

## Fooling Myself

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### Introductions

Im in my mid forties, married with a large family, kein yirbu.

I grew up in a secular, second marriage "blended" family, with much constant resentment in the air, both to me and my father from my mother and my half siblings from a prior marriage. Essentially, I was simultaneously adored and hated by my mother, leading to years of constant confusion (that continue today).

In that environment of the late 1960s and 1970s, there was a lot of crazy stuff going on, like hippies living in our house and a goyish family invited to share our house when I was 2 years old.

It turns out that the father in that dysfunctional goyish family was a molestor , and in turn , his teenage boys molested me at a very early age. I also discovered porn in the house when I was six years old. Later those boys got me interested in pot and much porn. Culminating in mutual masturbation and other activities.

As I grew, I got very addicted to pot and porn. My entire life focus was to find a girl to have sex with (at age 12)

Finally at 15, I scored so to speak and began a sex relationship with a girl of 14 that lasted a few months.

Later in college I was involved with several girls. I never went more than 24hrs without one or more orgasms for almost 10 years.

In the mid 1980s, I started becoming frum in Eretz Yisrael. It was a progression through different steps and yeshivas. Way too much detail for this post.

But eventually I made a commitment to be a solid yeshivish Yid, the seriousness and intellectual honesty appealed to me. But, I couldnt stop masturbation. The conflict in me caused me to abandon professional plans, and seek a deeper yeshiva experience, cause obviously, I was not yet on the right madreiga.

I went to gedolei hador. They told me to get married, although in all honesty, I did not understand nor reveal the depth of my prior issues (it took years for me to connect the fact that I got molested to my mind frame)

They told me, "when you werent frum, you at at Mcdonalds, now you can eat at Kosher Bite. But, with sex, you used to be active, and now there is no outlet."

Although it was difficult, HaShem was with me and I got married as soon as possible, to a great wife and we have a great marriage . When I got married, I felt like the gemarra in Kiddushin where the amora says "An arrow in your eye, Yetzer Hara..." I felt protected and like I had grown past my prior life, which I shut completely out of mind, much like a Holocaust survivor, not wanting to talk about the past.

That lasted around 6 years, total sobriety from masturbation. I pushed myself very very hard in learning to compensate from my late start.

Around 1996, I was exposed to some porn links on Compuserve, the predecessor of the internet.

I would read the links, with out clicking them. I then linked to some other sites and saw other material, but stopped myself. I stopped getting internet connectivity and tried other ways to protect myself, but a gradual slide back an forth had begun, teasing myself and stopping thousands of times. It never materialized into masturbation until several years later, when under enormous pressure at work I looked at some inappropriate things.

After each fall, I would make kaballahs, daven intensely , but always to fall again, sometimes years later.

Because of my long sober period, I was fixated on what recent thing I must have done to cause a moral weakness.

I would push myself even harder, to the point of collapse many times but this was just a frum way to avoid the RID that was deep in my system. After getting broken again and again by more and more self defeats and difficult job situations, my optimism has dissapeared , and my learning and mussar have weakened.

The frequency of the falls has increased, although compared to many, I havent viewed much porn, since I keep my internet out of the house and am on a monitored pc at work .

I now am finding myself tempted by other strong desires that I dont want to elaborate on. I decided enough is enough, I have heard too many tragedies and dont want to join the list. I have begun participating in the daily call and have found much chizuk in it, although the cravings are still strong and present.

I am hopeful that continued involvement will help and very thankful for the groups that I wished existed 20yrs ago.

What I have found is that I have been fooling myself regarding how much this disease has affected me and my life, although the symptoms have not been as extreme as others, the mental toll is there.

Thats my intro for now.

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