

Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 03 Sep 2018 23:39

It has been quite some time since I have posted on my own thread titled "My Story and G-d Bless GYE". Being that those submissions are in the balei batim forum and therefore off limits to all our single friends here, I figured if I wish to post, it's time to open a new thread.

BH we are at day 627. That's a big number. A number that represents a chunk of life. Different seasons, various occasions, many opportunities, a kaleidoscope of challenges. And with Hashem's help (and as I have written many times - with the help of some great GYE chaverim - specifically "one_day_at_a_time") I have stayed clean.

During this period of growth I have made some observations. Firstly, as a rebbi of mine used to say - no specific type of yid has the "copyright" on yiras shomayim. Eye opening to me has been how individuals from very varying lifestyles all truly want to be close to Hashem. It is not just lip service. It is genuine. I am humbled and amazed how even so called "modern" Jews walk determinedly against the tsunami wave of decadence, indecency, immodesty, and liberalism which is trying to inundate the world and destroy every vestige of holiness in its path. These dear teenagers, married fellows, and even post middle aged heroes ignore the current threatening to drown them and keep moving forward. And of course, being that this scourge does not discriminate, all kehillos and "types" are affected. GYE is like the Kosel - one can find every type of yid there crying for help. In summary, everyone wants to be kadosh v'tahor. Imagine how proud Hashem must be.

A second observation. So many unnecessary tears, so much unnecessary pain. How many bochurim stay clean while in yeshiva and camp only to fall within hours of returning home on their parents' devices which have not been properly filtered. The anguish these boys share is heartbreaking. These are boys who will not enter an internet café or library. They avoid public transportation except when absolutely necessary. They are careful in the street. They are the

brave ones who picked up the phone and shared their most personal and embarrassing secrets with total strangers from GYE. But spending a weekend at home where every other room has an unfiltered device....How naïve can people be? How many drashos have been given, and articles written, and people really still think "it cant happen in my house"?! Is the convenience of unfiltered internet worth these churbonos? I am not passing judgement on anyone specific - just publicizing the very painful issue.

Number three - There are many helpful ideas on GYE. Each successful person here will tell you about the "cocktail" he used to break free. A combination of all or some of the following: shiurim, forum, chats, Taphsic, chizuk emails, 90 day chart, phone conferences, therapy referrals, 12 steps, and of course tefilla, guide people from the abyss of the sewer to the summit of a life of freedom. However I believe if a poll were taken, a great majority of people would credit the human connection as the main weapon in the arsenal that blasted them through and saved them. To hear, and even better, to meet and see, an individual who struggled and now is clean, is a tool that is extremely powerful. It shatters the destructive mindset of "it's impossible - no one gets better". Sitting by therapists, as helpful as they are (and they are part of many people's recovery), is not nearly as powerful as someone being honest and telling you what he used to do and how he stopped. Someone who "has been there and done that" can help rewire the unhealthy thinking and give new perspective - there simply is life, even without sex. Plus one must learn the true and Torah perspective on sexuality. One must be educated that he has been poisoned by the evil and filthy portrayal of an act that we now know is uplifting and elevated, even holy. We are more open to be reeducated by one who initially believed as we did. Secondly, that real person can hold your hand in those first days and weeks when it is really difficult to get started. He can give you the chizuk to get past the withdrawal period. He is an anchor. Thirdly, when you see a successful frum fellow standing before you, you realize you are not the rasha or loser you thought you were. You really are a nice good person who has a struggle. That knowledge gives one more self esteem and resolve to get started. Based on my personal experience I would advise any newcomers to figure out which safe person on the site appears to resonate with them, and then carefully - in the beginning anonymously - reach out and let someone help them.

