

Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 24 Jul 2024 21:00

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Hi! I am so happy and relieved to be here. If I may, I'd like to share my painful story.

I grew up in a sheltered Torah home. My father is a mechanech known for his passion in fighting the internet and the nisyonos hador. Ever since I can remember I've always been consumed with sexual curiosity. It started with hijacking woman's clothing catalogs I found in the mailbox, discovering masturbation, fantasizing about pretty much any attractive female I knew including family members, and more. Throughout my years in mesivta I would occasionally purchase or rent movies, and even had some opportunities to watch porn. I used to have streaks where I would abstain from being motzi zerah. Sometimes it lasted a few days sometimes even weeks. But they never lasted very long.

As all this was happening I was very busy portraying myself as a serious bachur and trying desperately to learn and get better at learning. BH, even with all my daydreaming and fantasizing I was able to block out the guilt and shame and throw myself into my learning enough that I made it through my yeshiva years. In fact, I was so deeply troubled about my identity and so desperately wanted to be considered a "good guy" in learning and yiras shamayim, I would join "extracurricular" shiurim and sedarim staying in the beis medrash till late at night. Although this definitely helped my overall shteiging, the truth is that I was way behind and should have been honest about where I needed to focus.

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BH I became more serious in beis medrash and was even one of the few in my shiur to get into THAT yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael. But there things got worse. The hustle and bustle of the geula neighborhood and the nisyonos it presents is something that I'm sure is all too familiar to many of you. I found myself deliberately getting on to packed buses (vhameivin yavin), taking late night walks in neighborhoods I should never have entered, pretending to be preoccupied with an important phone call, and just generally consumed with sexual fantasies. And then I discovered those free chat lines. And those unfiltered computer kiosks. I found myself again going to sleep late, sometimes entirely missing first seder. All the while continuing to prop up my image as a chashuva Ben torah. The double life continued and deepened.

I continued on to BMG and got engaged soon after to a wonderful bas talmid chachom. Like many, I clung to the desperate hope that shidduchim, engagement, and marriage would help me solve my problem. But in between my "streaks" I was still busy with chat lines, porn, and masturbation. Davening was always a bizarre fluctuation of intensity, tears, and disinterest. In halacha I was sometimes meticulous and sometimes lax. I would be proud yet disturbed whenever complimented on my learning achievements, hashkafic sincerity, or general intelligence.

During my engagement and after my marriage it became clear that I had an issue seemingly not connected to any of this, that severely affected my shalom bayis. I was, and still am, very determined to make my marriage work, and I know the issue is mine. I went to therapy for 3 years for it. I spent lots of money, tried different therapists with different modalities, all the while really trying to make things work. It helped a little, but things were really not simple. I have to give a shout out to my wife for being the trooper, for bearing with me, for seeing the good in me and the possibility for me to heal and our marriage to blossom.

All this time, freshly married, struggling with my marriage and much inner turmoil, I felt lonely and isolated. I didn't know what HaShem wanted from me. I cried, I ignored and moved on, cried again and ignored some more. Over the past year things got to the point that I sadly moved on from just porn, masturbation and chat lines.

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2 weeks ago, Hashem in His overabundant mercy rescued me, and I stumbled upon this precious website. Out of desperation I sent a couple partner requests. IWLR emailed me within a few hours. To make a long story short, it turns out that we knew each other very very well. I will forever be makir tov to him for introducing me to the possibility of recovery. I've been in touch with Harav Hatzadik HHM over the past week and my life has changed. I'm finally able to address what I've known all along. That this dark hidden part of me has directly and INDIRECTLY seeped into every aspect of my life.

I have no words to thank everyone who's posts I've read and who I've spoken to over the past week. The power of being able to share, be vulnerable, and come clean, with those whom you know will accept you, is indescribable. 3 years of therapy and I never shared this! I even managed to convince myself that it wasn't related to what I was there for. I am more connected

with myself than ever and my marriage has changed because of that. Everything in my life is different than just two weeks ago.

I have a long way to go, but finally I feel ready and equipped to fight this battle. I look forward to continuing to grow the friendships I have created, and to live a pure, authentic life together forever.

Your friend,

MinHamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 15 Aug 2024 17:10

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Hi everyone,

Over the past few weeks I've had some thoughts and i think it'll be beneficial for me to write them down here. Mostly, I've been refraining from posting them here due to their very personal and sensitive nature.

I mentioned in my opening post that I've been going to therapy for over 3 years now due to a unique personal challenge that is severely affecting me and my shalom bayis.

A lot of my kedusha struggle had to do with that, and I'm thinking of opening a thread on the balabatims

Forum so I can share, and thereby hopefully clarify for myself some things. I'll let you know.

