

Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 18 Dec 2008 19:22

I just wanted to start a new thread here to track my progress.

Today is day 7 and I am doing reasonably well B"H. I have been reading the chizuk e-mails every morning and reading the forum periodically throughout the day.

Will try and stay strong through the weekend and will *bili neder* be on Sunday's support call w/ Elya.

Link to my original post on GUE [here](#)

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 22 Mar 2009 14:54

Dear Guard,

Thank you for taking the time to post to my journal!

Last week (the week I went to my first SA meeting) was a critical week for me. As things happened, last week I did not attend just one meeting, but 3. Furthermore, the 3 meetings I did attend were all different meetings.

So here Guard is what happened over the past week, perhaps one of the most emotionally charged and tumultuous weeks of my life.

As I mentioned in a previous post, I attended a meeting last Sunday. I drove an hour, parked my car and walked point blank for the first time in my life into a church. Although I was the only frum Jew in the room, everyone was very nice and courteous to me. I listened, but did not speak and was a bit shaken from what I had heard in that room. For the first time in my life I heard real human beings in front of my face expressing their struggles in real words and it was heavy stuff. I don't think that I was quite emotionally prepared to hear what I heard, as many of the individuals in that room were talking about things far worse than I had ever done myself.

Having gone to my first meeting, I knew that I did not have a choice but to go again if I wanted to break free of the addiction, but was full of reservations about the actual program. Boruch, however, was kind enough to talk to me for an hour on the way back and assuaged many of my fears.

Fast forward 2 days to Tuesday and I was thrust into an emergency task for work and had to be up half the night. I was physically taxed and emotionally wobbly. During the course of the maintenance, I started looking at images that I should not have. This was technically not pornography, but certainly close enough to want to make me look for more. I began looking for holes in my filter/monitoring/accountability software and unfortunately found one. I slipped Tues. night and again Wed.

Devastated by this *mapalah* and full of questions about the group I had gone to the previous Sunday, I decided to join boruch at his Thursday group to see if it would work for me. Boruch has found much success in the small, conservative and committed nature of his SA group and I thought that may work better for me. I went w/ boruch to his Thursday group and was impressed, but still held reservations regarding my ability to succeed in a *goyishe* environment and was concerned about how the scheduling would effect the time I spend w/ my wife as well as how I would leave work early every week. I was committed, however, to work the program and would find a way to make it happen.

At the end of Sundays group, a Jewish individual who was wearing a baseball cap and jeans, but was probably a shomer Shabbos, told me that there was an SA group in my town that was predominantly frum. He had given me a number to call, but at the time I had anonymity concerns and did not plan on making contactl.

On my way home from boruch's group, I began thinking to myself "wow, this is a really long

drive, how will I justify this to my wife every week? how will I slip out of work early every week?". Additionally, at boruch's behest, I asked for a temporary sponsor. I was assigned a temp. sponsor, who I am sure is a fine fellow, but someone that has about as much in common with me as an automobile has to a toaster oven. I was desperate, however, and was willing to give it a go.

That night as I was driving to night seder, I thought, why not give this frum person a call and find out what the local SA group was all about. Well I made that call and ended up missing night seder as I was talking for about an hour. Having expressed my questions and concerns I was happy to learn that there are six SA meetings a week just minutes from my home that are attended by individuals just like myself that are fighting and **succeeding**. I decided then and there that I would attend the early morning Friday meeting.

I was a bit nervous and a bit taken aback when I saw "normal" Jews such as myself walk into a room, sit in a circle and express the same (and in certain instances more severe) fears, concerns and struggles that I myself had been experiencing.

I made a call to that same person right before Shabbos to express concern over a scheduled maintenance I would need to perform for work *motzei Shabbos* in the middle of the night. Getting on the phone and calling someone really helped me to actualize the *nisayon* and b"h I was fine last night.

This morning I got a call from someone I met in the meeting. He told me that he had heard what I had to say during the "share" and wanted to reach out and let me know that there is hope. He confided in me that he had struggled for years by himself and that nothing seemed to work. He told me that he had been clean from masturbation for 2 1/2 years and porn for 1 1/2 years. He spoke of the **miracle** of the program and injected some much needed hope into my state of being.

I think that I have b"h found my place and hope that Hashem will be kind to me and grant me the tools, desire and strength to stay sober for a lifetime.

