

First time

Posted by thanks613 - 05 Oct 2010 19:50

I'm new here. This is my first time personally reaching out to others to ask for help, but obviously not my first time struggling with this problem myself. I have spent some time looking around the website and am a bit overwhelmed about where to start out (I think I will try some of the handbooks). Any advice that anyone could offer about where to start would be much appreciated (referring me to another already existing thread that deals with this would also suffice)

I'm a long time yeshiva bachur (5+ yrs) and maybe on the verge of dating and I can't believe I'm still dealing with this problem. Moreover, I am sometimes in positions where others, both friends, ba'al habatim, and younger kids look to me as a sort of role model for what a ben torah is. I cant' help but feel that its a terrible thing to be seen this way on the outside and be so different on the inside, and that I may even be hurting some of them in some way because on the inside I don't have what it really takes to inspire, influence and prtray true torah values. Not to mention respectable people are offering me shidduchim now with true b'nei Torah (yes b'nei can refer to women) and I can't imagine entering shidduchim in my current state.

One question I have is about the 12 step system. I know that it must work to really help many people. I for one have always wanted really badly to kind of solve the issue myself, and have believed that I could for a long time. To some degree I am admitting That I really need to start asking others for help, but such systematic and specific programs still make me weary. Do people find that the 12 step program, or therapy are really the only ways to deal with this problem?

I also have to admit that although this is my first real request for help, I know that it is a long way removed from opening up with my problem to a friend, rebbe, or parent and asking for their help. For many reasons I have always wanted to avoid doing just that. It has at times strained some relationships, especially with my rebbeim b/c deep down I knew that while I may be asking for help for them in one area, I am really secluding them from an entire section of my life that probably affects the way I think, feel, and act more than most others. But I'm still not sure if I should approach someone like that who may have a very high impression of me and ruin that impression in such a shocking and severe way. Do I need to turn to one of these people who already knows me an open up to them? Should I instead turn to a new source and ask for help from a rebbi or friend who until now has not been a major part of my life? Would it be enough to continue fighting this on my own with the help of the GYE community and, if successful, to avoid ever divulging my problem to anyone besides for at a computer screen, anonymous phone call, or e-mail?

Also, I know it's premature maybe. But even if and when i do BE"H kick the habit and start living a more fulfilled life, and hopefully get married and raise a family, how can I approach this topic with them. Will it forever be a secret that I keep from my wife (assuming it never comes up and I don't offer the info, or will I even have to lie to her to protect my secret?). Also, until Machiach comes and we see the fulfillment of "Kol Harish'a Kula Ke'ashan Tichleh" I will have to deal with this problem with children one day (it has actually come up slightly in the past involving younger kids who I was a counselor for), what can I tell them? Does it really work to say "I've been there and you should stay far away" or is it better to act as if its something foreign that you've never been involved with. Like I said, this question is a bit premature to say the least.

Thanks to everyone and anyone who reads this. I hope that one day I'll be able to give back to the GYE community.

I'm sure there are loads of forums and articles written about these topics, and I know that I should do more on my own to find them, but I am a bit overwhelmed about where to start.

one more thing. I once heard that this is the kind of problem that one needs to quit cold turkey, basically because of "Masbiy'o Ra'ev, Mar'ivo Savea" - whatever little bit you give in or continue will just fuel the proliferation of the problem. I highly agreed at the time. Later someone else told me that this kind of thing takes time, and that there will be many failures along the way, and if I start now (this was a year ago) I can be totally better when I get married (they were actually talking about wasting Zera, not internet addiction). I understand that it doesn't help after the fact to get down, and depressed, and give up hope, but is the correct outlook before the fact that starting now I will never give in to this temptation again.

I could write more but I think this is already too long. Thanks for the help. If you could refer me somewhere else to do more reading on my own (another thread, a book, online article, whatever). that would be helpful too. Thanks.

