

The struggles of a human

Posted by anonymousmillennial - 19 Oct 2020 14:49

Hi this is supposed to be the first log describing what I'm going through and perhaps an outlet of my feelings and experience trying to fight the yetzer hora of hotzoas zera levatalah.

?Allow me to first introduce myself. I am a bochur of 24. Learnt in a yeshiva till the outbreak of corona. To be honest, I never fully understood what people meant when they said that masturbation is the nisoyon of the generation. Why would anyone from a logical perspective engage in such behaviour? It didn't make sense to me. That was till about two months ago.

In yeshiva I didn't have access to movies or unfiltered internet. When I came home I did. I also got my own computer for studies and although it was filtered, I was the one with the password. So I naively didn't think of it as a big threat. But one night my curiosity got the better of me and I checked out some pornography. That night I also gave in to masturbation and I realized all of a sudden that I've made a big mistake. A whole new pathway of what the brain might consider pleasure opened up before me.

Not much later I gave in a second time to masturbation (not porn which I have since tried to avoid). And as time went by the frequency of my giving in became more and more. I know I have to find a way to stop this and I am trying. It just is so hard sometimes when my whole body aches and screams and the anxiety is just not allowing me to think clearly.

Sometimes I can hold back for a day or two three even but then eventually I end up giving in. The thing by me is that I am usually okay throughout the day, but when I lie in bed and am trying to fall asleep I am having difficulties doing so without having the urge. And that is usually when I cave. So I have tried listening to a shiur to keep me distracted, which has helped maybe once or twice, but with my emotions being so powerful it is hard to concentrate. I also tried relaxing music and it has helped although I do need to experiment with that more. (I know that from a halachic perspective music is not the best thing to do before falling asleep, but I think it is permitted occasionally and it is also permitted if it is not leshem simcha. Also I am not sure if relaxing music fall under this stringency.) Another thing I do is that even when I do give in I stop in the middle and pause for a count of sixty. It gives me back a sense of control and I feel it can help overall. Another thing I do when I feel weak and I know I might likely give in is I try to postpone giving in for x amount of time. Sometimes I am so tired of the fight that just to get rid of it, I give in. I know it's wrong, but I still do it. I really need some technique here to overcome this.

I am currently going with the mindset that this is like building muscle and that slowly but surely I'll get stronger and stronger. I just doesn't always feel like this. It also pains me when I read some of the consequences this challenge has on both a ruchniyusdige and gashmiyusdige

sphere. As a bochur, I feel like I am tainted and that I might have a bad marriage or children of lesser quality because of this. I am sure that there is teshuva, but will I really be able to overcome this before getting married? I truly hope so.

My current goal is to go through a whole week without giving in.

For me this is a true lesson on another front. It's what I wrote in the beginning: I never thought that this nisoyon could be so hard and yet here I am. So perhaps when people are going through things, that to me seem trivial and perhaps I'll even judge them sometimes, I'll remind myself that it could happen to me and even if it doesn't I don't know where they are coming from so don't judge.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by Grant400 - 01 Nov 2020 21:56

[anonymousmillennial wrote on 01 Nov 2020 21:32:](#)

It definitely makes a difference. To everyone of us who is blessed and fortunate enough to read your posts, feel the emotion and experience your triumphs. Because your triumphs are our triumphs. Why? Because it causes us to become stronger too. It helps us win in our struggles too. So, continue posting and we will continue growing.

Grant

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 02 Nov 2020 13:17

Day 15.

No way! I made it to two weeks. I can't believe my own eyes.

Only with the help of Hashem and the help of you guys.

The journey so far...(more or less)

Right after the fall

"Hey, the urge has disappeared. I'm free."

...

"Oh no, what have I done. What have I done! Just for a fleeting moment of pleasure."

"Ok, let's not get wrapped up in guilt. I need to do something about this. I feel this is getting out of hand. How can I move forward from here? I can daven. I can start over. But I need something more. The GYE website says that posting in the forum greatly increases the success rate. I think that I'll give that a try."

