

Introduction ... my background, first time writing

Posted by ethangadi - 04 Dec 2024 23:06

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Hi and *Shalom 'Alekhem* to everyone. I heard shining things about this site so I signed up around five months ago, but I've only become active in tracking and doing exercises this past week; I have high hopes and GYE seems like a community of good-hearted, warm people, *temime leb* and *yore-e shamayim* here to support each other in our growth. Be"H I should merit and be *zokheh* to join you all.

On myself: I'm 23 years old, from the United States, with an Israeli background. I am *?ozer beteshubah* (not to say that I am fully *shomer mi?wot* but be"H I will merit this one day), and now identify as more or less Sephardic Modern Orthodox (Shabbat, keep basic kashrut although I would like to be more stringent, *mithpallel* 3 times a day and learn when I can). I have a strong interest in *?azzanuth*, and am a *?azzan* for a small minyan I helped found. I just graduated from university and hope to start working soon.

I've struggled with P&M in some form for about seven years, but have wanted to quit (always unsuccessfully) for around the past four, as it's grown from an occasional guilty vice to the all-consuming habit that swallows up hours of my day: during which I transform into a different person: a grotesque shell of myself, *poshe'a*, bereft of *mi?woth* and any favorable *middoth*, and completely under the *shil?on* of my Evil Inclination. Yet, even as I am in the middle of this daily nightmare that eats up who I am, I can feel my real self -- my *Ye?er ha?ob* -- kicking inside, screaming to stop-- but here I am pinned down in place by an unseen force, unable to move or react or act on my real, true, sincere wishes. I am an *asir* of my own hand, I am as innocent of being oppressed as I am guilty of oppressing myself. I hate it. I can't continue living like this. As these sessions conclude or during, I even have verses of Torah of the day's *tefillah* floating around in my head as if to remind me of what is *emeth* and what is *sheqer* while I chose in the midst of *sheqer*. The last time I slipped, I remember the verses from Seli?oth: ... ?????????? ??????????, ??????????. ?????????? ??????????????, ??????????. ?????????? ?????????????? ?????????, ??????????. ?????????? ?????????????? ??????????: **"He who answers the poor, answer us. He who answers the oppressed, answer us. He who answers the broken-hearted, answer us. He who answers the downtrodden, answer us."** So in this spirit, I hope that *yosheb 'al kisse ra??amim* will answer my pleas-- and that all of you, who are *yoshevim* in your halls of study, at your dinner tables, and at your office desks, can answer and we can work *lema'an a?ai were'ai* to keep each other on the straight path.

Out of all this, somehow, I have merited to have the most wonderful girlfriend. I met her at my

university's Chabad; we have been together for almost three years and I hope to propose, be married, and build a home full of love, purity, and *mi?woth* as soon as I am *mesadder parnassah* (by her and her family's wishes). Early in the relationship, she knew of my issue and attempted to help me. She "flew too close to the flame," and the indirect fallout nearly separated us. Since then, my P use has been an elephant in the room that we rarely discussed, and always with great discomfort on both ends. Likewise, it grew in the shadows, as there was no one to hold me accountable. What triggered my newfound motivation and enthusiasm was a candid conversation we had a week ago about my seemingly hopeless situation. I confided in her that part of why I love spending time with her is because it reminds me I am good at heart, and not "evil, disgusting, hated, and unredeemable" like I feel after each P binge. She aggressively defended me, that she knows that my struggle (which in the past couple years ceased to be a real struggle, and was more of an occupation where I could never go more than two days without use, and sometimes used compulsively several times a day) is not who I am: that my *middoth* are representative of who I am at heart. And also, that we should not raise a family until I have conquered my conqueror, and that she is depending on me, believes in me, and is there to support me.

