

Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by aryehtahor - 07 Nov 2010 02:49

Dear Chevra,

I feel it's overdue for me to return to the forum after a long period of absence. For a recap, I am a 25 year old college student struggling with viewing internet porn and, quite recently, relations with a non-Jewish ex-girlfriend from before I was frum. B"H I have been able to cut off contact with said woman, which is something I tried hard to do for months and fell often, leading to actual relations with her. I now haven't seen her in a couple months, and have not responded to a few of her attempts to contact me. Also, B"H due to a new living situation and WebChaver on my laptop (which is REALLY effective and worth the negligible \$3.95 per month), I have stayed away from internet porn...mostly. I also haven't masturbated in about 3 months.

So I've seen some success in this area lately.

The fact that I haven't been lusting when I walk around, or when I'm going to sleep, is not the result of doing the steps (I haven't), or studying Mussar (I haven't) or battling the Yetzer Hara head on (I haven't) or any of the other methods advised by this site. In fact, I've dropped off on a lot of mitzvos I used to do when I was struggling a lot more with the addiction. My relationship with Hashem has suffered, and when I do happen to be in shul and everyone else is davening, I can't bring myself to do it because it feels so disingenuous. I can't face Hashem, and somehow I think He won't notice me if I don't speak to Him, which is what I want because if He does notice me, He'll Judge me, and that would be embarrassing. And anyway, the voice in my head says, "You haven't davened all week, and now you find yourself in shul and you think you can suddenly start muttering words that you don't mean and Hashem will appreciate that?"

I've found my problems in the area of sexual addiction have come and gone in cycles. But since I know there are no shortcuts, it's pretty logical to assume that since I haven't done any work on this front, the addiction will resurface in a matter of time...But I'm not sure how to fight this addiction pre-emptively when I'm not actively experiencing it.

When I do occasionally have a problem, such as on Motzei Shabbos when I have free time and feel drawn to do something exciting. I don't even feel compelled by lust, more just for the desire for something fun that will give me a rush. Since I slept through Shabbos (more or less) I'll be up late and it's going to be tough to stay away tonight...

I also want to start posting again on the forum, especially on other people's threads. Since I'm pretty alone in my current matzav, this place is kind of a lifeline for me, and dropping off is usually pure yetzer hara. It already feels good to get connected again.

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by aryehtahor - 14 Nov 2010 21:20

Had a pretty rough last few days (despite deleting facebook, yay!)

First of all, this woman is contacting me with more frequency now. I just got an instant message from her (I thought I blocked her). And as I said, Thanksgiving break is coming up. This wouldn't necessarily be such a risk for me if it weren't for the fact that...

I'm sinking into a coma. Every weekend is very long for me, being that I don't have class on Fridays. So I waste away a lot of time staring at my computer doing nothing in particular. Then Shabbos comes, and I have major problems staying awake and alert on Shabbos. I always end up sleeping too late on Saturday morning, coming home, eating Cholent, falling asleep more, eating more, sleeping more etc. Then of course I'm not tired on Saturday night, so I stay up. But that always leads to trouble, since going into my university to study means seeing all sorts of drunk women dressed like prostitutes. It's really bad here. That's when I'm most likely to look at porn, or even strike up random conversations with people who I really shouldn't be talking to, and I certainly am unlikely to get any real work done. I also tend to gorge myself on junk food and smoke a lot. Then I wake up Sunday feeling disgusting, continue the cycle of eating a lot, dozing, napping, wasting time, etc. etc. Then Monday rolls around and I'm shocked to discover that I just lost 4 days of my life.

This has happened as a cycle many times for me. I think a lot of it comes down to observing Shabbos properly. It has become a time of total physical and mental stupor for me, not the spiritually uplifting time it is supposed to be.

Any advice on this is most welcome. I realize its not directly about SA issues, but for me its very related.