Within 24 hours of the fall

"Oh, no. I can feel the urge again."

...

"The website says to make a log of 90 days. 90 days! No way! I can't do that! Ok, so what can I do? Maybe 3 days. You know what, just because 3 days doesn't sound like a great deal, I'll make my goal a week and see what happens."

...

"Ok, just posted my first post. How this is supposed to help, I'm not sure, but we'll see what happens."

Throughout the first week

"I'm going to sleep soon and I feel 'it'. I think this is a lost battle."

"I'm in bed now. Just tossing and turning trying to avoid 'eye contact' with 'you-know-who'. This is really burning! I'll do what I can and let it play out but I don't know how I'll get through the night."

"I just woke up, and it's morning. I think I'm seeing a miracle in front of my eyes. I made it!"

...

"It's still bothering me. And it's bothering me that it's bothering me."

...

"Just posted another post. These 'thank you's really feel good. And there are some people even commenting on what I've said. Those feel great. I am slowly seeing that this post is not so bad after all."

After the first week

"Just finished a week. Am I dreaming?"

...

"I don't think I can do a second week of that. You know what, since I haven't lost just yet I'll continue. I probably won't make it but just for the sake of it I'll make my goal another week. From there I'll take it day by day. And who knows, maybe I'll make it after all."

The second week

"I just watched a movie(/read something that triggered me a bit/etc). This is it. I probably lost for tonight. No? I mean watching a movie (/etc) makes you give in?"

"Okay, watching a movie doesn't mean you'll give in, it means you might have a stronger urge. But the battle is still mine to win."

...

"I actually feel a bit more confident in this battle. The urges are weaker and I know I don't have to respond to them."

...

"Goodness gracious, the urges are back! I thought they were gone. I thought they were supposed to get weaker with time. I know I said that I don't have to respond to them, but this is really powerful."

...

"I would give in but then I would have to post that on the forum. No, I don't think I'll give in."

...

“Oh no, not again.”

“I would give in but that would mean that I would have to start all over again. I don’t want this to end in an endless loop.”

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“The guys at GYE are great. How can someone win this battle without such a support group?”

After week two

"I made it!"

...

“What do you say, another week?”

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by Grant400 - 02 Nov 2020 13:28

FOUR! MORE! WEEKS!

FOUR! MORE! WEEKS!

FOUR! MORE! WEEKS!

Seriously beautifully well written! Thanks for sharing. Definitely another week my friend, definitely another week.

Another week of pleasure. Another week of joy. Another week of bliss. Another week of happiness. Another week of discipline. Another week of remaining in control. Amen.

Grant

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 02 Nov 2020 16:39

Thanks Grant! I'll say Amen to that!

(ps: Go Trump!)

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 03 Nov 2020 01:20

You are a real inspiration buddy. Keep helping us all with your posts.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 03 Nov 2020 22:09

On day 16 here...

...one day at a time, one day at a time.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 04 Nov 2020 20:58

Hi there. Day 17 and B"H still clean.

I sometimes ask myself: what is it that is so great about being jewish? I sometimes envy the goyim. They are free. They don't need to hold back from their lust. I sometimes say "halevai". And even if they themselves realize that it's bad because it might be addictive or whatnot, but they can afford to give in once in a while. We on the other hand strive to be 'tahor', pure and clean. Also, giving in to our lust has the potential to cause guilt and other bad feelings inside of us because we know that it's bad on a ruchniyusdike level. Is that really so great?

It occasionally really gets me thinking. Why indeed is it better to not give in? Why are we better off than them? We can intuit that it's better to be a yid than a goy, but why?

You might say that we are bnei melachim, princes, and that it doesn't suit a prince to act on such a low level, to take delight in such low pleasures. But who says that I want to be that prince? Maybe I prefer the 'simple life', the easy way out?

When I confront myself asking this question, I find I need a solid answer, an answer that'll satisfy. An idea that'll make the fighting worth it. Not just on a rational level but also on an emotional one.