In other news, there seems to be something very pashut to most people here in this struggle,

something that I've only recently begun to internalize.

We all know that the source of all these urges that we get, is that the yetzer hara is trying to "chap" us. This is the most basic and fundamental truth when it comes to all areas of bechira.

But for some reason, throughout all my years in this battle, rarely if ever did I stop and think to myself that this is the yetzer hara I'm fighting! To me, it was always the good part of me vs. the bad part of me. The part that so desperately craved to feel accomplished, to feel good about myself, to feel connection with hashem, vs. the lazy, instant gratification seeking, lust filled, sex/porn lover that I was.

Now, I know that in reality it's really one and the same. I was created **with** a yetzer hara. He's part of me. And he **is** (among other things) a lazy, instant gratification seeking, lust filled, sex/porn lover, and I'll have to deal with him for the rest of my life.

But to have the outlook that he's just an external force that's purely trying to "chap" **me**, is something so basic, elementary, and useful. I know there are sources throughout chazal that this is a necessary outlook to have. I'm not exactly sure how something so simple like this wasn't even on my radar on a practical level (although I do have some ideas). But

in any case, I think this new (for me) outlook will prove itself very beneficial in understanding and beating this (and every) struggle.

thanks for listening,

MinHamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 21 Aug 2024 04:26

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Tonight, another door to real friendship **opened** up for me.

It was short, sweet, and a bit rushed. But it was clearly the start of something more.

MinHamayim'l

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by Muttel - 21 Aug 2024 05:54

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'Twasn't a wholehearted enough hug  
[minhamayim wrote.](#)

**MinHamayim'l**

<https://guardyoureyes.com/forum/19-Introduce-Yourself/413043-My-ENTIRE-story?limit=15&start=90#415559>

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by freespirit - 21 Aug 2024 09:40

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Can you tell us about your time in brisk. Did you share your struggle with any of the chashuvim there? Did you find anyone else with similar issues?

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by hopefulswan89 - 08 Sep 2024 14:02

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[minhamayim wrote on 24 Jul 2024 21:00:](#)

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I grew up in a sheltered Torah home. My father is a mechanech known for his passion in fighting the internet and the nisyonos hador. Ever since I can remember I've always been consumed with sexual curiosity. It started with hijacking woman's clothing catalogs I found in the mailbox, discovering masturbation, fantasizing about pretty much any attractive female I knew including family members, and more. Throughout my years in mesivta I would occasionally purchase or rent movies, and even had some opportunities to watch porn. I used to have streaks where I would abstain from being motzi zerah. Sometimes it lasted a few days sometimes even weeks. But they never lasted very long.

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by Muttel - 09 Sep 2024 08:53

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[hopefulswan89 wrote on 08 Sep 2024 14:02:](#)

Very Shtark post. Wondering if anyone else from that yeshiva are among the members of GYE. While I didn't make it to that yeshiva, i was first tier.

There definitely are!

Why don't you share your story so we can get to know you better. I see you opened Your profile adjusting your counter to 515 days. Why don't you talk about how you got there (or is your counter setting a mistake?) and what others can do to emulate you?

Muttel

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by minhamayim - 11 Sep 2024 03:42

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It's been a few weeks since I last posted here. Bh thinks have been going fairly well in the kedusha department. It's great watching my streak slowly climb.

Some thoughts on my progress:

I'm a little disappointed about how often I still find myself needing to fight the lust.

Now, I understand that I'm not supposed to be waiting for the day that I don't struggle with lust anymore. Or for the day that my yetzer harah decides to bid me farewell. That ain't happening and that's fine. But I did think that the less I give in to him the less I would be affected by normal civilian shmiras einayim challenges. I always assumed that it was only because of the garbage that I was busy with that I couldn't walk in the street like a normal human being without literally ogling at anything that remotely resembled something I could lust over. (I always marveled at how in this inyan I always manage to have such an ayin tovah that I assume that the blurry figure 2 blocks away is probably the most beautiful woman I'll ever get a chance to lay my eyes on)

Literally anything that's caught in my peripheral vision becomes a struggle for me. I'm trying to just mentally acknowledge their presence and move on and bh i usually do these days but it bothers me how hyper aware I am of any potential stimulation and how lust is so ingrained in me. I really hope things will start to get easier

Another point:

Im a little nervous. Life is great better than ever even. But I still almost feel as if I'm waiting for things to get worse. How could it be that something I've struggled with my entire life has changed so drastically in such a short amount of time. Almost as if I flipped a switch and I'm cured. I'm nervous that my current streak perhaps would be considered "white knuckling" mainly because of the fact that I don't believe I'm putting in so much work.

As I'm writing this I'm realizing that my two points sound slightly paradoxical.

Again I'm pretty confident that this is real I just don't want to let my guard down and therefore I'm trying to acknowledge these feelings by writing them down here.

