

Will not be my secret secrets anymore

Posted by backto613 - 12 Mar 2012 16:23

To start, I am 26, single and lightly yeshivish.

I quit when I was 15, and then I started again at 24. In these two and a half years, I have not had a 90 day clean streak. This past summer I had about 40 days (trying for 90), then I fell. I hope this will be my first 90 day, and the end of my problems.

I thought I can do it on my own. I started tallies. The most recent was seven. Then after I fell, it only took less than three days to fall again. (The first three are always the hardest.) That was on Friday night, and tonight will be three days, but I almost fell last night.

This time I won't keep it a secret. I hope the fact that someone could know my secrets will help me.

I have many triggers. The biggest one is nudity, even one that is accepted by the outside world... (sadly, of both body types.)

My desires respond with many excuses:

1. if I was married then my wife could take a pill, then I would have been able to release this...
2. other people are doing this (both frum and non-jews) - as if it is okay
3. I will be better after doing this - this one was what got me last time -- in this case, it keeps me up at night and i cannot fall asleep until I release.

I have tried many things. I have even tried to pretend that I did it already. Once it is fully triggered, it keeps badgering me until released - minutes, hours or days.

It can start with the need to touch myself, but it obviously doesn't end with that. During my "dry" period, it used to be enough and I wouldn't go all the way.

Often when I fall, it is in front of a computer watching other men. I am not sure if I am just attracted to the same sex. I can be triggered by both, but the male attraction happens more often, is stronger, and its pretty much the only type of images and videos that I watched. [I read through another thread on this area. If you haven't dealt with SSA, you are very unlikely to intuit an understanding.]

When I fall, I usually do it again ... a total of three releases within 24-36 hours, and then it stops pervading my thoughts for a time. This last time I only did it once, and now I cannot stop thinking about it.

I have never told anyone any of this. I have kept it all inside and to myself. I thought I could get over it myself, but then I close the shades, lock the door, and turn on private browsing. I am quite embarrassed about most of these points, especially the ones that are not common, even for this site.

It has been just over 2 full days, and I have until 2am for the third.

I want to speak by email and gchat with someone who has most of the same problems as me (especially SSA). I also want to get the filter that someone who understands me will be involved to keep me from ch"v falling again. Please PM me soon if you can be that person...

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 12 Mar 2012 18:09

Welcome aboard 613!

I relate so strongly to everything you wrote, it sounds almost exactly like me 20 years ago!

Opening up about it is a very important step. One of the biggest problems people like us have is isolation and a feeling of being "different" and not belonging, it is both a cause and an effect and can become a vicious cycle of shame, loneliness and falling. Getting involved with other people, both in groups like this and in real life, will go a long way in helping you get over it.

There are plenty of people here who do "get it", even those who do not share the added nisayon of SSA. And in truth, most of the struggle is really the same, it's all about the need to lust and our character defects that drive us there, it doesn't matter what the specific triggers are.

Look around the site, read the handbooks and other materials, and sign up for the Chizuk emails if you haven't yet.

Do you have a filter on your computer? If you need help installing one, or you want someone to hold the password for you, the GYE filter Gabbai can help.

<http://guardyoureyes.com/filters/gabai>

Wishing you much Hatzlacha on your journey. Keep on Trucking and Keep on Posting!

Gevura!

P.S. Just in case you have not seen them yet....

My thread: <http://www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4125.0>

Another great thread on the

subject: <http://www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4612.0>

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by JackAbbey - 13 Mar 2012 10:20

Dear 613, it seems that you need special help

i used to have similer issues, i went for help, and by now i know that

this is totaly imagination, its the way YOU see the outer world

its the way YOU think that people relate to you

but realisticly nobody cares about your body parts, when someone looks at you he just looks at a human being

so start thinking of yourself as a NORMAL PERSON, because you are one

a good sycho-therapist can be a huge help

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore

Posted by backto613 - 13 Mar 2012 13:43

Last night was pretty tough. I had to fight hard against the early warning tendencies. Then it woke me up really early this morning. But BH I went to the mikva and vasikin and spent some time afterwards in the bm.