Yishtaba? shemo la'ad, I am now "struggling" again: by which I mean that the going is hard, but I have a real fighting chance, and will not stop struggling, no matter how many times I lose in the short-term, until I am victorious. I suffered a setback after a nearly 6 day streak- which may seem like little, but was the longest streak I've had in at least two years and my third best all-time. I don't want to darshen to people, but I can't understate the importance of confiding in someone close who knows your struggle, loves you, and will hold you accountable. My *'awonoth* grew in the shadows, and the light is proving a challenge for them b"H. That is part of what led me to want to write here. I've never written about my feelings on this issue (even in a journal) and so this is my first time putting my feelings and experiences into a readable form. I hope this will keep me accountable in the future. Since I slipped, I am on my 2nd day clean, feeling strong. May we all merit strength, freedom, good judgement, some providence and *hashga?ah and siy'atha deshmaya*. My feeling is that if I am *ma?lia?* in conquering this issue, I have it in me to conquer any other obstacle that the Qb"H should put in my way, and I'm sure I am not alone in this feeling.

Bizekhutheh de?adiqaya that give us inspiration, may every single one of us be *ma?li?im*.

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Re: Introduction ... my background, first time writing
Posted by amevakesh - 04 Dec 2024 23:53

Welcome Sadiq (did I spell that right?) to the forums. Yes you read that correctly, you are a courageous person, who is trying his hardest to fight the toughest battles of the generation. Fighting alone makes you a champion. The fact that you were able to buck the trend of your upbringing, and not pat yourself on the back, and say to yourself, "look how far I've come, I'm good enough, why do I need this headache of clean up what I look at?" makes you a hero of epic proportions. The battle within you is hard, but you've got what it takes to beat this. Serenity is attainable, as you will find out by reading so many of the stories that posted on the forums. So many of us thought that we would never be able to break free, but by allowing the light of real friends in to our lives, have completely cleaned up their act. That isn't to say that there aren't any bumps in the road, but when you travel the road holding hands, it becomes a whole lot easier. When you're ready, take the plunge, and reach out to any one of the good people here. When you find a person who's writing style, or personality, resonates within you reach out to him either through PM or through his email (if it's available). Many find that HHM is a great place to start you can reach him at his email at michelgelner@gmail.com. Hatzlacha!

P.S. As an aside, perhaps you'd like to go back to your post and edit some of the details. You write a lot about yourself and it might not be the best thing to give away your identity on a public forum like this one. Although most of us are good and safe people, one can never be careful enough.

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Re: Introduction ... my background, first time writing

Posted by yiftach - 05 Dec 2024 00:01

A very warm welcome, brother!

Yes, this is a haven of hope. Connection is the opposite of addiction. And so many people can attest to the miracles (freedom and cleanliness) they've experienced once they connected to others on this site.

Reach out, if you feel ready. The captain aboard is @hbm reachable at michelgelner@gmail.com. And there are so many others... Make yourself comfortable, you'll BeH also be able to be free and build a healthy marriage and home.

P.S. The mere fact that she's willing to look past your struggles and separate you from these actions, is an unbelievable feat and very rare. Many people here struggled even after getting married, and few can say they felt that level of acceptance as you do. So feel lucky and fortunate, brother!

All the best,

-Yiftach

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Re: Introduction ... my background, first time writing
Posted by proudyungerman - 05 Dec 2024 02:48

Welcome to the warmest family in the world!

Here you will find true care, concern, and warmth.

Here you will learn that you CAN break free!

There are many tools here to help you in this fight.

There is the F2F Program, the [Vaad Program](#), the book The Battle of the Generation - many have found this very helpful in reframing the struggle.

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There is also an extremely powerful tool of accountability, friends, and mentors, as has been mentioned, that has helped hundreds - myself included.

HHM - Hashem Help Me - is the mentor-in-chief around here. He's reachable at michelgelner@gmail.com.

Some of the other great guys here are Eerie - 1gimpelovitz@gmail.com, Muttel - muttel15@gmail.com, and iwannalivereal iwannalivereal@gmail.com Reb Akiva - mevakesh247@gmail.com.

Looking forward to seeing great things from you!

And don't forget, as always, KOMT!!

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Re: Introduction ... my background, first time writing

Posted by eerie - 05 Dec 2024 18:44

Welcome! Stick around, get to know the chevrah, keep posting. ask questions, and may Hashem grant you loads of Hatzlacha on your journey!

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Re: Introduction ... my background, first time writing

Posted by chosemyshe - 05 Dec 2024 21:16

I don't have much to add to the warm greetings and helpful direction provided above. I just want to personally commend you on your excellent transliteration skills! I always love seeing a nice ?, and you went above and beyond.

Stick around and you'll be *ma?lia?* in no time at all.

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