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by silentbattle - 14 Nov 2010 22:11

Being active is always more difficult than just responding to what my body wants. However, I've found over the years that when I push myself to accomplish, I'm always glad I did, even if it means sacrificing a little sleep, etc.

So set up a schedule - some of it can be relaxing, so set aside some things to do then, too. But set up a loose schedule, and follow it. And enjoy!

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by aryehtahor - 14 Nov 2010 22:31

Since for me, idleness is probably the main driving force towards the self-destructive things that I do, I just wrote myself a note about it and how I can address it. The problem, I think, is that idleness is a degenerative disease like an addiction. The less you do, the less you want to do, and ultimately, the less you can do, and the lower your stress threshold so that pretty soon, you just can't deal with life anymore and go to sleep hoping it will all sort itself out. This has really been a killer for me and I think it might even be why I have the constellation of addictions that are a time-bomb for me. Addictions thrive on idleness, and the body raises its demands from a whisper to a loudspeaker when I'm not involved in life.

"A Jew is too busy to sin." - Twerski

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by silentbattle - 15 Nov 2010 05:04

Absolutely. Do you want to talk about how you can address it?

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by aryehtahor - 15 Nov 2010 16:34

In my note to myself, I outlined 4 preventative steps to take, as follows :

1.Set aside some time for connecting spiritually with Torah and Hashem. Daven to Hashem in my own words before the time comes.

2.Stay on a regular sleep schedule no matter what. Do not take any naps. Sleep at night.

3.Get some form of exercise over the long weekends, preferably outdoors if it's nice out.

4.Plan things for the day. Don't just "try to work and see what happens". Think creatively about new things to do. Don't try to work all day.

IY"H this won't be such an issue once I go to yeshiva in Israel. Anyhow, sooner or later, I'm going to have to learn to deal with spare time without becoming a vegetable.

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by the.guard - 15 Nov 2010 20:17

aryeh, I got a lot of good feedback from people who were inspired by you in yesterday's chizuk e-mail (#890). Keep strong. You are a true hero.

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by aryehthor - 15 Nov 2010 20:36

Wow, I can't believe I got featured in the email! I think I'm blushing...

Guard, you are the best...

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by frumfiend - 15 Nov 2010 22:06

i am very impressed with your the seder you are making of your life.

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by silentbattle - 15 Nov 2010 23:54

Sounds like a good plan - rock on!

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update

Posted by jewinpain - 16 Nov 2010 14:32

Arye, ur plan sounds awesome, and I'm impressed by how clear ur mind goes, point # 1 is crucial for every yid and especially for addicts, cuz with that point being practiced in 1st place we wouldn't become addicts, its a shame that its not taught for teens at the right age, so keep it up, be sure that the YH will try to ruin ur plans, but send him to hell,he'll come back again in a different forum, but just do it again its a constant fight, but we must never give up, eventually u will see the light

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update
Posted by aryehtahor - 16 Nov 2010 15:33

Thanks jip, and I like your new name!

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update
Posted by silentbattle - 17 Nov 2010 12:45

I agree with AT - love the name change!

Reb Aryeh - how are things going?

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update
Posted by aryehtahor - 17 Nov 2010 14:51

I had a fall yesterday. The real problem is that when I do that, I want more so I think of calling up that woman again. I resisted it last night and I'm proud that I didn't contact her despite a very very strong urge. I davened that I should make it through Thanksgiving break without seeing or talking to her. I'm learning how vigilant I must be in not indulging any form of lust, because it always leads directly to either seeing her and having relations with her, or having to fight a very strong urge which I wouldn't have had if I hadn't indulged in lust. Once I give a little bit to the urge, it won't leave me alone. Better to not ignite it in the first place.

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Re: Reintroducing myself/update
Posted by silentbattle - 17 Nov 2010 14:53

Congratulations - and very, very true. Lust is a slippery slope.

Remember to feel good about your victory, even while you plan and learn from your fall.

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