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Re: First time
Posted by mnman415 - 06 Oct 2010 01:57

i cant say anything about the 12 steps cus i have not yet used them. but i hear amazing things about them.

however, i have used this site, i have a thread (called starting again after 37 days clean) and this site itself can be a big help. if you start a 90 day journal. if you read other peoples threads.....there is so much to be used.

if youre able to though, i would assume that a lot of people here would tell you to do the 12 steps...lets wait and see other peoples posts

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Re: First time

Posted by jewinpain - 06 Oct 2010 02:48

Welcome aboard holy 613, I'm glad to see ya here with us, this is a very special place for yidan who wana get closer to hashem, I'll try to put in my 2 cents & u pick what's helpful for u

1st thing u need a filter installed & the password given away to the filter gabai, than sign up for the 90 day chart & that should be ur goal to reach, but u will only reach it , if u go on a daily basis, take it slowly, don't look at the big picture, a hour, 2 hours, half a day, a full day & so repeat it 90 times,& as u speed up u will feel the YH and YT fighting badly , but make sure not to fight the YH, just ignore him & ask hashem to move in YT to next gear,

Now, I do see lots of anxiety & stress in ur post, u r probably a smart guy, with too many questions in ur head which is causing u unneeded worries, don't worry about what u will tell ur wife or younger students, @ the right time hashem will send the right words into ur mouth, granted u work the program, I dono if the 12 step is the only way that can help, but its certainly the most powerful way & as a bonus, u gain freedom in many other aspects of life, rabbi twerski claims it to be the 1 & only way to recover from an addiction, listen to what the pros here who have worked it have to say & follow through, as far opening up, its a very funny thing, that as soon as u open up, u feel relieved, that's what they call "we r only sick as our secrets" of course if u can confide in someone u trust & have respect would be better , but if that's not possible, a therapist or a smart rav not from ur community can be good, or as a last resort u can use us here at GYE, or combine all of them, as more as u share the more weight u take off ur mind, it will be easier to get healthy, its true they u gota stop cold turkey, but knows better than us addicts, that this addiction is not like smoking, the urge is million times stronger, & while the ultimate goal should be to stop for good, u gota keep in mind that a fall may happen & if it does its only used as a runway to get u to board the plane again, best thing for u would be to keep writing in ur own thread, share ur struggles, victories, progress, so other can gain & give chizak to u

Hope I addressed all ur concerns, if I missed something plz forgive me & feel free to ask away

May hashem help u see him in clear light & fulfill his wish

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Re: First time

Posted by thanks613 - 06 Oct 2010 04:38

Thanks for the speedy replies!! I will try to keep posting

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Re: First time

Posted by worthless - 06 Oct 2010 04:46

this is a great site ,uswe the froum ,the handbook and you will go far .Add the 12 steps and you'll secure your place on the right path

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Re: First time

Posted by ben yaakov - 06 Oct 2010 11:52

Hi and welcome

just to add 2cents. I think the only way to succeed is with the support of others. the first of the 12 steps is to give up you have to admit you can't fight this addiction that you are powerless against it. After we admit that, then we **need the help of others** to give us strenth to straighten ourselves out to feel and focus on what our real issues are to see where we went wrong and how we became addicts. I use the SA and 12 step books and speak to my wife about all the issues I have. I'm lucky she agrees to listen

and discuss all these issues.(i'm clean for 130 days)

My point is that to overcome and control the addiction you can't do it alone you need constant support from someone who realy understands you. (nobody understands us better than another addict)

Haztlacha Raba

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Re: First time

Posted by Jooboy - 06 Oct 2010 14:50

613,

I LOVE your post. You have a lot of good questions that deserve well thought out responses...something I wish I had the wisdom and time to give - but I don't.

What I can offer is to share that I have been addicted much longer than you have and always thought I would be able to beat it myself. It took me over 20 years to realize I would never be able to do it and get into the SA 12 Step program.

It is a bitter pill to swallow.....only before you get into the program. Once I started as part of a live SA group it is (easy?) so freeing and life giving that I can't believe I didn't look for help many years ago, I would have saved myself and my family much misery.

In short I would say if you want to stop and can not - then yes you definitely need help. I can't say there is no other help other than 12 Step programs but they work for millions of people and they are GREAT once you get there!!! Regarding all your other questions we have a slogan in the groups "One day at a time". Once you get into recovery all these other issues will not just go away but you will be able to deal with them from a solid and healthy place. They won't overwhelm you.

Looking forward to hearing great things from you!

