

My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 06 Mar 2016 18:47

Hi all

I'm revamping my efforts all around. Got an accountability partner, a sponsor, a 12 step group, a coach, and some new tools. Of course if I started to list what I don't yet have this post would never end. I guess what I'm trying to say is that I recognize that my "plans" are only as good as what I will make of them.

I thought it might be helpful to have a place to write about my experiences at times. Fell free to share any thoughts/suggestions/comments you may have along the way.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 18 May 2016 04:54

["Dov" post=288005 date=1463435434](#)

There is a way you can become motivated to do these things, and that is **by not acting out your lust**. It actually works in reverse for some people (actually for most people it works both ways). Admittedly, this is a scary-sounding path, but I guarantee it will not kill you.

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Shockingly, it will end up being the easiest period of sobriety you have ever had. The exact opposite of what so many GYE guys would suggest. But I know it from experience and the experience of all the other guys I know who have done it. If you are begging for a way out and for a 'bottom', then assume that sex of any kind is toxic to you. Just for a few months. It is worth a try. It will wake up inside you a *dependence upon G-d* that you never knew you even had.

And one month is not enough for this to work, at all. Most of us will simply revert to holding our breath, as we have many, many times trying to white-knuckle our way through the '90-day wall of honor'.

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That's proven by the fact that when it comes down to actually *doing* this, three months seems suicidally stupid to us and crazy. And 'just unnecessary'. Four months is even better, as we did, be"H.

Now, of course dropping sex temporarily is not enough. So, regardless of whether you are, or are *not* married, during this period (and I think 3 months is usually right for starters) you can agree not masturbate even once nor to ever touch yourself in a sexual way. Simply agree that come hell or high water you will adhere to that.

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Part of this includes no sexual fantasies. As soon as you become aware that you are running the mental video - just drop them, surrender them, give them up. Pray sincerely for all the men and women in the porn you were remembering, or the person you were fantasizing about and ask Hashem to please, please give **them** everything they will need in this lifetime that He is giving them to make this life precious and truly good for them. No need to pity them and pray that Hashem should get them to finally stop being so pritzus...for who is the one worshiping them? Me. So instead of looking down at them at all, I would do better to admit that had I been born in their shoes and had *their* upbringing, I'd likely be the same as they turned out or perhaps even worse. So we are equals in some respect - screwed up people on G-d's earth.

Now, if you find that this sincere praying does not help you move on without the fantasy, then call an understanding (sober) friend and admit the entire desire. Rav Elimelech zy"a writes just this (and he isn't even talking to addicts - certainly addicts would benefit by it). Don't squeeze your eyes tight and beg G-d to take your desires away...no fast and 'desperate shukeling' - none of that will help. It will only hurt...badly. As the Shulchan Aruch writes, "*It is essential **not** to believe that the **intensity** of your prayers is what is making it work instead of the simple charity*

(Chessed) from G-d that you can never deserve anyway." (I paraphrase) And the ShaLo"H actually writes this is Pshat in Hashem telling Moshe Rabbeinu "Mah titz'ak elai?" - He meant to say to Moshe that he should not daven so hard. For if he does, the bnei Yisroel will likely believe that Kriyas Yam suf happened because of *Moshe's* will, not because of *Hashem's* Will!

As addicts, we more than any other people, I think, need to recuse or disqualify ourselves from G-d's decision-making process in a very practical and concrete way. One way of doing this is to quit self-pleasuring. Recovering addicts who choose the 12 steps, agree (as AA suggests in Ch 5) to abandon ourselves to G-d as much as we are able (it will only be a little, surely), and to let go of people and life and let G-d do His Will. We try to do the best we can, and yet leave the outcomes completely to Him and Him alone. This is radically different from how we were till now. I assume you may agree. Trying to do that and failing, is always because of our character defects - and that is why steps 4-7 follow step 3 immediately. If you find this is the issue, then avail yourself of those steps exactly as they are written, and you will find relief, chaver. It really works, if you really work it. As we are, we are only comfortable in the Driver's seat - we determine when we will orgasm, by masturbating ourselves on demand, for example. When the going gets tough, we masturbate...no? And that is just the tip of the iceberg of our controlling. Gevalt, we need G-d, perhaps more than anybody does.

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My new plan. Hope it's not just the same old, same old...

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Re: My Journey

Posted by Yesod - 18 May 2016 04:55

Unless it's something you've done before it ain't the same old,

So expect great things !

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 18 May 2016 04:59

Wow, that was fast! you hawking me? (I thought only stillgoing does that ;-)

OK, I believe you now about being up late at night...

