

"Finally Taking Action After Years of StrugglinPosted by sduece - 21 Jul 2025 23:08

Hi everyone, this is my first time posting here. I'm 34 years old and have been in recovery from drugs and alcohol since 2019—thank God.

I've been struggling with pornography and masturbation since I was about 13 years old, as I'm sure many of you can relate. For most of that time, I was rarely able to go more than a week without acting out.

Since getting sober, I've become more aware of the underlying emotions, triggers, and behaviors that fuel this struggle. Over the past few years, I've installed filters on all my devices, but like many of you, I've always found ways around them. I've also learned many tools along the way through therapy, recovery work, and self-reflection, and I've had some success using them. One step that really helped me was deleting my Facebook and Instagram accounts. That cut off access to inappropriate content, but more importantly, it reduced one of the outlets I used to escape from internal discomfort. Stress or emotional unease would often lead me to scroll through YouTube or social media for that quick hit of dopamine. But I've realized that it's all part of the same cycle—just another way to distract and disconnect.

I've been in therapy consistently for the past five years and have definitely seen growth. I got married in January 2024, and in the months leading up to the wedding, I was able to maintain about four months of sobriety from pornography and masturbation—the longest stretch I've ever had.

That said, marriage didn't make the struggle go away. I used to think it would—and I know others might feel the same—but I've learned firsthand that marriage doesn't fix these issues. If anything, it can add new layers of guilt and shame when the struggle continues.

Since getting married, I've taken on more responsibilities, and earlier this year, we had a baby. Baruch Hashem, it's been a tremendous blessing—but also a major adjustment. With these new responsibilities, I've become even more aware of how deeply this struggle affects me. When I act out, I feel paralyzed—drained of energy, low on motivation, and filled with self-doubt. It affects my mood, my self-esteem, and how I show up as a husband and father.

It's also impacted how I relate to women in general. I've seen how years of exposure to pornography and unhealthy content have distorted my lens. Whether I'm at the gym, walking down the street, watching a movie, or even just online, I struggle with the way I view women. It's made it harder to be present, to see people as people, and to stay grounded in real

intimacy.

This has also affected my marriage in very personal ways—especially around initiating intimacy. I've noticed how difficult it can be for me to take initiative or be emotionally open. I think that's partly because this issue has been with me for so long that it's shaped how I relate to intimacy in general. And as I continue to struggle with it, I see how it still holds me back.

Lately, I've also noticed how much I struggle with motivation itself. I go through these mental battles where I feel the urge to act out, and instead of putting up a fight, I just let go. I tell myself things like, "It's just one time," "You deserve this," "It's not that bad," "It feels so good," or "You need this." And then I give in.

Afterward, I feel completely deflated. The shame, the lack of motivation, the feeling of failure—it's heavy. There's a part of me that wants to give up entirely and believes I'll never beat this. But usually, after a little time—sometimes even the same day—I get my motivation back. But it's a hard cycle to keep going through. I know I need something stronger anchoring me—more clarity around why I want to quit and how I'm going to fight.

It's gotten to the point where I know I can't ignore this anymore. I've been procrastinating taking real action for a long time. I've known about Guard Your Eyes for a while now, and I've used it here and there—mostly just to log my falls. But I've always known deep down that I need to do more.

When the urge comes, I tend to be passive—I just give in. But recently I've realized I can't keep living that way. This struggle doesn't just affect behavior—it affects my mindset, my energy, my drive, and my sense of self. It robs me of my masculinity and purpose. It desensitizes me emotionally and spiritually.

Even when I do manage to abstain, the "detox" phase is tough. My thoughts become overwhelming. I become hypersensitive to what I see out in the world, and just navigating day-to-day life can feel exhausting.

I'm here because I've finally accepted that I can't do this alone. I want to take more consistent action. I want to connect with others who get it. I want to show up more honestly and fight this with the seriousness it deserves.

I'm hoping to find accountability, support, and community here. I'd love to hear from others—especially those navigating recovery while married, raising kids, and carrying real-life responsibilities. How do you stay present? How do you stay in action mode?

Thanks for reading, and I'm truly grateful this space exists. Looking forward to growing with all of you.

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Re: "Finally Taking Action After Years of Strugglin
Posted by hashemisonmyside - 21 Jul 2025 23:47

Welcome to the family!!

you came to the right place. This place in a certain sense helps more than even therapy at least for me...

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Re: "Finally Taking Action After Years of Strugglin
Posted by newpage2025 - 21 Jul 2025 23:54

Thanks — it feels good to finally be a part of this community and not just know that it's here without really engaging. I totally feel you on what you said... I've been seeing a therapist for years, and it's done a lot of good for me. It's helped tremendously.

But I also realized there's a certain kind of support that therapy can't fully provide — and that's where something like GYE comes in. For me, therapy was actually a lot easier in a way: I just had to show up, be honest, and share whatever was going on. I was fortunate to feel comfortable with my therapist, so opening up wasn't too hard.

Still, I've felt this pull to go deeper — to get more involved here, to post, to interact, and to not just stay on the sidelines. I've even spoken to my therapist about it, and we both agreed that taking this step and getting a mentor through GYE could be really powerful. That's actually one of my goals right now.

Looking forward to being here with all of you.

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Re: "Finally Taking Action After Years of Strugglin
Posted by eerie - 22 Jul 2025 15:18

Hey, welcome to the family, NewPage!

This is a wonderful place, and I hope you stick around and use it. Post, share, ask, listen, connect. There's a lot to learn, and for a guy that's been working on himself for a while, I'd think this place will do you a world of good!

Looking forward to hearing more from you!

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Re: "Finally Taking Action After Years of Strugglin
Posted by mesayinoso - 23 Jul 2025 13:09

Welcome NP25 to the this incredible, unique, family!

We're going against the tide of this insane world, and we're doing it together, you've come to the right place!

Your post is very relatable, and I love the openness and vulnerability.

We are all here to be with you through every step, we celebrate Wins and get Chizuk together, which can be especially useful in coming back from a fall.

Wishing you much Hatzlacha!

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