Lastly (for now), we see a sad issue. So many people join GYE and then disappear. They had hisorerus, found the site, joined, maybe even posted, and then they are gone..... It is incumbent on those of us who have tasted success to make ourselves available to help others. We know the pain anguish anxiety depression and turmoil these chevra are experiencing. We know where their eyes and hands are - even though they don't want to be doing those things - and we have

the ability to help. Some will argue, "I don't know what to do". Others will say, "Now that I am better it isn't good for me to be focused on this so much". True, but its payback time. Do something. And if you really can't, then at least daven your kishkes out for all the strugglers. And of course - give a nice donation to that great place that got us all back on track - the very holy mosad GYE. If not for them, where would I (and you) be today?

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 14 Sep 2020 06:31

[quote="Hashem Help Me" post=355029 date=1600051577 catid=20]

[lhavestrength wrote on 14 Sep 2020 02:11:](#)

[I wrote:](#)

Thank you for sharing. I can relate to this very much. What do you suggest is an appropriate mindset so as not to turn Yomim Tovim into triggers?

I will answer your question, but please accept what i write as simply the opinion of a nice simple guy, not anywhere resembling daas Torah:

First of all ACCEPT YOURSELF. If the matzav becomes intense and you feel anxiety building, don't panic. You are normal and are experiencing something many people struggle with. At appropriate times allow yourself a break.

Secondly, if you are like me, learn to stop using cheshbon hanefesh to destroy yourself. If you are prone to any depressive tendencies and/or perfectionism, realize that it is not avodas Hashem to bet yourself up for every brocho you did not have kavana for, or for every minute you did not learn.

Thirdly, plan a beautiful yom tov. Some nice pleasant things to say by the seuda. Instead of focusing on your personal issues and kabalos, focus on coronating the King (which in truth is the true avoda of Rosh Hashana). Imagine how you can be marbeh kvod shomayim. Yes there are tefillos like Unesaneh Tokef, but most tefillos are about the Melech, and even the Great

Judgement is about meluchah.

Just BTW, from what I understand the primary goal of the teffilah "*unesana tokef*" is to show the *gedulah* of Hashem and **not to freak out and burst into tears that G-d is going to throw you into some tsunami or pit of fire.** This is why it is placed before kedushah as well as why most places have a minhag to sing the final part with a tune that resembles a royal march.

The point is the *malchiyus* let's not forget that.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hakolhevel - 15 Sep 2020 15:01

It's interesting that many of of us here feel like we are going to judged for all of our "misbehaving". What interesting is in the davening we do all for forgiveness, but we don't ask for blessing and forgiveness because of our good deeds, we ask "Imaancha" for your sake. Not because we have been so good.

For most of my life, I felt like Rosh hahahaha/y"k revolved around my porn and masturbation. What a warped view.

We need to realize hashem is very smart, and he knows exactly who we are, and he's very advertising. Just remember, he is not just malkenu, he's also avinu.

Anyways I'm just trying to talk to myself here.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 15 Oct 2020 00:27

1400 days BH.

Lots to say and iyh when there is time, I will try to put it all into words. However meanwhile my message is - please do the same. I was in very bad shape. If Hashem allowed me to escape this mess, you can b'ezras Hashem do it too. Make the decision that you are willing to do **anything and everything** to get better. Feel free to reach out for help. I am driven to help others be spared the torment i suffered. Iyh to be continued.....

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by OivedElokim - 15 Oct 2020 01:25

Mazel Tov!

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Grant400 - 15 Oct 2020 03:34

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 15 Oct 2020 00:27:](#)

1400 days BH.

Lots to say and iyh when there is time, I will try to put it all into words. However meanwhile my message is - please do the same. I was in very bad shape. If Hashem allowed me to escape this mess, you can b'ezras Hashem do it too. Make the decision that you are willing to do **anything and everything** to get better. Feel free to reach out for help. I am driven to help others be spared the torment i suffered. Iyh to be continued.....

Mazal tov! Congratulations! Watching your count grow every day is truthfully a tremendous inspiration and encouragement.

Maybe in another few years your count will be almost as big as your warmth, care and most of all - your heart.

Thank you for all your words of love, encouragement and constructive criticism.

May Hashem bless your with continued success in all your endeavors.

Grant

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 15 Oct 2020 04:50

Mazal Tov! What an accomplishment!