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Re: First time

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 06 Oct 2010 17:56

Dear **Thanks613**,

'Guard' used to welcome all newcomers with the following post, but since nowadays he is too busy working for us from behind the scenes, i am copying it for you from another thread.

[guardureyes wrote on 30 Jul 2010 14:45:](#)

I am the admin of this forum. Welcome to our community!

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#)...

Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best - and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other from Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [this page](#) for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most

powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

One of our goals on GYE is to help people "hit bottom while still on top" so they will take recovery seriously. To explain better what I mean, please see [this page](#). If you're here, it means you're already taking serious steps in recovery, so keep up the good work!

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone of all our work at GuardYourEyes. Before the GYE handbook people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, someone with a low level addiction wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences", putting in filters etc... For the first time ever, this handbook details all the techniques and tools dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now, anyone can read it through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook to the next tools, as the suggestions become progressively more "addiction-oriented".

We suggest printing out the handbooks and reading them at least once. Then, we suggest going back and reading them again slowly on the computer, and this time pressing on the many links that are found in the different articles.

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: First time

Posted by thanks613 - 06 Oct 2010 21:59

Thank you all so much for the concern. Your understanding and sincerity in wanting to help really mean a lot to me right now. I made some "New Year's" resolutions during elul and Yom Kippur which included the decision that I would stay away from pritzus on the internet or T.V. programs which can also increase the nisoyon. Knowing that in the past I had failed in this resolution I basically promised myself that If I was nichshal even once, I would have no choice but to ask for help from a friend or family member, which is something I desperately wanted to avoid doing. Although I believed my resolution was stronger than ever, it didn't take long for me to slip, once, twice, and several more, and yet I still avoided telling anyone. Anyway my point was that even though I will be back in yeshiva in a few days, and the more serious problem for me is at home I decided anyway to sign up to GYE so that I can be better prepared in the future. For me right now, talking with you guys is instead of speaking to other friends or family, at least temporarily. So far it has really been a help to know that I'm now with you guys and

working on it, and knowing that has been anchor to keep me clean ;D I only signed up a few days ago, but... so far so good.

Thanks for the support

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Re: First time
Posted by thanks613 - 06 Oct 2010 22:10

I can't reply to everyone's posts but I want to ask Ben Yaakov because I know that admitting you have a problem is one of the steps towards recovery, but is that just about getting out of denial and admitting there is a problem, or does it mean I will have to give over control to someone else in my life. For some reason it seems hard being the only one in the house who knows about my problem because there is such a fear and paranoia of not letting others find out which makes it nearly impossible to truly give up control?

Also, I plan to go through the GYE handbooks, and also a handbook I saw recommended in a different forum- Dear Bachur (in smile4life's forum - p.s. thanks to the guys who wrote there, so far that has also been really helpful to me)

B"N I'll keep in touch with you guys!

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Re: First time
Posted by frumfiend - 07 Oct 2010 02:18

Jew in pain that was a amazing post

Thanks

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Re: First time

Posted by ovadia - 07 Oct 2010 13:02

[thanks613 wrote on 06 Oct 2010 21:59:](#)

Anyway my point was that even though I will be back in yeshiva in a few days, and the more serious problem for me is at home I decided anyway to sign up to GYE so that I can be better prepared in the future. For me right now, talking with you guys is instead of speaking to other friends or family, at least temporarily.

Dear 613,

I strongly suggest that you keep in touch with a sponsor here at GYE by phone, so that you have an anchor during Zman as well, and especially in anticipation for next Bein Hazmanim. Otherwise your Y"H might find some excellent excuses for you to delay posting again.

If you ask for help you can be sure that there are plenty people here (including myself) who will be prepared to keep in touch with you. Also see this page to help you find a partner.

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=101.0

Hatzlocho and have a great zman.

Ovadia

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Re: First time

Posted by ben yaakov - 08 Oct 2010 02:21

No it's not about denial or about handing over control to some one else. It's about reprogramming yourself and discovering yourself to see things in the proper perspective. In order to do that you have to admit you can't do it alone you are powerless (I tried fighting this for over 20 years without success) then you turn to Hashem and say now what? I need your help in overcoming this addiction.

My understanding is that the actual addiction is a symptom of trying to feel good in the only way we know how.

