

I'm just like you

Posted by jump - 05 May 2025 01:09

Trigger Warning: Sensitive Content

Hey chevra, I wanted to share my story.

The first time I remember doing anything was around eighth grade, in the shower. I remember thinking, "What is this?" I was confused and honestly thought my body was broken. I didn't know there was anything wrong with it—I had no idea what I was doing or what it meant.

Then me and my brother started doing things together. It became a regular thing when I came home for Shabbos from mesivta—every Friday night. Until one Friday night, he was in bed, undressed, and tried to get me to do something again. That time, I put my foot down. I said no. And that was the end of it. But the damage was already done.

I try to look back at that episode and say—we were young, we didn't know better, and we were going through a hard life. We were just looking for something that made us feel good. And in a lot of ways, I've moved on. But the need for pleasure stayed.

Life was tough. I was just trying to feel something good. I remember times coming home from school, alone on the bus, the non-Jewish bus driver playing music—and I'd fall again. I'd get home so angry, and my mother didn't know why. She thought it was school, even though I was well-behaved there. But when I got home, I was a different person. I'd get sent to my room the second I walked in. I was hard to be around.

Years went on. Baruch Hashem, I didn't see porn until I was around 22. I used to speak to rabbeim—some tried incentives, some gave accountability—but nothing worked. Somehow, I couldn't even get past Friday each week. I had one Elul where I was clean, but that didn't last. I'd cry and beg Hashem, "I love You, I don't want this," but I felt stuck.

Eventually, I learned it's an aveirah. But by then, I couldn't stop.

When I went to Eretz Yisroel, I had this crazy urge to watch. I couldn't hold back. I bought a phone that looked kosher but had internet—and that was my intro to porn. It tore me apart. Everyone I saw became part of some fantasy in my head. My brain got messed up.

And I was still learning in the Mir—going to shiur, davening—but the rest of the time, I was sneaking off and watching.

When COVID hit, I came back to America and things got worse. No yeshiva, no minyan, no structure. Up late, waking up late, all alone. It hit rock bottom.

Eventually I went back to yeshiva, and things got better. But I still had my struggles. I even bought toys to act out with. And once, I went to a massage place. I hoped the woman would cross a line—but that was the only time anything happened with a real person.

Then dating started. Nothing worked out. So I made a decision: no more. No more watching, no more acting out. I got engaged, and I thought I was done.

About a week before the wedding, I opened up to my kallah about my struggle. It wasn't a good idea. She said she couldn't go through with it. I promised her I was done, and she decided to stay.

We got married. About a year in, I slipped again. I knew it was affecting the shalom bayis. I could feel it.

Then I heard about Guard Your Eyes. I joined. I started counting days. And Baruch Hashem, I'm now 221 days clean.

I still feel urges sometimes. But I know that if I act on them, I'm going to feel worse. If I hold back, I feel stronger. I'm in this fight. And I'm going to win.

Thanks to all of you—I know I'm not alone. That helps more than anything. I'm no different than you.

If this gives someone chizuk, I'm glad I shared it. You can do it too. Hatzlacha.

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by vehkam - 05 May 2025 02:46

I'm so happy for you that you have been able to stay clean. Do you listen to the daily vayimaen videos?

Let's get to a place where you are proud of your accomplishments despite the difficulties.

Having a rebbi or mentor that you can be totally open with May also help to lessen the shame that seems prevalent with these behaviors.

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by m111 - 05 May 2025 11:57

Your title says it all.

And I say back, I'm also just like you.

BTW what made you feel the need to tell you wife?

Exploring this may give some insight to yourself.

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by jump - 05 May 2025 16:49

Yes, I do watch the videos—they definitely keep me going. Looking back, I think the reason I told my wife is because it was such a big part of my life. It felt like a part of me, and not telling her meant she didn't really know the whole me.

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by vehkam - 05 May 2025 17:02

being open and honest in that way can pay off tremendously. you are fortunate that you had that opportunity.

wishing you continued success and growth

vehkam

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by puppy - 05 May 2025 18:15

Thanks for sharing your story it gives me definitely chizuk and probably others as well that it's possible to break free and everyone should know that.

Wishing you all the best on your journey

keep strong

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by jollylemur95 - 05 May 2025 18:33

Thank you for sharing your story.

I am really inspired by your gevurah!!

And I love your attitude!!

Chazak V'amutz!!

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Re: I'm just like you

Posted by jump - 06 May 2025 02:15

Amen!! Thank you guys

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