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by jewizard21 - 11 Sep 2024 04:25

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It's late so I'll answer quickly what I'm thinking. I can definitely relate.

I don't see it as lust being so ingrained that now I'm always aware of shmiras einayim more than when I was watching porn and masturbating. I see it that now I am experiencing the way regular shmiras einayim is, as opposed to lust filled shmiras einayim.

Also in some ways it is easier over time but it's never easy. Don't overthink it, if it's easy now then BH. It may get harder one day but that's in the future and who knows what the future entails. We have to focus on today and thank Hashem for each day. And especially those easy days

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 11 Sep 2024 11:23

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[minhamayim wrote on 11 Sep 2024 03:42:](#)

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bothers me how hyper aware I am of any potential stimulation and how lust is so ingrained in me. I really hope things will start to get easier

What you are experiencing is normal and expected. Our subconscious craves the "fix" we used to give our bodies. Therefore, when one has BH successfully removed himself from the hyper-stimulation of online garbage, the subconscious makes one all of a sudden start noticing "everything" in the street - desperately attempting to arouse you from that. The solution is quite simple. Do not panic. Do your best in the street. The same way that the subconscious grudgingly gave up on "getting you" through online stimulation, the same will b'ezras Hashem happen with the real-life stuff.

Of course, basic shmiras eynaim challenges are here for life - just as basic shmiras halashon - honesty in business - etc. challenges are here to stay. That is how Hashem made us. But they do not have to be overwhelming. And they won't be overwhelming if we slowly but surely - and **calmly** - continue growing.

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by Muttel - 11 Sep 2024 13:26

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@Minhamayim,

???? ?????? ????? ????? I'll say I had a synonymous experience. It lasted for a few days and subsided. Every person is unique, but I'm just giving over my personal experience.

You're doing beyond amazing! Hashem should give you the requisite strength to go ????? ?? ??? to a life filled with purity (not just the absence of ??????) and success in this inyan and all others too.

With a ton of brotherly love,

Muttel

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by hopefulswan89 - 11 Sep 2024 13:45

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[minhamayim wrote on 24 Jul 2024 21:00:](#)

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Your friend,

MinHamayim

Written beautifully. Wishing you continued success. How does a guy from AJ write so well? You are gebentcht with a multitude of talents. Focus on your blessings. You are a chizuk to all of us.

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by hopefulswan89 - 11 Sep 2024 16:42

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[minhamayim wrote on 29 Jul 2024 19:32:](#)

Friends,

I remember my 10th grade rebbe asking us the following question. We all know the rule of kol

haschalos kashos. So why is it that for many, the start of the zman (or the start of anything for that matter) is so often the easiest and most successful part?! He explained the obvious, that the initial high, the excitement, the freshness; they all have little to do with the real consistent hard work necessary for growth after those feelings dissipate. Therefore, that can't really be considered the beginning of the zman. The real beginning is only AFTER those first few days or weeks.

And THAT'S when we see the klal of kol haschalos kashos.

Yesterday my real beginning began.

I had my first real urge since the start of this new chapter in my life called gye.

I reached out to my first gye friend for support and whoa did he come through!

Let's see if I can try and jump on the poetry bandwagon here and give it a shot. (I have some

Hours so precious

Yielded over as if nill

His optimism infectious

Remaining with me until

Assurance garnered

the means has met it's end

the demon's been caged

Now my strength will not bend

time

How can I reciprocate

Show him what he showed me

When I'm the one submerged in deep

And in the deep it's hard to see

Words like thanks won't do justice

Won't Suffice to be uttered

For helping me to (e)merge

from the gated and the shuttered

This is someone who cares

so much so that he speaks

of another man's mountains

Like they're all his own peaks

For that kind of friend

There's none to say or do

But I sure can remind him

My victories are his too



pulled out,

MinHamayim

I think you should write professionally.

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by eerie - 12 Sep 2024 01:52

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To my dear friend, Minhamayim

Just to share my experience. It took my a good few hundred days until I felt that I was really making strides in the 'regular' shemiras einayim. I went through a stage of hypersensitivity on the streets. But even when I passed that, it took a long time for things to really change inside of me for the work on the streets to be possible. Obviously, the work on the street is much more subtle, and takes more ko'ach. There are no filters or webchavers. And it's not porn, right?! So, yes, it takes much more work. Take it slowly, my special friend. You are doing wonderful work.

Oh, and Yes, there are major things you learned, and BH you are internalizing them, and you feel like a different person. And that's not something to worry about, it's something to dance about!!! BH! You ARE a different person!

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge  
Posted by minhamayim - 12 Sep 2024 04:21

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Thanks everyone. Feels great that people are listening.

MinHamayim

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