So 3 days down and feeling good for the day. Usually I am pretty good from day 4 until the recent milestones, at which point the yetzer says that I did a good job and enough. So this means I may have it much easier for the next three days. I will have to be super vigilant again for day 7-11.

One of my biggest issues was that I was so secretive about everything that could be related. My yetzer used that to turn everything to actually be related and become some kind of trigger. When I started on this site I knew that things won't be a secret, and so after some streak I couldn't tell myself "okay so you'll start a new one tomorrow; it's not like anyone knows." Now people know.

I further threatened it that I would punish it with a report of anything that it did to keep it at bay. I had the feeling it was taunting me about that, and so I made a very detailed post. (If I already had a partner last night, I would have emailed him rather than positing.) I also think I exaggerated the post to make it more scared. While typing I felt like I was fighting someone, and when I saw that it was read, I felt like it really lost. For now, I think it got the message about

how serious I am. I think there is very little to scare your vanity more than the threat of shame and scandal. It did its job and leaving the post up could become counterproductive.

@Shmeichel

I probably didn't explain this issue properly. I completely get that it is my imagination projecting, but I don't think I need a therapist. It is not an obsession.

To draw a parallel about how feel about this: imagine someone wearing a yarmulka for the first time or being the one wearing a pink shirt when everyone else is wearing white shirts and jackets. Many people would not care, but a lot of people would become very self conscious about it. I get self conscious about the things that many people don't notice, and, yes, I realize they don't notice or care. I often do things to accustom myself to this fact. Even if I did nothing, all it would mean is that I dress like the majority of the people around me. The issue was that I was secretive about it, and so my yetzer was using it in its arsenal.

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by JackAbbey - 13 Mar 2012 13:52

613 i can see where you are coming from

keep it up, you can

espacially now that you understand the facts

maybe get yourself a tiny notepad, and write there some essays, and keep on going thru it a few times a day

like: "I am a well respected standard person"

or "staying clean is my platform for narmality" etc...

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 13 Mar 2012 20:46

Hi 613!

Your post from earlier this morning was so "me" it was scary. You described almost exactly how i used to act out my fantasies... in fact I'm glad you deleted it because it triggered me badly :-[.

A couple of ideas, these are really halacha. Make sure to sleep on your side, not on back or front. And keep your hands outside the blanket. Also say the entire Krias Shema Al Hamita before you go to bed, from a siddur.

As far as Keep On Trucking, it means that no matter how difficult or painful, even if we slip or fall CH"V, we pick ourselves up and keep moving forward. It's one of the most important principles of recovery, as articulated by the Heiligger Rebbe Shlit"a. (TZ if you're reading this I'm sure you) We also have some fun with it, humor is good for recovery too. Stick around and you'll learn all about Woodford, possums, cholint, Khaled, jellybeans, and all kinds of other cool stuff... ;D

Keep on Trucking!!!

Gevura!

P.S. feel free to PM me if you want.

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by backto613 - 14 Mar 2012 13:45

4 days down and on day 5.

Every time I am about to go to this site, I start to get really nervous inside - like I am going to see that people found out about me. I think it is a sign that I am fighting my yetzer and it is not happy.

I have been studying and analyzing my behavior for the past several months. When I came to the site I saw that you have realized many of those same things. Based on my limited readings in this forum, it is obvious that we all have our unique issues and yet we have many of the same elements. I would hypothesize that there are a limited number of unique elements and that each person will have some combination of them. (I exclude specific attractions, fetishes, phobias and philiias -- they probably resemble the random number function on a computer.)

[Sorry about the length, but I also need to write this for myself to read at a more dangerous time.]

One element that I have noticed elsewhere is not identified specifically or named. I call it "latency." I am currently in the latent period and so I will try to describe my stages.

-- Latency is a middle ground time period. Most of the time I will not be thinking about it and so I can become "dormant" by getting pre-occupied with something else (it can only last as long as the pre-occupation consumes all your thoughts). As we all know, it is possible to be latent or even dormant and be alerted negatively by something internal or external. When I fell during latency, I felt the worst because it so easy to brush off and even to become dormant. During this time I am more triggered by a female. However, two males with at least pg13-rated behavior can push me to the next stage.