As for now, it is one day at a time

Today is day 4

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 22 Mar 2009 15:06

Praised is Hashem!! You did some REALLY HARD steps in that first week, and when Hashem saw that you were willing to go the "extra mile", he helped you find an easier and much better group. I am truly happy inside!

May you and Boruch go Me'chayil el Choyil and not only recover - but also help us all here at GUE, to help others with these issues for many years to come!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 24 Mar 2009 18:32

Hi Guard and thanks for the reply ...

I plan on participating on the GUE network for a long time to come *bezras Hashem*. In the here and now, however, I have been struggling to come to grips with a lot of things.

The most immediate and perhaps significant thing that happened regarding my recovery is that my wife found out last night.

As I mentioned earlier, I went to several groups last week and decided on participating in the local frum SA group in my area. I had been feeling a bit overwhelmed by the whole process and called one of the guys to talk things through. My wife had left the house and was scheduled to be out for about 30 minutes and I thought I would use the opportunity to make a call.

I was talking on the phone with a fellow SA member for quite some time and decided to continue my conversation even after my wife was scheduled to be home but chose to speak in the attic of my house and very quietly. I figured that if my wife came home, I would certainly hear her and end the conversation then and there. Well, my wife did come home, but I did not hear her. Apparently she called my name and when I did not answer proceeded upstairs and heard me talking quietly on the phone.

A few minutes later I heard my wife downstairs and promptly got off the phone. I proceeded to go and learn with my *chavrusah* but when I returned my wife confronted me. My wife told me that she had heard me talking upstairs about an "addiction" and wanted to know what was going on. She told me that she was very scared and burst out in uncontrollable tears. I realized that I had to tell her ...

Well, I won't go into the details here, but I basically spilled the beans and told her everything. I told her that I had been living with this disease for many years now and realized that I could not fight the battle alone any longer. I told her that I had been going to meetings and that part of the SA program was getting on the phone and talking openly with other members.

All of this was very difficult for her to digest and she did quite a bit of crying. My wife told me that she needed someone to talk to and could not do it alone. I made some inquiries and found out that there are special meetings for spouses of sex addicts. I got her a number of another frum lady to call and will wait and see how that works out.

I told the group this morning that it is ironic that I have been hiding this addiction for so many years from my wife and end up getting caught during my first week of recovery. One of the members of the group put it very succinctly by saying that "it is better to get caught in recovery than to get caught in addiction".

Going forward, although I did not disclose to my wife voluntarily, I have been told that it is easier to fight this battle with your wife on board and *boruch Hashem* my wife is on board.

I plan on attending meetings every morning and see where things go from there.

I am a bit nervous and a bit on-edge but feel as though the real recovery, the recovery that I have been davening for, has begun.

I will stick b"H with SA and stick w/ the GUE network.

Today is day 6

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 24 Mar 2009 18:52

How Hashem loves you! Praised is his great name!! I can't tell you how fortunate you are. Yes, it is painful. Yes, you can expect some sleepless nights. But, WOW, Hashem has just take you and thrown you into recovery FOR GOOD. That's it. Once she knows, there is NO turning back. You say it's ironic. But for us who believe in Hashem, it is not ironic at all. It is simply "Aniyas Teffilah", a natural divine reaction to those who are truly sincere. Hashem has just thrown you into recovery at a pace you wouldn't have believed possible. The same thing happened to the guy in [this story](#). When you do enough, when your Teffilah is sincere enough, when you've tried hard enough, Hashem makes the painful - yet inevitable - happen. And then you know deep down in your gut: THIS IS FOR REAL AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.

And too prove to you that this is all from Hashem's love, what are the chances, like you said, that all these years she never caught you, and then ONE WEEK into your sincere recovery she catches it? And to think, you were caught in the best time possible! In a time when you can finally tell her honestly, while looking her in the eyes, that you are doing the most you have ever done to rid yourself of this disease, and that you will never go back to it again.

A little advice to help you get through this:

- Maybe have your wife see some of the things on [this page](#).

- Elya's wife has helped save some marriages already. Try and have your wife speak to her.

Call Elya on [the hotline](#). If you need his personal cell, I can ask him permission.

- Also, there's a lot of good reading material that can help her... For example, there are chapters in the SLAA books on partnerships which will help couples cope with this together in the most constructive way.

- [This story](#) can help give your wife some good perspective.

