

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 sederim 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.

I found myself extremely confused as to who I was and what I really wanted. On the one hand, I was a bachur with big ??????. I was zoche to learn in yeshivos where I witnessed true gadlos b'torah. I craved it. The genuine ahavas hatorah and meyushavkeit that I saw in my Rosh yeshiva, rebbeim, and older bachurim was something I knew I needed. On the other hand, how could I throw myself entirely into achieving that goal when I knew that I wouldn't be able to? When I knew I would fall again and again. When I knew it just wouldn't be real.

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.

And then...

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 Muttel - 07 Nov 2024 09:40

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[minhamayim wrote on 07 Nov 2024 06:37:](#)

Embarrassed to say that I just slipped a little. Not sure if it's a fall.

I am not anonymous to quite a few people here which makes it extra embarrassing.

Not sure what to think.

Going to sleep now.

Sorry guys,

Minhamayim

Brother,

I'm not sure exactly what happened, but it sure sucks.....

Hoping to meet you today, would be glad to shmooz things through.....

With overflowing brotherly love,

Muttel

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by iwantlife - 07 Nov 2024 14:49

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Hey minhamayim. Not sure what happened but I feel your pain. We're at about the same count, I also slipped a bit last week, as I posted on my thread. It happens! Don't mope for too long though, you're a different person than you were 112 days ago! Dust yourself off and keep climbing!

With love,

iwantlife

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by jewizard21 - 07 Nov 2024 14:55

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Just remember that a slip up even if it's a fall doesn't mean your a failure and that your progress means nothing. It could just mean that your streak is restarted but that shouldn't take away from each day that you are clean. Each day is another accomplishment and there will be some days that are harder than others.

Keep on Trucking, One Day At A Time!!

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 08 Nov 2024 06:03

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Thank you all for your support.

I decided I'm gonna follow hhm's advice on this one and not count it as a fall. To be honest mostly cuz I'm not holding by starting over. The streak is a tool I can use in weaker moments and I'm not ready to give that up. Or maybe I just don't want to give it up and start over because I just don't want to. Whatever. Point is, bh I did not view actual porn nor did I even touch. Chasdei HaShem.

I fixed the loophole in my filter.

Let this be a wakeup call for me that I gotta be on top of my game at all times- working on ways for that to happen as well.

Thanks again to all who posted and reached out.

Pulled out once again,

Minhamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by rebakiva - 08 Nov 2024 06:16

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[minhamayim wrote on 08 Nov 2024 06:03:](#)

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I fixed the loophole in my filter.

Let this be a wakeup call for me that I gotta be on top of my game at all times- working on ways for that to happen as well.

Thanks again to all who posted and reached out.

**Pulled out once again,**

Minhamayim

Not sure what that so called fall was, but whatever the case, "***pulled out once again***", is the greatest chizuk you could've given us right now, to see our fellow brother pull himself out of the mud {or maybe better yet just sand} gives us the strength and courage to follow in your path.

Thanks for your post you're an inspiration to us.

Keep it up and keep us posted.

With love Akiva

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 08 Nov 2024 06:30

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[rebakiva wrote:](#)

Not sure what that so called fall was, but whatever the case,

sorry if the oilams curious just don't think there's any toeles in spelling out the wheres whats

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 26 Nov 2024 03:19

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Hi everyone,

After a week of pushing this off I finally came to terms with the fact that I should probably post this.

About a week ago I had a slip similar to the one I recently posted about. Truthfully it was probably more like a continuation of the first slip. I relied to much on the fact that I fixed the "crack" in my filter.

The following is what I'm doing to protect myself going forward:

I started a 2 week accountability text to make sure I put the fog behind me and stay focused as I recalibrate.

I will BezH be more intentional about not letting shmiras einayim on the street slide.

I'm gonna dust off my old TBOTG and get back involved.

Thank you all,

MinHamyim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 26 Nov 2024 03:21

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Hi everyone,

After a week of pushing this off I finally came to terms with the fact that I should probably post this.



About a week ago I had a slip similar to the one I recently posted about. Truthfully it was probably more like a continuation of the first slip. I relied too much on the fact that I fixed the "crack" in my filter.

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Thank you all,

MinHamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by Muttel - 26 Nov 2024 09:41

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I'll iterate the idea I mentioned last slip. How 'bout meeting up with old Muttel?

***And staying in touch.....***

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by chaimoigen - 26 Nov 2024 16:16

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*every day*

*some of us*

*fight the gray.*

*he doesn't relax*

*waits for us*

*to slip through cracks.*

*keeping it **real***

*empowers us*

*to truly **heal.***

Reaching out a warm hand that stretches far - to grasp the hand of a honest, growing friend, I  
am,

chaimoigen

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 20 Jan 2025 15:05

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Hello everyone it's been a bit

Slipped again.

In recent months I've been using this thread only to post my slips in order to strengthen the degree of accountability and also to strengthen the middah of honesty- which Ive struggled with for most of my life. I'm not sure why I haven't been posting my wins but Bchasdei Hashem I am coming along in my journey towards wholeness mainly through constant touch with many friends off of the forums- all of to whom I'm exceedingly grateful.

Now for the details...

I poked around my filter and read erotica for a long time this past Thursday night.

Before I did it I told myself that this would not ruin my streak yet when I was done I was fearful that I had just lost my streak. This was all even though I didn't do anything more than I had initially set out to do.

I'm bothered by the fact that my streak means so much to me and that I'm tying so much to it.

I will be keeping my count even though technically premeditated erotica reading does count as a fall according to the rules. It's kind of a grey area in general and since i was careful not to cross any other red lines I will continue from here.

Perhaps it's even more in the spirit of e"merging" to keep my streak because the reality is that I want to keep it. Pretending that I Only really care about true odaat growth just isn't true for me right now- although it's definitely my long term goal. To go against that feeling would be

pretending to be more authentic that I am which would obviously be a ridiculous thing to do.  
(How's that for rationalizing:) )

Thank you all,

Minhamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 18 Feb 2025 01:58

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Hi again,

Just want to document here that I broke some gedarim that I set up for myself. I made up that I will not go on a certain "harmless" website without someone around or without first contacting someone for accountability. This seemingly innocent website had proven to be a pretty guilty one for anyone that is prone to easily slipping into the clutches of lust (e.g. me). I was bored so i was moreh heter and predictably, ended up seeing some stuff that I didn't want to see and ended up feeling pretty yucky about the whole thing.

I think it is noteworthy to mention that a friend of mine once pointed out that in moments like these it's important to remember how just a few months ago it would have been hard for me to imagine that breaking gedarim like this one would be reason for major concern. Thank You Hashem for bringing me to this place and for continuing to safeguard me as You present me with opportunities to grow.

I am hereby renewing and strengthening my commitment to this specific kabbala for the coming 30 days.

Thanks for listening,

Minhamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 17 Mar 2025 14:04

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Good morning friends,

It's been 30 days (see last post) and I'd like to officially renew the kabala for another month. Bh I stuck to it religiously and it really helped. Unfortunately that's not to say that it was a perfect month poking-wise. Even though these little slips are nothing compared to what I used to be busy with, it's not what I want for myself. Why oh why can't I just eradicate this completely! Just to be clear, it's not that I want the urges to go away- that would be ridiculous. I am a healthy human male and getting urges comes along with being one. And Bh I now have the tools to help me stay out of real trouble.

It's just these little pockets of allowing myself to lust just a bit without crossing any of the red lines I've set for myself. That is my battle now.

Minhamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by eerie - 17 Mar 2025 16:46

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Minhamayim, you are a true inspiration!!!

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