However, the more common thing for me is to go from "latent" to "negative alertness" almost seamlessly. -- That period is where I get an urge to be triggered, and almost start looking for something. If I get to a computer, alone, during the n/a period, I can c"v fall right away or after a few short attempts. Otherwise, I will end up moving along to the vulnerable stage.

The vulnerable stage is the most difficult stage of all. I experience it during the first three days

after falling. It will then attack based on trigger opportunities or as part of vicious cycles. If I can get through this stage without doing anything anything anything, not even to think about it!!!! then I can get through this and go back to latent, until the next guerrilla strike. If I do anything during this specific time, I run a highly significant probability that it will not stop until I do something ch"v.

I suspect that switching between stages comes automatically, because the latency is also part of my yetzer's strategy. That way it can hit me with a bus when I am not looking. I have at least two early detection signs -

The buddyetzer -- I start thinking about how I *used to* have a problem. Then I start to think about how long it has been. If I have recently crossed or about to cross a milestone, it will pat me on the back and hang up. [This is in contrast to recognizing that I have a problem, am working on it, and should not be engaged in Hubris because I can fall that way.]

The youloseryetzer -- I start to think of guys my age or younger that are already married, have children, and are more established in life. I then think about how far behind I am and start to get ashamed of myself...

Whatever logic I may try to employ against these talks, I still switch into negative alertness or vulnerability after those.

I am now in the first latency period. During this period I begin to disassociate with my past. I start to really believe that I don't have a problem, and that I have moved on. During later latency periods I even get to the point where I start to think of myself as someone who practically never did this. All that behavior incites the yetzer.

The most important thing for me right now is to recognize this: I have a problem. Even if I don't have urges right now, or my urges are very weak, that doesn't mean that I am not an addict. If I don't believe me then just think about how many times I went through this stage and still fell (way more than seven times). if/WHEN this cycle moves on to the next stage, I must be ready; I cannot be lax about my behavior.

yezter hara - I know you are there and I know you read this. I know much more about you than you think. You may cloud my judgement during high time -- but this is now out for all to see and I will remember to read it when you try to make me forget all this. I also know that YOU WON'T GIVE UP AFTER "JUST THIS" -- SO NO MORE "JUST THIS"!!! You will not own me anymore!

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by JackAbbey - 14 Mar 2012 13:57

have you started or done the 12 steps?

latency is a nice name for "Hate having responsabilitys", hiding under the warm cosy lazy blanket

common! start living life to the full!, use every minute of your life productively1

run away from those time pushers

get yourself a list of things to do, and whenever you want to do something - anything, just add it to the list

and whenever you a second to spear, look in the list and carry out those jobs, until the list will be empty (which it will never be)

(sorry for being harsh - it seems you are cought in a mind-trap cycle)

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by backto613 - 14 Mar 2012 15:54

@Shmeichel

It seems that I am very unclear with you. I am sorry if my earlier post sounded like sobs and excuses.

Latency is a relatively good thing. I do not at all mean laziness. [The official short form psychological definition: existing in unconscious or dormant form but potentially able to achieve expression.]

Addiction is something that can not be cured. The stage that I call "latency" is what other people call "recovery." I don't like that terminology because it ignores the fact that there is an underlying problem and that makes me more susceptible to future attacks and hardens the fall if c"v occurs.

Consider an analogy - if you literally fall and get up then you have recovered from your fall. If, however, you have a certain medical condition that causes you to have balance problems, then you don't just get up and recover -- you have to walk more carefully than other people or else you can fall again.

During latency I am as productive as I can be. I don't even think about this issue the vast majority of the time. It does not keep me up at night and most things that could trigger people have little or no immediate effect in me. I even have to remind myself of this as an issue when I daven and do teshuvah things. After a 20 or 30 day streak I don't even fall first by computer. It comes from an outside inciter (as explained below).