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Re: My Journey

Posted by Yesod - 18 May 2016 05:02

Glad to share it with you.

Yeah got back from the gym and shul real late. Sat down to eat, and getting ready to plan tomorrow.

What's with you at this hour?

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 19 May 2016 12:50
It's slim picking at this hour

Also got home late, ate dinner, and was planning to watch TV/Movies or something, but got lost on the forum instead... Not so bad. I went to bed after the post.

Yesterday went well, B"H. One time I saw a lady on the sidewalk and couldn't help but notice how... Anyways, I remembered by new plans and started thinking about Dov's words from above. This kind of thing hasn't been a major trigger in the past anyway, but I think it helped change my mindset towards actually thinking about me and Hashem for a change.

Last night, I cheated by watching TV till like 1 AM, but was happy with my day for the most part

until about 10:30. And, when I did turn off the tube, I went to bed like a mentch. AND woke up early for shacharis with a minyan, which has been a major struggle for me lately. Actually, more importantly was that I woke up feeling refreshed 10 minutes before my alarm even went off, which I felt was a clear and special gift from Hashem, for me. ?? ?? ?? that I'm pretty sure I didn't say ?????.

Gotta go before I completely lose the advantage of an early start to my day.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 02 Jan 2017 02:40

I figured I might as well update my own thread as long as I'm checking in on the forum every now and again to stick in my 3 cents.

Despite my last posts here, I'm still really struggling to keep sober. And my life is still basically on hold in lots of important ways because of it.

I like the DQ "*I can resist everything except temptation.*" To me it basically says "I feel I can conquer any challenge, as long as it's not a challenge". I guess that's probably what it means. - Thanks captain obvious.

So quick update: My sobriety count is accurate. It's been an ongoing fight really, a few times I got close to the 30 day mark before falling off. That seems to be a trend for me. Lately, I've been struggling to get through a week. So I'm glad to be sober for today, because usually I have acted out by this time on a Sunday. Although, I've had a lot going on today until about an hour ago, so that probably helped.

I've been going to weekly SA meetings on and off since the summer. I've been doing daily phone calls with a guy from SA pretty much every day for about 3-4 months, which has been tricky at times when we fuel each other's falls, but I hope we've gotten past that now. I'm probably a bit depressed to be honest, but finding time to get help with that has been tricky for me.

I feel strong right now, though I might act out / lose my sobriety before tomorrow morning if I'm not careful. I've been trying to live with the reality that not acting on lust is truly the most important thing in life for me right now. So when I find myself saying trying to justify the need to act out with the old excuses like "Just to help me finish this paper, cause if not I'm screwed", I try to remind myself that actually I can face the consequences of not getting the thing done more easily than the consequences of continuing to act out.

The most recent thing I did is to make a list of the types of lust that I am committed not to engage in and setting concrete limits on what I cannot do in each category or what types of "shady" behaviors I would have to consult with someone about if I found myself slipping in them. It's not the first time I ever tried something like that, but it was important for me now, and I think it has helped.

I also confess that I have been watching movies and stuff, which in the past has sometimes been a replacement addiction for me. That's a thread I'm having a hard time letting go of.

That's it in a nutshell, for now.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Jan 2017 03:14

Thanks for the share.

If you'd have to list three things that would enable you to stop, what would they be?

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 02 Jan 2017 03:22

I'm not sure if you mean stop lusting or stop watching movies/tv..

Either way I'm not sure the answer.

1. Something positive in my life to do instead
2. Feeling good,satisfied, and confident about the things I am doing professionally/personally
3. Something or someone to be really connected with - like G-d, a Rebbi, therapist maybe, friend, or wife

To stop TV/movies - also a decision that I cannot continue to live my life with them. But I have not made this decision yet. Only that I can't live with lust.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Jan 2017 03:53

Il mean to stop lustin'.

And the above are your responses?

I mean seriously: what can you REALLY do to stop actin' on your lust?

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 02 Jan 2017 04:24

It might help if I:

1. Don't use internet accessible devices except when looking at porn is not possible - like public places or family rooms
2. Go to bed earlier and get up for shacharis
3. Have regular contact with someone who can really help me and hold me accountable and stuff, like a mentor, sponsor, therapist, Rebbe, parent, sibling, or friend.

I guess I just don't seriously want to do any of these things.

I really want to start watching a movie now, but I'll commit to #2 instead, just for today.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by cordnoy - 02 Jan 2017 04:36

[thanks613 wrote on 02 Jan 2017 04:24:](#)

It might help if I:

1. Don't use internet accessible devices except when looking at porn is not possible - like public places or family rooms
2. Go to bed earlier and get up for shacharis
3. Have regular contact with someone who can really help me and hold me accountable and stuff, like a mentor, sponsor, therapist, Rebbe, parent, sibling, or friend.