You should just know that your work here is tremendous! What you put into GYE and the chevra, your time and effort, is an even greater accomplishment, may we be zoche to have you here with us to help us, support us and hold our hands for many more years so that one day we can all join you in the ranks.

Thank you for everything, without you so many would still be rolling in the dirt.

Wilnevergiveup

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 29 Nov 2020 17:38

Hi everyone,

If you understand Yiddish there is a "must listen to" recording from Rav Asher Arielli shlita about corona where he discusses protecting ourselves from outside influences. Keep in mind he has never in all these years commented publicly on anything and is beloved by thousands of talmidim from varying backgrounds. Please listen and post your reactions here. If you do not understand Yiddish, maybe listen with someone who does - the passion is awe inspiring. Whether one accepts his advice or not, it is not possible to listen and be unaffected. Call 732-400-9003. then dial 12, followed by 1, followed by 5.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 04 Dec 2020 12:17

I have found Rav Elimelech Biderman shlita's weekly parsha kuntrus to be full of chizuk. This week (VaYishlach) has very uplifting chizuk for all of us dealing with challenges. His positive perspective is built on divrei Chazal and is a must read. It is sent out for free each week in various languages. Below is the link offered on the weekly email for anyone who wishes to "subscribe" (for free). Enjoy and be uplifted. If you know anyone who's interested to receive the weekly issue, please give him the following email address: Mail@torahwellsprings.com **Full name**, Message: **"I would like to subscribe"**

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 06 Oct 2021 05:20

One of the greatest things GYE has revolutionized is putting guys in touch with each other. The chizuk, advice, and simple knowledge that there are others involved in this struggle, are all major game changers.

An 18 year old bochur who BH is clean for a long time is available to help others realize they can break free b'ezras Hashem. If anyone wants to reach out to him, his email is EvedHashem1836@gmail.com

He requests that we not get too graphic while discussing our own challenges.....

There are other long term clean bochurim (and marrieds) wiling to help also.....

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 07 Dec 2021 12:06

Hi. It has been a long time since i posted on my own thread, but i received an email from TAG that i think should be publicized, and i am not sure where else to put it. See below:

Clarification

In recent weeks there have been various advertisements published in local circulars as well as via email blast lists marketing a smartphone which is being promoted as kosher and fully in line with proper hashkafic values.

Being that those ads featured the TAG logo and promote the product as recommended by TAG, we have a responsibility to clarify our position on that and similar devices.

While TAG employs the top filters on the market, it is generally correct that a presecured device is a better option than TAGing a regular device. However, any smartphone, including a presecured smartphone, is not ideal and is always a second choice compared to a flip phone.

TAG follows and promotes the *daas* Torah of the entire spectrum of Gedolei Yisroel that smartphones should be considered with utmost caution and seriousness *only* when needed for business purposes. Smartphones should never be purchased for general convenience.

The TAG Team

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by DavidT - 07 Dec 2021 14:53

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 07 Dec 2021 12:06:](#)

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Clarification

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The TAG Team

Thank you for this! When I saw the ad I was thinking that this is another ploy that the yetzer is pulling against us.

I'll quote part of the message in bold ...

"any smartphone, including a presecured smartphone, is not ideal and is always a

second choice compared to a flip phone.

smartphones should be considered with utmost caution and seriousness only when needed for business purposes. Smartphones should never be purchased for general convenience."

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 17 Dec 2021 12:20

Hi. I received an email and responded to it. Please feel free to comment with any additional advice that i can forward to this chaver. Of course also feel free to disagree with my response...