This is why I haven't done a public log until now. If I was not frum, then I would probably not be considered an addict by general public standards. It has not affected my relationships. (I had other stresses that have affected them so I can see what that is like and what it is like to not have it.) Secondly, even when I allowed myself to do whatever I wanted, I could go for at least a week or two without it. Thirdly, even when I spent time on the computer, it was not when I needed to be somewhere else or busy with something.

My addiction is characterized by the need to do this when I know I shouldn't. It's like I want to eat meat right after dairy, because it is something not for me. If I were not frum I would probably just consider it a guilty pleasure. It only consumes my thoughts when I know that what I just did I cannot do again -- hence the 3 day withdrawal. The more I move away from it the more it becomes like ice cream. [I love to eat ice cream, but can go for months without it. - I wouldn't

say I am addicted to Ice Cream because I can have some when I am in the mood for it.]

However, I am frum and it is assur. That having been said, I need to get over this.

A little background --- I went for almost (I think a little more than) ten years without this. A few years ago, I entered a world of non-Jews and Jew selfhaters. It was in an environment like nothing I had been in until that time. It actively supported LGBT's (SSA's) and people's "rights" to lust, act, kill fetuses, and otherwise be free of real morals. Live and let live. They were even strongly and very vocally critical of an incident where someone opposed and wanted to support real morals. [To give another example, the LGBT group had an event where they filled a table, in an area that everyone goes through, with condoms. The point was safety. Such idiots.] The women there were so naked it is unreal.

As I think back, a real big issue were the women. I started by looking away and taking off my glasses. Then they started sitting in front of me, talking to me... I often acted like someone with Asperger's I would talk to the floor and look at my computer (which is weird when your not looking something up). I would face guys when talking to women. All this faded slowly, partly by necessity .

The first nine months were relatively fine. Their message of acceptance just seeped in slowly. As I became more social, I started hearing people be open about their behaviors - a lot. for good measure - I say a lot, again. I think that all of their free time must have been divided between drinking and "hooking up."

That's what started my inclinations. If I knew something was wrong halachically but accepted publicly, it became a major battle.

I think that Rav Moshe was correct for me - my SSA is really my yetzer lehachis. I only think it because I know it is wrong. It did not start with SSA and I hadn't experienced that wanting before. Even to this day, when I am in what you call recovery, I really don't get triggered by men just being men -- even at the mikva. [Sorry 37, but this is an area where we really diverge.] My viewings and my fantasies were also practical (I would have trouble projecting myself as being alone with / being a woman.) I think the standard for having SSA or not is whether it repulses you -- which it does not now, but it used to. After 90 days, I can tell you what I think.

I really have to stress that I am not making excuses or saying I don't have a problem.

I recently stopped working for a lewd, brash employer (he's married and bluntly told me to get with many women now, before I turn 30 and start to think about getting married. what the heck?!) and (BH) now I have a few months before I start my new job. [The search had put such a strain on me and those around me.] I expect this job to be a lot more professional, but they still accept the unacceptable. therefore, I am spending time in a Yeshiva again and growing spiritually. I am on target to meeting the goals I wanted to cover (I started about two weeks ago). I needed to address the core issues through GYE before I go back into the "real" world.

I also needed to get back in to learning -- which is what was slipping away from me for lack of time and that is probably what made me so susceptible to their message. Torah is the antidote.

This post is so long, but I feel very different than after any of my previous posts. I had a major breakthrough. It was about time that I started getting at the root of the problem. Essentially, I never asked myself why I fell after ten years. I always thought that it was just inside of me this whole time and came to the surface. I also never thought about where the SSA came from and into the picture.

BSD from now on:

1. I will continue getting back into learning more and achieving torah goals.
2. I will NOT continue to pretend that I accept acting homosexuals. I will have to find a politically correct way of saying that I do not agree. I cannot even be silent on this issue anymore.
3. The world around me DOES affect me. Even the music, tv, and movies condoning this behavior DO have an affect on me. I must continue to cut down on all of them and break free from their message.
4. I have to deal with the dissonance between the way people dress and what I think is appropriate. (This is a tough one. Anyone know a politically correct way to voice that you think someone is not properly dressed?)