Sex is a very special gift Hashem gave to humans it is not about pleasure as much as about unity and sharing and giving. In our minds we mess this up we look at women as objects for our pleasure every thing we do is just for this reward.

The only way to really change all these messed up views is by talking to someone else who understands our issues and will not judge us but will support and keep us focused.

If you tell someone who doesn't understand addiction you have this problem they will just tell you to stop looking at porn. Everybody here knows that just won't help it will only put you down make you feel you are a loser who can't control himself.

But if you confide in someone who will not judge you just listen and guide then you can discover yourself and know who you really are.

I just want to add that marriage does not make the addiction go away at all. If someone doesn't get better and understand addiction he must tell her before he gets engaged it's not fair to hurt someone else. (if you get better you may still need to ask someone what to do about the past)

However if you feel this is to much to handle at once you can try it anonymously working on yourself using the phone calls I suggest to read the attitude handbook on gye. But please don't let time pass you are to valuable of a person to sit in the gutter anymore. Hatzlacha Raba

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Re: First time

Posted by briut - 10 Oct 2010 13:07

[thanks613 wrote on 05 Oct 2010 19:50:](#)

Any advice that anyone could offer about where to start would be much appreciated [...]

[Wondering about] opening up with my problem to a friend, rebbe, or parent and asking for their help. For many reasons I have always wanted to avoid doing just that.

[...] Will it forever be a secret that I keep from my wife (assuming it never comes up and I don't offer the info, or will I even have to lie to her to protect my secret?).

Thanks613, WOW. What a font of honesty, determination, wisdom.... Your questions do have answers, I'm convinced that you'll find them, and the "other side" of your challenges will look beautiful.

Having said that, the only other encouragement I'd offer is to find ways to SHARE yourself. The honest, determined, wise side that you just showed us, and also the scared, clueless side hiding within the levush of a ben Torah. It's really really painful to begin that opening-up, perhaps, but I think everyone here would agree that it feels SO good once you've opened it up. Your bravery will be rewarded ten-fold in the comfort, help, wisdom you'll find in your Rav or other trusted contact.

Certainly, I've found the GYE site to be enormously helpful in providing cyber camaraderie and cyber advice. It's also been a good place to write journal posts and get set straight when I'm off-track. Use this site, however it speaks to you. But "find yourself a Rav" is sorta Yeshiva 101 if you're gonna trust that Rav on the other aspects you mentioned of growing up as a Ben Torah.

One last idea: A GOOD MARRIAGE CAN WITHSTAND ANYTHING BUT A SECRET. If you can't share everything, everything, even the worst stuff you won't even share with yourself, I mean EVERYTHING, then that girl is not YOUR kallah. I know of too many disastrous shanos rishonos (incl R'L divorces) that come from secrets one partner couldn't bring him/herself to share. And being the brave one in that regard will make your kallah feel safe and secure that she can share with you her own warts. And she'll have them. And she'll feel terrible about them. And when she sees you can hear them and still find her lovable, she'll feel secure and loved in ways she never dreamed. THAT is a good marriage.

So, who am I to say this? Well, you can read an 'introduce yourself' newbie thread from Briut, or I'll just say that I'm a long-time BT, married a couple of decades, houseful of yeshivish kids with black hats (or white stockings), honored in the community, and a closet full of (head-blowing) activities I wouldn't want my Rav to know. [Except he DOES know. And that's saved my marriage and my life on at least a couple of occasions.]

Send a private message if you want any add'l thoughts, or come post on my LaBriut thread in the Wall of Honor section. Keep posting, stay in the game, go for all you want and don't settle for less 'cause that's what HKB'H wants for you.

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Re: First time
Posted by Kedusha - 10 Oct 2010 14:53

In this day and age, Bochorim who don't have a problem in this area are probably the rare exception. So, I wouldn't worry too much about shocking your Rabbeim. They won't be shocked at all.

Your attitude should be that I will absolutely not engage in these behaviors - TODAY. The goal, of course, is to never go back to these behaviors, but this can only be achieved one day at a time. And, yes, there will be setbacks - "Ki Sheva Yipol Tzaddik v'kam"; however, that is not a contradiction to having a goal to stopping altogether, one day at a time.

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