His question: **How do I deal with wanting to watch porn when I'm not married because it's natural to feel the need to want to have sex and I cant have it prior to getting married so what am I supposed to do.**?My response: Porn is not the sex of marriage. That is why it never satisfies, and leaves one feeling dejected. Example - It is natural to want to have a warm hug after a long challenging day; would you say hugging a doll would help? It has to be real. Of course not. Same with sex. The natural drive for sex that we are wired with is not focused on ejaculation - if it was, we would be satisfied when masturbating - and even secular studies that surveyed the general public find that the typical American male feels a form of depression after masturbation and after having sex with their spouse in a pornographic (selfish) fashion. The natural drive for sex is harnessing an intense investment of physical and emotional energy and directing it into a giving connection. It will never be satisfied by watching strangers act out sexually, and masturbating to that, or having sex with a stranger, or even with one's wife - if done in an exclusively self pleasing manner. The guys that manipulate their wives to participate in actions/positions that the wife really does not want to do, all wonder why they feel so low post ejaculation... You may find what i am going to say now as weird, but it is true. A real replacement for marital sex is to get involved in a chessed organization. Channel that drive for passionate giving and connection, use all that latent energy - both physical and emotional, take that hyper focused concentration (used while viewing or masturbating) and do something really special for someone else. You will feel like a million dollars - which is what one feels like after having real sex, the right way.Please also realize that if you watch pornography now, you will chas v'shalom poison your brain. Besides chalila causing shalom bayis issues, the irony is, you will not be able to enjoy the incredible real pleasure of sex, which is completely different and exponentially greater than anything pornographic style sex can ever offer.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Trouble - 17 Dec 2021 13:47

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 17 Dec 2021 12:20:](#)

Hi. I received an email and responded to it. Please feel free to comment with any additional advice that i can forward to this chaver. Of course also feel free to disagree with my response...

His question: **How do I deal with wanting to watch porn when I'm not married because it's natural to feel the need to want to have sex and I cant have it prior to getting married so what am I supposed to do.**?My response: Porn is not the sex of marriage. ~~That is why it never satisfies, and leaves one feeling dejected.~~ Example - It is natural to want to have a warm hug after a long challenging day; would you say hugging a doll would help? It has to be real. Of course not. Same with sex. The natural drive for sex that we are wired with is not focused on ejaculation - if it was, we would be satisfied when masturbating - and even ~~secular studies that surveyed the general public find that the typical American male feels a form of depression after masturbation and after having sex with their spouse in a pornographic (selfish) fashion.~~ The natural drive for sex is harnessing an intense investment of physical and emotional energy and directing it into a giving connection. It will never be satisfied by watching strangers act out sexually, and masturbating to that, or having sex with a stranger, or even with one's wife - if done in an exclusively self pleasing manner. The guys that manipulate their wives to participate in actions/positions that the wife really does not want to do, all wonder why they feel so low post ejaculation... You may find what i am going to say now as weird, but it is true. A real replacement for marital sex is to get involved in a chessed organization. Channel that drive for passionate giving and connection, use all that latent energy - both physical and emotional, take that hyper focused concentration (used while viewing or masturbating) and do something really special for someone else. You will feel like a million dollars - which is what one feels like after having real sex, the right way. Please also realize that if you watch pornography now, you will chas v'shalom poison your brain. Besides chalila causing shalom bayis issues, the irony is, ~~you will not be able to enjoy the incredible real pleasure of sex,~~ which is completely different and exponentially greater than anything pornographic style sex can ever offer.

i think it's great advice; the parts that i somewhat disagree with are "struck-thru" above. and again, like usual, if one is an addict (if there is such a thing), telling him to get involved in chesed is simply a mode of distraction. keep up the good work r' fellow.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hakolhevel - 17 Dec 2021 14:13

I recently came to the epiphany, that if my wife did follow my exact instructions to act out what the people on the screen do, I wouldn't be able to fully enjoy it, because I will always be analyzing is this exactly what I want and how I want and the looks that I want.

In other words, what I realized is porn and masturbation are the ultimate escape from reality, and it's not that if it was acted out in reality I would enjoy itit.

That being said, during the act porn and masturbation are very pleasurable, which is why its so hard to stay away from. But I shiuldnt kid myself that if only these scenes would happen in real life I would be happy and wouldn't want the porn and masturbation.

And the few times I got my wife to do these fantasies, I was not satisfied at all.

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