-- Please let me know what you think.

Also, as I work through this issue I will probably come across some inconsistencies. I plan to work through them to figure out what is true and how to fight the enemy and not its reflection.

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 14 Mar 2012 16:13

Hello 613,

Welcome to the forum and shkoyach to you for bravely stepping out into the light with your story. Honesty is one of the key ingredients for recovery.

Regarding whether or not you're an addict, I heard this simple 2-question test:

1. Do you find that you act out even though you don't want to?
2. Once you start, are you able to control yourself and stop as soon as you want to?

If you act out even though you don't want to, and if you can't stop once you've started, then you've probably got a problem. (Even if sometimes it seems like you have control, if sometimes you don't--then you really don't).

What you said is so true--that we have a lot of similarities. Underneath our acting out, we're all in pain, having trouble coping with life. We need to feel better, we need an escape, and until now acting out is the only solution we have found until now.

You would probably appreciate this link:

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=4870.msg130839#msg130839

And the following page has a lot of ideas for dealing with this struggle:

www.guardyoureyes.com/breakingfree/first-time-here

Lots of luck to you,

Elyah

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by backto613 - 14 Mar 2012 16:47

That is an interesting test. I personally appreciate the elegance of its simplicity, but I worry its results would not be sufficiently conclusive. For example, my answers probably reflect the fact that I view an "instance" as a short span of time usually from a trigger point until I act out or move on. The term "want" is also left ambiguous, which means the answer will depend on how I personally interpret the term and the concept of "free will."

1. After the first three days, I do not act out the first time. It can take quite a while to get me to act out. As I move further away, it takes a lot of attacks to get me started. So I would check off "yes."

2. I can and have stopped on many specific occasions within an "instance," but usually I am being bombarded by negative messages. If at first it won't succeed then it tries again. When I fall, it is right after "giving in" and so you could say that, at the point of expression, it is no longer against my "will," but I could hear that going either way. -- inconclusive response

I do think of myself as having this behavioral addiction. Otherwise, I clearly would have quit a long time ago. It may not have been destructive to me in this world, but it is still a problem I

haven't been able to stop.

(Next step will be to stop scratching my head on shabbos. :D)

Recent studies have shown that the brain can experience "decision fatigue." The more you need to think about something, the more it tires you out. The theory explains why people with very tight schedules are able to accomplish so much more than people without them. It is tiring to constantly decide what to do.

For addicts it has an interesting ramification. The more I need to tell myself "no," the more my brain gets tired. That is why there is a common suggestion for people to get themselves preoccupied when the cravings hit and to not think about it. When applicable, I find it is beneficial to be in a public area. My yetzer won't suggest anything when there are people around. On a shabbos afternoon that could mean sleeping on the couch. At other times you can trick your psyche into thinking others are around - you find this idea in halacha, to sleep with a light on -- you can leave on the light in the hall. (Easily explained to others if you have to wake up early.)

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by JackAbbey - 14 Mar 2012 17:06

Dear 613

my heart goes out for you

i can actually feel your craving to be free

did you go to an SA group? that can be a good help

your explanation sounds like the pink elephants

that is a very common problem, i wouldnt need that at all, but just because i know that i can't have, thats why i will try everything possible to get it!

maybe it can help, to slowly day by day, start hating lust, build up a hate against it, start seeing that its actually harmfull for you

its your worst enemy

it completly ruins your life

on issue 4, my answer would be, like Bard used to say: SHE IS NOT MY PROBLEM!

i couldnt cear less how she dresses, its not my problem, and gut shabbos

finish that yetzer hora conversation then and there

dont let the question of why is she allowed to dress like that? get into your inner brain, so whenever you come across a situation like that just say: she is not my problem, and immidietly ignore the whole issue, as if nothing happend

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by backto613 - 14 Mar 2012 17:38

@Shmeichel

I appreciate your willingness to help, but I have trouble understanding why you are so insistent on live professional help. Even Dov has said that live help might not be necessary.