It is very, very hard for the woman to find out about the things you did. She always thought she was the only one in your life. Even though you explain her that you don't care for the thousands of others you have looked at - it is hard, very hard, for her to swallow. You need to keep telling her how much you love her and how much she means to you. Tell her that the on-line images meant nothing to you, it was just a disease. Tell her you are working hard now on yourself, and this is your tikkun - and she is your partner to help you grow. And whatever nice things you can say (even if they aren't 100% true BTW) - a woman **likes** to hear them.

May Hashem help you through this difficult but IMPORTANT period with much chesed and rachamim!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 24 Mar 2009 19:55

[guardureyes wrote on 24 Mar 2009 18:52:](#)

Once she knows, there is NO turning back.

THIS IS FOR REAL AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.

Do not believe this. This is not true. Guard, you may not know what it is like but I have been there also. I was caught as well (not during recovery but during addict, yes painful indeed). I also thought that there was no turning back. I felt so cured and it was only six weeks later that I fell back into it. I slipped back into privacy becoming even more hidden in my ways. This was summer 2001. Anyone healing himself needs to have zero external motivation. When an addict relies on external motivation, like his wife's reaction, he is setting himself up for failure. I saw this from experience. You see what happens is that when the person is caught the menuval runs away. The addict thinks he is cured. But he has not worked on himself. When the menuval appears again he begins rationalizing the way he used to. It is embarrassing to go and admit to ones wife at that point. It is one thing to admit to a 12 steps partner or GUE email sponsor, but to ones wife a can be difficult. However, praiseworthy is the one who is willing to embarrass himself in this world to protect himself from embarrassment in the next world.

Rather, one must always maintain 100% internal motivation while utilizing people in his means to carry out his true desire.

With that being said, I wholeheartedly agree that it is a blessing from Hashem. Having your wife know about this, assuming you have a good relationship with your wife, in the long run will be very beneficial. You will be able to express a part of you to your wife that you were never able to do before. Your wife will begin to understand you much better. There was always a part of you that she did not know about. There was a piece missing from the puzzle. It may have been a piece of the puzzle that you did not like, but it is still you. She will be able to encourage you to grow in kedusha. When I tell my wife that I cannot go certain places she understands why. She lovingly protects me.

It is very important to make your wife realize how sincere you are. Show her how you hate this more than she does. We went to a therapist which was very helpful for both of us. The therapist almost acts like your advocate. Being that your wife feels confused by you, it may be hard for her to trust you. But bringing a therapist into the picture, helps her understand you in a more objective way. This should be done as soon as possible. I phoned a therapist within a few hours. I had spoken to him that night and the three of us met the next day. This calmed the tears.

I wish both you and your wife hatzlacha. May Hashem be with both of you. Please keep us posted.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 24 Mar 2009 20:39

You have a point Yaakov. Thank you for balancing my optimistic post with a healthy dose of reality. Even in [the story](#) on our site that I mentioned above, the guy had a relapse after his wife found out. It took **more** than that for him to break free. This is true. But it still **does** help in the long term. After all, just today, Ahron posted on [this thread](#) (reply #35):

I try to link the pleasurable sensation of inappropriate thoughts and fantasies to the devastating emotional pain I experienced when I revealed my addiction to my wife. Since I must tell her if I fall and she has reminded me nicely many times that she understands me but would be very hurt if I had something to report, there is an immediate link between the fall and the painful consequence, even more immediate than the inevitable depressing feelings that used to follow a fall. Although it's still a 2 step process (pleasure followed by memory of pain), I'd like to get to the point where the only sensation is the memory of pain.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 24 Mar 2009 20:51

[guardureyes wrote on 24 Mar 2009 20:39:](#)

Even in [the story](#) on our site that I mentioned above, the guy had a relapse after his wife found out. It took **more** than that for him to break free.

Thanks for the story. amazing. The story makes the exact same point I was stating above by saying, "*She challenged me to allow Ryan to develop his own internal passion to resist temptation. I finally understood that, as long as I persisted in assuming spiritual leadership in our home, prioritizing myself and my goals and taking responsibility for Ryan's choices, Ryan would not experience the work or glory of G-dly manhood.*"

By the way, if it is OK, can you please remove the picture of the woman on the top of the page. I try not let my eyes glance at any woman at all and it did not feel good to chance upon a picture of a woman on GUE. Thanks.

[guardureyes wrote on 24 Mar 2009 20:39:](#)

But it still **does** help in the long term.