Even though I'm still looking for the 'perfect' answer, here are a few ideas that I find help me with this, but let me know what you think:

1.) We all want pleasure. Every act of ours truly is motivated to some extent by pleasure. It could be the simple pleasure of eating a slice of pizza. It could be the pleasure of getting up early forgoing the pleasure of enjoying more sleep. And it could be the pleasure of connecting to Hashem through his torah and mitzvos. Hashem created the world for pleasure. And just like not all ice-cream flavors are created equal, so too, not all levels of pleasure are created equal. It's true that sushi tastes great, but does that compare to the pleasure of loving and being loved. It's true that listening to your favorite music is great, but does that substitute the pleasure of having a life filled with meaning. Pleasures come in different levels. Hashem wants us to have pleasure not just in olam haba but even in olam hazeh as well. The torah is there in part to help us not to get trapped in the lower levels of pleasure. It's there so that we can focus on the pleasures that really matter. And it's true that in order to get the higher levels of pleasure, we sometimes need to forgo the more immediate pleasure, but that too makes the pleasure that we have afterwards even greater. Lefum tzaarah agra.

We are princes. And just opting for the simple life out of choice is like giving up the fortune of a billionaire father for the lick of a lollipop. It just isn't worth it.

(I once read an excellent piece by Rabbi Noach Weinberg on the five levels of pleasure in the book "what the angel taught you". In my opinion, a must read!)

(One of the problems I face though is that even though I know that keeping a life full of mitzvos is truly the most pleasurable one, I sometimes feel that I can't connect to that pleasure. There is a rambam and kesef Mishna at the end of hilchos lulav saying that there is no simcha as the simcha of a mitzvah. Sometimes I can connect to that, but many times I can't. How can we truly

tap into that potential that our avodas Hashem has to elevate our lives?)

2.) Another thing that helps me neutralize my question on a more emotional level is the following: I try to imagine my life after already having had the pleasures I so crave. If I crave doing x,y and z, I try imagining having done so already and how I would feel about it. Would my life be so much different and better? I many times realize that having license to do x,y and z might be geshmak for the moment, but on the long run it doesn't change my life for the better (and in fact sometimes for the worse). Many times it helps me sober up a bit from when I have a craving for something not so good.

I would love to hear your ideas on this matter so please feel free to post away.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by Grant400 - 05 Nov 2020 14:28

[Grant400 wrote on 27 Sep 2020 14:28:](#)

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 25 Sep 2020 17:39:](#)

Ah, the life of a Yid. Complicated. Volatile. And gripping.

Any chizzuk would be great.

Especially a rebuttal to my last point.

Thanks!

Hey Yeshiva Guy you are truly inspiring!

I don't have time to wax on and on (which I tend to do sometimes) but just the gist.

Sometimes life as an orthodox jew can feel intense, with a lot of "demands" and can become overwhelming. But that is just because of the way we try to mix the best way our yetzer hara wants to live and the way Hashem, who definitely knows the truth, instructs us.

It's cliché and we've all heard it. The reason why when we learn Torah it isn't as delicious as the gedolim or seforim say is because we are tasting it with damaged tastebuds. We brutally assault our spiritual tastebuds with materialistic indulgences and then we expect them to still be sensitive to the loftiest levels of spirituality.

The same applies here. We watch movies- exposing ourselves to the antithesis of truth, fantasize and drool over secular society and their modus operandi of self pleasing and indulgence (like animals), and compare it to what we must do, but that's all wrong.

Do we watch cows in a pasture and dream to be one? Do we envy the simplicity of their lives? Are we jealous of the fish in our fishtanks who's greatest concern and duty is to keep checking of the sand at the bottom suddenly became edible? No, we understand the difference. So let's think a little deeper and understand this difference.

