each habit gets boring and will make you look for the next

2) every habit feels wrong in the outset, but then becomes part of your norm to the point that you don't even want to stop.

My question to everyone here is where do I start?

Is stopping cold Turkey and filtering every device the way to go? I fear that I won't last a day

like that....and if I fall I'll just give up.

Do I stop slowly? Is that even an option?

I'm too wrapped up in all of this to see things clearly. In moments of truth and clarity I'm well aware of what needs to happen- but a piece of me just doesn't want to stop. How do I start on this road? Any and all help will be greatly appreciated.

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by chosemyshem - 23 May 2024 16:44

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Bro! Welcome!

You're in the right place. GYE is full of people like you, who fell into a place they never thought they would and slowly fell deeper and deeper into pits they are not sure they can ever escape. You'll find companionship; you'll learn that you're not alone. You'll also learn that the struggle can be won and some tools to help you win.

Stick around, post, never give up.

Some excellent resources: [The Battle of the Generation](#), the [F2F program](#), and the mentors around here (I suggest reaching out to @HashemHelpMe whose email is in his signature).

I don't know the answer to your question. My gut feeling is block everything but other, wiser, people may say differently. I will say this. I don't think "wanting" to quit is required to get clean. You recognize you need to make changes. That is all that's needed.

You are 100% correct that this is a terrible slippery slope.

Let me ask you a personal question: How is your marriage doing?

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by tj613 - 23 May 2024 16:48

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Hi, well step one is done already your here!

step 2 id say is realize that what your doing is wrong, why its wrong, and why its not worth for you to do what your doing. ( there a big list for you to figure out for yourself).

after that figure out what made you choose to go after your desires more then you should.

after you have all that answered you now can make your work plan and go work.

regarding blocking i would say it should be done but i dont know you and your situation.

always remember to be open with poeple about your situation so they can help you

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by markj3905 - 23 May 2024 16:56

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Thank you for your advice. Regarding your question, I BH have an amazing marriage and a truly special wife. I feel like my habits are not because I'm lacking as much as it's just a feel good habit, a stress relief, and almost a hobby at this point.

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by proudyungerman - 23 May 2024 17:02

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Welcome!

You have come to the right place!

The guys here are great, and they are warm and understanding.

If you're up for it, definitely reach out to HHM ([michelgelner@gmail.com](mailto:michelgelner@gmail.com)) He has helped hundreds, present company included.

I would also recommend reading Vehkam's thread (link is under). It seems to me like it has some relevance to your situation.

[guardyoureyes.com/forum/4-On-the-Way-to-90-Days/375452-Work-in-progress](https://guardyoureyes.com/forum/4-On-the-Way-to-90-Days/375452-Work-in-progress)

Keep on posting and keep in touch!

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by chosemyshem - 23 May 2024 17:15

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[markj3905 wrote on 23 May 2024 16:56:](#)

Thank you for your advice. Regarding your question, I BH have an amazing marriage and a truly special wife. I feel like my habits are not because I'm lacking as much as it's just a feel good habit, a stress relief, and almost a hobby at this point.

Amazing! May you continue to have shalom bayis. That being said, I can almost guarantee you that if you don't stop you will cease to have that amazing marriage. Do you think your wife will appreciate you cheating on her? How do you think she would view this hobby? Odds are she'd (correctly) view it as cheating already.

But to unpack a little more. Why do you think this is a "good habit"?

Perhaps I'm misunderstanding what you're doing? It sounds like you are chatting with online prostitutes, perhaps paying them to expose themselves to you. Is there a different definition of camming and I'm jumping to the wrong conclusion?

There's a section in the [F2F](#) program that helps you think about your reasons for change. I suggest you go through it. Does camming align with your priorities in life? How bout hooking up with women you met online?

I apologize for the blunt language, but one thing I was taught here is that we often ambiguate what we are doing as an attempt to hide from ourselves. It's just "my little problem" or "that dirty thing" that is not really part of my life. It's my "de-stresser" - sure sounds alot better than "I often spend hours selfishly pleasuring myself to some naked shiksas so I don't have to face my life".

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by Muttel - 23 May 2024 17:30

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[chosemyshe wrote on 23 May 2024 17:15:](#)

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chosemyshe - a **FEEL** good habit, not a GOOD habit!!!

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by Muttel - 23 May 2024 17:42

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Welcome!

Starting here and getting to know the Angels - always willing to help anyone here - is a support that is priceless!

Your fortitude to reach out here is a stepping stone to growth...

Here's hoping you go mechayil lechoyil on your quest for Kedusha and purity....

Muttel

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by chosemyshem - 23 May 2024 18:06

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[Muttel wrote on 23 May 2024 17:30:](#)

[chosemyshem wrote on 23 May 2024 17:15:](#)

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Oh whoops. Good catch R' Muttel. I somehow read that as "feel it's a good habit".