Yes, indeed as I have described above how it has helped me. Even though my wife never understood the full extent of the addiction, the little she did know only help me and US. I truly believe that had she understood more and had I been honest to her about my relapse, things could have been different. But we all make mistakes. That is why we are on this forum. Unfortunately, at this point for myself it would be be more detrimental than beneficial for my wife to find out about my past. I stand to lose more than gain. In the meantime, I have this wonderful group of friends here on GUE to share my emotions with.

And yes, I read aahron's posts. He writes from the heart and I often relate to his experiences.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 25 Mar 2009 17:32

Hi GUE & Ykv and thank you for your insights!

I am fully aware that telling my wife alone will not solve my problems for me. One of the members of my SA group, however, put it very nicely. He told me that it is hard enough to recover from addiction to begin with, but add to that sneaking out of the house and lying to your wife about going to meetings and that can be challenging indeed.

My wife basically cried the whole day yesterday. She did go to bed last night, but woke me up at 2:00 AM and was crying hysterically. I spoke to her for close to 3 hours and attempted to validate her feelings and explain to her that none of this was her fault and that I really am the

person that she has married and loved for all these years. I told my wife that although there are reasons that I got addicted in the first place (unstable family, exposure to P at a young age etc. etc.), none of that matter and that I fully accept responsibility for my actions and will bel taking the steps I need to make amends to the best of my ability.

Although things are far from perfect, my wife does appear to be in a much improved state of mind today and we have resolved to get through this together and grow from it.

Things are not easy, but they are getting better.

I am totally on board w/ the 12 steps and agree fully w/ boruch regarding their effectiveness.

Today is day 7 ...

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 25 Mar 2009 19:12

Shomer,

glad to hear that things are clearing up in the short time that it has been since your wife found out. I do want to advise in a friendly way that by going to a therapist it may help your wife and the two of you in a even better way.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 25 Mar 2009 20:31

we have resolved to get through this together and grow from it.

Tears welled up in my eyes when I read this. Why? I realized, why do people cry when they hear very beautiful music? Music has the power to be "Mamtik Dinim". People who have had much suffering in their lives, when they hear the perfect harmony in a beautiful tune, they suddenly feel as if they understand the harmony of it all, the underlying purpose. They feel in their hearts that in the end it was all for the best. This makes people cry. And when I read your post, I heard the beginnings of a beautiful symphony of music.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 25 Mar 2009 20:47

By the way, if it is OK, can you please remove the picture of the woman on the top of the page. I try not let my eyes glance at any woman at all and it did not feel good to chance upon a picture of a woman on GUE. Thanks.

Sorry about that. I removed it. (I did have a deeper reason for having it, but never mind. *Scharo yatza be'hefseido*)

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 26 Mar 2009 14:13

Thank you GUE and Ykv for your advice and words of encouragement!

My wife and I have really come along way in the short time since she discovered my addiction. Yesterday was the first day since Monday night that my wife was not constantly crying.

My wife called one of the other wives from the SA group and that did help to some degree. Yesterday, however, she called a Rebbetzin that she is close with and told her that her husband was struggling with something for a long time and that she had just found out. This Rebbetzin did not ask for details, but told my wife that although she did not ask for this, it is incumbent

upon her to support and encourage me and that in the process our marriage and our relationship will be strengthened as a result. She also told my wife that when there are no secrets in a marriage, a husband and a wife can attain a certain level of closeness and contentment that will radiate throughout the rest of our home and family. She told my wife that if she every needed to talk about anything, she will always be there for her to talk to.

My wife also spoke to a therapist friend that she is close with and she also helped my wife come to terms with this. She used terms like "cognitive dissonance" and told my wife how my rocky childhood drew me into the comfort that P and MB had to offer. I am not a big therapy/psychology person, but it did provide an additional layer of comfort to my wife.

The bottom line is that my wife is now fully on-board and has encouraged me to talk to her whenever I feel urges or temptations. She even told me that I should feel free to wake her up in the middle of the night if I ever need to talk or feel compelled use again.

My wife and I have done a lot of talking over the past 3 days and I feel that it has already started to bring us closer.

I will continue to read the 12 step literature, continue to go to meetings and continue to work the program with the group and with my wife.

I have been davening that Hashem should help me make a full and complete recovery and can see him *b'chush* starting to lay out the pieces.

Ho'du La'shem Ki Tov ... Ki Leyolam Chasdo

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 26 Mar 2009 15:00

I can't help the tears, they just come.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 26 Mar 2009 18:06

me too. I am also crying. May you and your wife continue to grow together and live a wonderful and loving life together.

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