We think about how a goy sails through life effortlessly (or so it seems), while we flail and struggle. Oh, how we wish to have it easy too! But it's all wrong. When we sign up for a gym membership, do we complain how now we must sweat and struggle? How we must run every single day and pick up the same weights, even increasing resistance as time goes on? No, we realized that that is the whole point of the gym. The more we sweat and strain the more reward we reap. And yet on the beach down the block there are loads of people lying on their towels lazily and sunbathing. No struggles for them, no straining, no gasping for air after an intense workout. But we know that they won't have a physique like yours, health like yours, retain their youth and physical stamina as long. Jealous? No. Maybe even a little egotistical. Proud of how you have discipline and purpose. Successes and goals for the future.

Life as a yid may feel hard sometimes, but we know why. We are here at this gym for that purpose, for a daily spiritual resistance workout. Let us appreciate the toil and sweat. Let us serve hashem to the best of our ability. We must constantly remember why we have this gym membership, be **???? ??** **????** daily, and we will eventually reap our tremendous rewards and be **????** **????** **???????**, which is the greatest pleasure and enjoyment possible.

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Grant

P.S. I guess I did wax...

This was a post from a while back. I hope you find it helpful. Hatzlacha!

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 05 Nov 2020 15:32

Thanks. Great post. I like the gym membership comparison.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 05 Nov 2020 21:10

Day 18

Wishing everyone a great leil shishi.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 06 Nov 2020 15:25

Day 19

Another week gone by.

Short week summary:

Overall I can still feel the urges. Sometimes I really want to give in. But they are mostly weaker. They are slowly fading into the background. I know that I don't have to give in. I can sleep better, Baruch Hashem and I am tossing and turning less at night.

Baruch Hashem an improvement.

But I must always remember to be vigilant, because the yetzer hora has patience.

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Re: The struggles of a human

Posted by anonymousmillennial - 07 Nov 2020 21:26

Day 20

Allright. Another Shabbos just flew by. Baruch Hashem nothing too bad came up.

I do feel that on these winter nights when Motzei Shabbos is pretty early I can pretty easily fall into the trap of just watching a movie or an episode of something. Just chilling around and wasting time. I need to figure out some strategy of productivity here. Maybe learn something light. "Ma shelibi chafeitz." The thing is, I am sometimes just not in the mood of learning. Motzei Shabbos is like one of those default chilling times for me. I know that learning has to be even without cheishek as well, but you know, without cheishek sometimes means no learning as well.

I don't feel like I am yet ready to work on eliminating movies etc. from my diet altogether although I know that it would probably help with the battle I am facing right now and it would do me a lot of good. It would also save me time and help me live more in reality. (Yes, whenever I watch something I kinda feel detached from reality. Contrast that to whenever I learn some gemorah I feel totally plugged into reality.) Another problem with movies is the question of how

will I fill the time that I usually spend watching. To me watching is like a filler for certain moments in my day. I know that in its core it's empty, but I still do it because it's easy and it's a good filler. Even reading a book takes more effort. It is just easy to turn on the computer and have something playing and putting your mind close to 0%. Underneath it all, and I am not sure if I am right, I think that I partially am addicted to watching. I probably could stop if I really wanted to (I hope so at least) I have done it before, but I really need the motivation for it.

My main goal now is just to be free of MB (do I really need to spell it out?).

Eventually I do want to work on this aspect as well, but as all things in life, before learning how to run, you've gotta learn how to walk.

There is definitely more to discuss here, but it's getting late for me so I'll be leaving the rest for a different post.

Wishing all of you an amazing and clean week.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by Grant400 - 07 Nov 2020 23:39

Gut voch! Just a few quick questions:

Do you rush through certain things so you can watch a movie? Do you plan ahead when you will be able to watch later? Do you spend time that could've been spent having a conversation or hanging out with a friend/family member watching?

Here's the most important: Do you sometimes (being completely honest) feel that you must

watch something or finish watching something even when you may have lost interest because its boring or you are really tired or any other reason?

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 08 Nov 2020 21:09

Hi Grant.

Thanks again for responding.

Had a busy day today. Will try to answer tomorrow.

Keep well.

AM

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 08 Nov 2020 21:13

Day 21

Good evening GYE-ers.

One more day and I'll be past three weeks.

See you tomorrow.

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