

Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by UpAndDown - 15 Mar 2020 11:32

Hi everyone!

I have never started a thread before, but now I need some help.

I have been clean for a while (224 days), and am starting to struggle again. B'h I haven't slipped in any way, because - thanks to GYE - by doing the 90 day chart I have managed to get rid of impulsiveness. But, since about a week ago, I am finding it very difficult.

Interestingly, since I don't see any 'heter' to act out / to watch stuff, I have been struggling with simple 'Emuna' questions, wishing to ditch it all (yiddishkeit) and to eventually indulge in my fantasies.

Anyone in the same position? Or any clever advice?

Thanks for your time.

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by DavidT - 15 Mar 2020 16:51

Intellectual knowledge has only a minimal impact on our decisions. If we do not feel emunah, then when we are challenged we will find ourselves subtly feeling that our actions lack consequences. Intellectual emunah also isn't enough for us to live with the palpable feeling that Hashem is present. Therefore, our job is to take our intellectual knowledge and make it real until it permeates our essence.

It is vital that you have a relationship with Hashem. Call out to Him whenever you are in trouble, and thank Him whenever things go right. Always view Hashem as your loving Father Who is reaching out to you — especially when you sin. Although our actions have consequences, Hashem never rejects us. He is not a sadistic dictator looking to zap people, and we must not view Him that way. Always remember that Hashem loves you and believes in you, no matter what you have done.

If you continually think about Hashem and try to connect with Him, you will eventually acquire unshakable faith and a real relationship with Him. This will dramatically increase your success in the battle of the generation.

This concept is

from <https://guardyoureyes.com/ebooks/item/the-battle-of-the-generation> Chapter 7

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by OTR - 15 Mar 2020 18:21

[UpAndDown wrote on 15 Mar 2020 11:32:](#)

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Thanks for your time.

This may not be the classic and expected response but I speak only for my own feelings.

I also had/have emunah questions. You may see some of that on my thread. Although there is a lot more that goes on for me irl.

Over the years I basically split religion from my challenge with porn and masturbation because I could not stand the religious guilt. And I don't regret doing that at all. Call me a bad Jew. BUt I could not live with being depressed. And in anycase it never worked for me to help me become

sober. Although at times, the mehalech of just having bitachon that god loves me no matter what has helped me stay away from masturbation for periods of time, so at the end of the day.. it became clear to me that I should just forget the guilt.

Long story short.., I realize I am sick and I do my best, and I don't think about God punishing me for any of what I may do to act out. I just try not to act out because it makes me inhuman, and when I do that I become sad angry and I hurt the people around me who did nothing to deserve that.

Anyhow, so I let go of the religious guilt regards my own masturbation, and I also seriously considered leaving my wife kids etc.. to indulge as you say, in a life of hedonism, all under the pretext of "emunah questions"...

Eventually I realized something though. I had envisioned telling my wife i didn't believe in Judaism, and then splitting because I had all these questions... so I could go do all I wanted. But then I thought, what if my wife says "OK I love you even if you don't believe in God. So let's stay married" And the overall self deception became very clear. That was not very exciting to me. I would wind up without God and without the sex I wanted. So what did I gain? Nothing. After that I lost my oomph in fantasizing about becoming frie.

With that being said, I still do spend hours and hours contemplating, searching and reading about the emunah issues which do bother me. Matters of science, philosophy etc.. genuinely DO bother me someimtes to the wee hours of teh morning even when NOT searching porn I could be reading about physics history archeology etc.. However, letting my desires jump on the bandwagon doesn't compel me once I realized how self deceptive I was being. I am STILL compelled toward lust.. but at least I am honest with myself about it and not blending the two issues.

Now here is the kicker-

Even though I divorced God from my struggle to be sober. And carry no religious guilt

Even though I really DO have real emunah issues as evidenced by my actions over periods of years so I know through self observation that I am genuine in that regard..

Even with ALL that... At some basic level I just can not live with myself with certain moral shortcomings. The guilt won't subside. Masturbation happens not to be one of them. (sorry) I can live fine masturbating freely in terms of it not destroying my relationships with other people. I honestly do not believe I am hurting my wife if I masturbate so I don't feel guilty about that.

Porn however destroys my life and feelings of self worth as does chatting online with women illicitly for two reasons. First- It is dishonest to my wife. Second, I feel debased to the point of being an animal after watching this kind of stuff.

At the end of the day I have a conscience, that's just what it is. There are certain things which get me and certain things which don't

That is just my experience.

Disclaimer: My point is in no way meant to advocate or encourage masturbating. I do put in effort not to, and would definitely prefer not to. I just mean it doesn't hurt me in the same way porn, and illicit chatting does. I guess because one is only between me and God and the other includes my wife's trust as well. Although I think even if I was divorced I would still react the

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles
Posted by DavidT - 17 Mar 2020 14:57

Hi UpAndDown

I'm following up on your post. How are things going? Please keep strong and keep us updated so we can all grow together.

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by UpAndDown - 22 Mar 2020 11:05

Thank you DavidT for your wise words and for your care. I am b"h doing well, I haven't slipped in any way and got my Emunah strengthened by learning more about the topic. I appreciate your Divrei Chizuk that you regularly post - they are very inspirational!

Will keep you updated iy"h.

(Sorry for late reply, I haven't had easy access to online.)

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by Realestatemogul - 23 Mar 2020 04:05

Hey UpAndDown!

There is a saying for lawyers:

- 1) If the facts are on your side, argue the facts.
- 2) If the evidence is on your side, argue the evidence.
- 3) if neither is on your side, call the other side a liar!

This is obviously humorous, but I think there is a very relevant lesson.

You should look at your emunah questions as a very comforting thing. You essentially have such a strong conviction to stay clean that the y"h - evil inclination - had to come up with this super backwards way to get you to slip. He was thinking, I don't have the facts or the evidence because this guy is super strong. My only hope is to attack his emunah. Realize that questions like that are normal and that there are answers, but also realize that even without being clear about the answers we still must follow the Torah. This is just another plan of the y"h all dressed up and you have all the tools to beat it!

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by UpAndDown - 23 Mar 2020 08:43

Realstatemogul:

Your message is spot on!!

Thank you!

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Re: Sexual temptations resulting in Emunah struggles

Posted by fromscarlettowhite - 25 Mar 2020 03:19

Today is 198 clean and I am right beside you. My mind flies in the wrong direction, and the lack of apparent success in my life, makes it that much worse. Emunah is challenged.

However, no matter what ones life challenge is, successfully fighting it will lead to questions in Emunah. An accountant who used to siphon funds from a client and stops will be met with the original challenge that led him to want to siphon funds in the first place.

So too, when we fight this challenge, we once again face the frustrations that made us turn to immoral desires to address and make us feel "good" about doing them, in the first place.

The questions on Emunah are not related to your stopping bad behavior; rather, they are related to the "reset" of life you have been give from Hashem, GOD HIMSELF, to redefine who you are, and to find a constructive, happy path in life that is healthy for you and your family.

We'd like to think that "oh, look at the problems I have since I stopped watching porn, all would be solved if I just watch it again". The answer is no - I have no more problems since I stopped, for I was victorious - I am a new man. Now I have the opportunity to rethink of my life, my faith, and redefine it so that I become someone who will never be associated with the sins committed when I reach the world to come.

Your Emunah is good. Pick a healthy path and focus on succeeding in it.

Good luck, and pray for us all to succeed in redefining ourselves to be improved spiritual people.

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