As far as your not believing me (the pink elephants? gay republicans?). You hardly met me. I could be right; for some people it may just be a matter of addressing the issues. Not everyone has the exact same problem and so not everyone has the same way of dealing with it. This is a journey and an exploration. -- If I remind you of someone else or a group of people, please be sure not to read them in to my words.

On issue 4. I do hear what you are saying, and I agree that could work for some people. The issue I have is acceptance. If I accept her, even a vote by silence, then it seeps into my head. I need to care. I need to say it is not appropriate and have a reaction of indignation.

As far as your overall comment. I think that for many people here, lust is not the root, it is a symptom. If you hack at the root, then you have a better chance of not having the symptom. If you ignore the root and attack the symptom it can build up like a resistance spring and blow up

on you. (If you had a cold, would you try to break your nose and ignore your headache?) We need to deal with depression, self doubt, self-esteem issues, and other roots and/or causes.

On lust - There are things open in society that triggers most people. Sadly, that is their point. If you are triggered by it, that is not a sign you are addicted to lust - their whole intention was for people to react that way. The question is what you do afterwards. For me, I need to remind myself and even say out loud how bad it is. Otherwise the message can get into me as well.

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by JackAbbey - 14 Mar 2012 23:47

of course i beleive you, i just gave my advice

if you feel that DIY helps you, go with that.

issue 4: you can accept her as follows: she means well, its her husband who demands her to dress like that, its his problem not mien, she is a pitty.

lust is only a symptom, but if you fight lust (as well as the roots causing it) then next time the causes erupts, it wont burst out on lust, you learn to let out those feelings on good things

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Re: Will not be my secret secrets anymore
Posted by backto613 - 15 Mar 2012 14:30

Today is the sixth day - yesod shbechesed - I realized this morning that the sefira system should work at any time of the year for any self improvement.

I still want to write as much as I can and as honestly as I can. Every time I tried to quit before this, I overlooked and ignored things. This time I want to properly work through everything and build a proper foundation. As I develop and explore I rehash and re-evaluate everything. No theory is safe from evaluation and testing.

How things are going -- As I mentioned during withdrawal. Days 4,5,6 are usually much easier. Of course it doesn't just go away in so little time. I still get urges, but they are not so much for complete fall as much as they are to slip. BH I have not gone ahead with them, and try to brush them off.

Also obvious, I can still be triggered. After yesterday's post I felt really elated, like I am accomplishing something. I then realized that if my problem really stems from the outside world affecting me, then I really need to disconnect. As a detox, for the rest of the week, I took on to not listen to music (any), watch TV, movies and even read secular books.

I think my problem could really apply to many more people than you think. Okay, the music I listen-ED to was pretty explicit, but the TV I watch consisted mainly of documentaries, cooking shows, home improvement, etc. My reading is also non-fiction. The movies are within what is generally accepted even by many frum people. I really believe, however, that no matter how innocuous they may seem they are like a fungus the saps the purity out of me and replaces it with venom. I heard this from torah places over the years, but I did not really get it until now.

I even stopped listening to the news on the radio -- this is detox. yesterday I watched a short purim thing on youtube, but I am also trying to avoid that.

BSD I hope this will help me move along to being a better person.

I need to talk about same sex attraction. Yesterday I realized that I excluded some things and forgot many more.

sorry if this is a bit graphic -

In the midst of my juvenile experience with this problem I did have some interest in guys. I still cannot tell you if it was just a projection, but I can say that I was very interested in girls - way more than guys. In the just under or over 10 years that I did not fall I could still get a little excited by a well built guy (on the way to the shower for example). It didn't develop into a fantasy, and it often made me think to work out -- which is why I think it was more "I want to be built like that" rather than to get me some of that.

In my current experience. I developed early on an interest in watching guys, and an interest in looking at them in real life. The stuff I saw on the internet - though I try not to remember - the ones that really "got me" had certain positions and angles that I could literally fit myself into the picture and imagine. In real life, I could get excited when I saw a good looking guy, but my fantasies were more situational - such as imagining a roommate also interested - and they didn't last very long - despite my otherwise vivid imagination it hardly developed.