I guess I just don't seriously want to do any of these things.

I really want to start watching a movie now, but I'll commit to #2 instead, just for today.

heck of a post.

I kinda sensed that.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by Singularity - 03 Jan 2017 09:40

[thanks613 wrote on 02 Jan 2017 04:24:](#)

It might help if I:

1. Don't use internet accessible devices except when looking at porn is not possible - like public places or family rooms
2. Go to bed earlier and get up for shacharis
3. Have regular contact with someone who can really help me and hold me accountable and stuff, like a mentor, sponsor, therapist, Rebbe, parent, sibling, or friend.

I guess I just don't seriously want to do any of these things.

I really want to start watching a movie now, but I'll commit to #2 instead, just for today.

Funny, because when acting out, I know **exactly** what I'm doing :D

Cordnoy managed to fission your very airy "1. **Something positive in my life to do instead**"

into a two-part

"Don't use internet accessible devices except when looking at porn is not possible - like public places or family rooms"
The Yetzer Hora's friend is vagueness

and

"Go to bed earlier and get up for shacharis"

Which is a good achievement! Medals all around!

although the first part doesn't sound like a positive thing (more like a *Lo' Ta'aseh*), the second part is a sure winner.

May you climb the mountain of specifichness and zone in on your ultimate goals!

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Re: My Journey

Posted by thanks613 - 12 Jan 2017 06:43

I've been able to stay relatively lust free lately. With the help of friends, Hashem, and my own efforts. Maybe I'll write sometime about what's working for me now, but I'm afraid as soon as I start "bragging" about it, it will stop working for me.

Anyways, I went to an SA meeting tonight after missing the past two weeks. It was an unusual meeting in a way, because there was a frum girl there. Mostly the meeting is non-jews, except for me and another guy that comes sporadically. There has never been a woman, until today. Oddly, it's kind of "triggering" for me right now, maybe more than anything else from the past few weeks. Nothing that she said, just her being there, and me feeling the need to talk to her to make her feel comfortable, and feeling/being awkward about it.

By triggering I mean that I have not been able to keep it off my mind, kind of like when I get a lust fantasy stuck in my head. I've been somewhat distracted from it by learning with a chavrusa, then visiting with some friends, (and maybe if I hadn't visited GYE it wouldn't be on my mind right now). I am committed to not acting out tonight. But if it doesn't go away by itself, then I have to surrender it by admitting I can't stop thinking about her, that I am powerless against the need to feel that I am accepted and liked by her, and powerless against feeling that I goofed up and made a fool of myself when talking with her. It comes back to character defects of feeling that I am not good enough and depending too much on others to validate me.

It could also be that I should not feel the need to make others feel comfortable if I'm not healthy enough to handle it. And if I do decide to speak with her, at least I could have tried to treat her more like I would any other random newcomer, which probably would have been less awkward.

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Re: My Journey

Posted by Singularity - 12 Jan 2017 07:37

If a frum (single?) girl came to a meeting I was in, I'd probably skip a few heartbeats. Must have been torture.

Funny, how when I read what you wrote, immediately I envisioned this sacred visage of my perfect woman, all dressed up frum-like, sitting, helpless, across the circle at the meeting. That Only I can save her. I've had issues like that. Sounds like you do too. Maybe.

We went on a kiruv camp once. For Grade 11s of my old secular school. There was this girl who ticked all the boxes for me (not one of the campers; another counsellor). I actually asked her out. Like for shidduchim, marriage etc. I was on this high, but now every time I saw her I felt "Well, if she doesn't talk to me, it's like a betrayal of her to me!"

Like, I created our entire future in my mind. She was beholden to me. I spoke to my therapist about it. I told him I create this imaginary connection in my head: she is my damsel in distress. She may only speak with me. I am the only one who can save her.

Finally she rejected my asking for a date, and I was so knocked about I acted out. BH I've come a far way from there. Mentally, right now, I tried to replace this imaginary visage girl with my wife, sitting across me in the meeting. I did so. It was a nice feeling. I see I have a lot to work on.

Your last paragraph hits the nail on the head. Why give her special attention? Because she's a girl and I'm attracted to her. It's the lust speaking. Wonderful you identified it.

Hatzlocha. Maybe ask someone more competent if it's healthy going to the meeting if she'll always be there. Weigh it up.

Better seeing *these* women than other women we sometimes look up...

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