@MarkJ I apologize. Really threw me that someone would call this a "good habit". I've heard some impressive rationalization on this site but that would've taken the cake. Please excuse my poor reading comprehension.

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by siyatta - 23 May 2024 18:35

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Kol hakavod for coming out and sharing your struggle. There are many here who struggle/struggled with the same and worse. There is absolutely hope to make changes.

If I can offer my two cents, here's where I think is a good place to start; to dig deep and figure out why you should stop. Maybe start with a running list of what's wrong with acting out (in whatever way you know deep down is wrong)? I would say write 5 things now and add as you realize more areas that this impacts.

Spend time really thinking about, I would think about my wife, my children, what kind of role model do I want to be. I would think about the people who respect me. Think about the potential chilul Hashem if something ever surfaced. Think about after 120. I would think about my deceased relatives looking down at me and seeing what I'm doing. Etc etc

Really dig while making this list, and review this list daily until you create the resolve needed to really embark on the journey of change. The battle is real and it takes determination to pull through.

Once you're determined, you can discuss the steps of change and how to go about it.

Those are my humble thoughts.

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by vehkam - 23 May 2024 19:03

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[markj3905 wrote on 23 May 2024 16:15:](#)

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I can definitely relate. It is hard to imagine stopping cold turkey. Since every person is different there is not any one foolproof answer.

in my opinion, starting slowly for you would mean, committing to staying off of the social media platforms that you described. It is crucial that you don't follow any roads to something that could lead to in person meetings. Starting slowly means that this is just the first goal and that you be cognizant of further goals (e.g. no camming, no viewing pornography, no stimulating yourself

etc...) that will need to come. As long as you are consistently going in the right direction you will iy'h get there. It is very difficult to stay clean if you are fantasizing so in order to break the pattern i would try the following:

i would work very hard to change from the inside out. I would try to fill my day with positive things that will be good for my neshama. I would keep myself as busy as possible so that there is not time and empty space for things that will bring me down.

I would read a book such as the Battle of the Generation every single day before going to bed no matter what! (even when you are delayed in going to sleep until 3am)

I would try to work towards being comfortable speaking with one or two of the amazing chevra here on a regular basis. Opening up to a real person takes away the grip that the secret can have on you. You can no longer convince yourself that noone will ever find out.

I would post on here every single day. Become an advocate for kedusha by encouraging others here.

I would open up to hashem and ask for help. Since i am meeting with him three times a day it is definitely worthwhile to speak to him honestly and ask for his help. Pay attention to what you say and how you ask. Your life may depend on this. View it as such.

There is a lot more. This is just an outline....

Wishing you the greatest success

Vehkam

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by iwannalivereal - 23 May 2024 19:16

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Shalom Aleichem and welcome to the family! Although you sound hesitant to be joining the chevra here, you'll soon learn how enjoyable it can be to be here.

Something that you wrote is quite relatable. You wrote that at some point the acting out becomes so much the norm that you don't even want to stop. I struggled with pornography on and off for about 15 years. At some point, I came to the realization that I have no real interest in stopping. I was enjoying it too much, and my daily porn watching was something that was quite a part of me. (I also slowly started sliding down the slippery slope similar to what you mentioned.)

What helped me tremendously was working on changing internally until I actually wanted not to watch pornography. This is quite a bit easier said than done. The pleasure you can get from this stuff is like none other, and trying to put together a list of reasons to stop never quite had me convinced that stopping was the better way to go. On an emotional level, I felt that acting out was the better of the two options that I had.

The Battle of the Generation book taught me how to actually appreciate what I gained by stopping my behaviors. I learned how to feel an emotional pleasure and sense of real and true accomplishment for every time I overcome the struggle. This feeling is something that has helped me the past 8 and a half months. Instead of having an internal fight - should I watch and get the pleasure or not watch and miss out, I now feel that by not watching there is something to gain as well!

All the best,

iwannalivereal

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by cande - 23 May 2024 19:27

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@markj3905

you may want to reach out to this Legend! VEHKAM!

it will be a life savior!

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by markj3905 - 24 May 2024 02:26

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Thank you all for the warm welcome - and some thought provoking ideas. I'm short on time at the moment, but will iyh follow up with some of you.

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Re: Where do I start??

Posted by chaimoigen - 24 May 2024 05:58

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Hey, here's a warm hand. Welcome!

There are good folks here, and a lot to learn. And hope.

Change is possible.

Id recommend reading through Vehkm's thread "Work In Progress". You'll see how a man who was totally in a lifestyle of indulging in in-person relationships and more was able to change and break free, from the inside to the outside, one step at a time.

You can too.

We are looking forward to getting to know you better,

Chaim Oigen

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