The question I have not really answered is where this all comes from. Either I naturally have ssa from within, or it has been nurtured by society, or it is a matter of practicality in my projections. It could be any combination of them. I also believe that the reason I didn't look at women, and this goes to when it all started, was because looking at women is considered "assur." It is so ironic that it almost sounds like a joke, but when I started I told myself that I cannot look at women and so I ended up looking at men and that got me off. To fit this in to my current theory -- I was getting impulses, some natural and some brought on by society, and I needed to place them somewhere, and that was where they went. If true, that is really sick.

I do know that when I am relatively tame, the ssa is much weaker than the attraction to the opposite sex. I am also not triggered by many of the things that I read would trigger other people with more of an ssa problem.

I am really confused. As I go along, I will try to update you on where I stand on these issues. I hope that the more I think through them, and not ignore them, the closer I will come to an answer. I also hope this will be reversed naturally as I progressively grow through the 90 days. I clearly cannot engage in reverse psychology on this issue -- I cannot practice getting myself excited and interested in women (though I did try that once or twice bizmanam -- fyi - bad idea).

In the spirit of full disclosure, my father was tough and a bit distant on me when I was a child. (I think it was not as bad as other people here.) I want to say this made me more of a cerebral person, and I often say I am not a hugger - but I am, just not a casual hugger, it needs to be an event or haven't seen them in a while. I also suspect that my warmth is calculated -- but better than always being cold to people. This seems to be a common element for those with ssa. I cannot say anything for sure, but it may have made me more receptive to the message.

I hope that bsd day 6 will move along well. I just fear for tomorrow. I have fallen many times on seventh and eighth days. I once found in my head that I would think that after the 8th day I would have some kind of re-bris - and the yetzer works hard to keep that from happening. I have also fallen many times on fridays and shabboses, especially the night. Both of those dangers come together tomorrow. In addition, some family is coming, and the last time they were here I was going out with this girl to whom I almost got engaged. (Yes, I do worry that ssa may have come in my way, but I was clean while we went out - except at the beginning and maybe the end.) Those may trigger some depression within.

I have long known these times are problematic, but I always just go through them quietly and hope for the best. This time BSD I will try to make it different. Since withdrawal, I have been working on myself.

For the past three days I went to the mikvah and then davened vasikin. (It's a halchic q if you're yotzeh shma at vasikin). On day one I said shma after davening, day two I said it with shel yad one, and today i said it with both tefilin on.

I have also kept this log to remind me that I have a problem and to stay vigilant.

I said the yom of tehilim (last week would have been the first week of finishing each day on the day, except I couldn't finish the day's on the taanis and made it up on purim, then i fell on friday night), and learned during parts of the day.

BSD I am not going to hide from the y"h. I will prepare for battle, since I know that tomorrow and the next 2 or 3 days will be tough. I plan to sleep with the light on in the hall, with my tzitzis on - the yetzer always takes them off first, but you guys won't let me even take them off! -

if I feel negatively about myself for something, I will not sulk and ignore it - I will work on it.

even though motzai is movie night -- I cannot partake! even healthy food is bad for a sick person

I saw my name on the chart yesterday, and I want to get through this stage and move on to the next level there.

Some interesting things. I used to think that many halachas are really harsh on guys - cannot be alone with women or live in a house with mother in law, how to dress and how to not touch the

ever in the bathroom. I don't know if it applies to all men, but from this site I realize that they were right about us. All of those things can become trigger and awake that which would be latent. Therefore, it is better to avoid them.

for inspiration I suggest reading sefer shophtim -- we fell and fell and each time we called out, hashem answered us. It can be really powerful. I did it before my last fall, so I cannot say that it really worked for me, but that doesn't mean it won't for you.

My two cents -- For everything we have in common, we also have things that are different. just as in medicine, there is no panacea. Some medicine works for some people and some works for others and the opposite is true. It is important to identify common roots and/or symptoms and see if our friends' medicine works, and it is important to see what is different and see if that could address the issue. Everything is classified by its similarities first and by its differences last.

truck on my friends.

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