

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 Shnitzel and kugel - 09 Nov 2020 05:45

Hooya!! Keep trucking!

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillenial - 09 Nov 2020 19:35

[Grant400 wrote on 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?

The way I'm understanding it, the crux of the question is: "How much time am I spending watching when I know that I should be doing something else instead?"

Truth be told, I'm having a hard time answering this question because the answer would be: "It depends." It depends on my mood, energy levels, how busy I am,...

I am not the type of person that will be up at two or later in the morning watching. No, that's not me. Yes I might spend some of my latest wake hour(s) watching, but I know my limits. I try to be in bed between 11-12. It's true that I might tell myself that I'll be in bed at 11 and end up being in bed only at 11 45 just because I was watching something. But I don't think that it's crazy abnormal.

Also when I know that I have something important to do I will do it and try not to get distracted by watching. Yes, I might take unnecessary watching breaks, but I do know that there are times that cannot be interrupted by an episode or movie.

Having said that, I must add that I do feel a strong pull sometimes to watch and just escape reality.

Using the excuse of a 'light break', when I am studying at home on my laptop, I will sneak in sometimes a short watching session that I wouldn't have done otherwise with something like reading a book.

Another thing is that I end up watching almost every day. Sometimes just 20 min. and sometimes it can escalate up to an hour or two (and even three), depending on how much time I have on my hands. I sometimes feel so guilty at the time wasted on these things. Especially when corona first broke out and I was having an 'extended' bein hazmanim I was wasting hours upon hours polishing off one season after the other, something I am not very proud of. Baruch Hashem it's much more controlled now as I have a more normal schedule, but I do think there could be some improvement here. But as I said, I don't feel ready to just give up watching entirely.

I can attest, though, that as time goes on I am finding it harder to sit down and watch a movie as almost all the content out there is either something I've seen before or just 'eye candy' in terms of visual effects but empty as a whole. I poshut don't have patience for this anymore. And even series, that I used to find more attractive than movies, are slowly getting more tedious for me to go through. I realize that at the end of the day it's all 'hevel' and I just need to fully incorporate that idea into my emotional being. But sometimes I just feel that I 'need' that escape or that 'light break'.

I don't have a good strategy for this at all. Going cold turkey would be very hard for me. But maybe that's something I would have to do.

I did actually stop for quite a few years, but when my anxiety came creeping in and I was having an impossible time with learning and even reading, I started watching again. In a way watching was an escape of the pain. On the other hand my anxiety was an excuse to start watching again.

As of now and as I have mentioned before on the forum I've had tons of siyata dishmaya and my anxiety is much much lower. So I might consider some form of cutting back in the near future. I would need to find a good substitute though.

I know that even if I do stop, there will be times where I would still crave watching. Truly, it reminds me of the famous story of Rav Gifter who, after having been established as a godol, made a kiddush because he didn't feel an emotional connection anymore to his favorite sports group. Can you imagine? That means that all the years before that, Rav Gifter, as he was toiling and shteiging and establishing himself as a godol beyisrael, was still somehow connected to his childhood sports team. To me this is a lesson that even when we shteig and grow, we still might feel the emotional connection to this movie or to that series. It doesn't matter. It's ok and normal. The ikar is that we continue moving forwards, continue aspiring for greatness. And who knows, maybe one day we will get there.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillenial - 09 Nov 2020 19:39

Day 22

I can't believe it! I made it! Three full weeks!

Mamash siyata dishmaya.

Well, week 4 here I come...

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Re: The struggles of a human

Posted by Grant400 - 09 Nov 2020 21:08

Thank you for such a well thought out post. I also meant in my questions if you feel like it's an addiction that is ruining your quality of life or if its just something you overdo. But you pretty much got it covered.

If you do think you might go cold turkey, now might be a good time to start. Because you mentioned that you are getting bored and everything seems to be the same. I have the same view sometimes but it changes. There are times you suddenly have more of an appreciation and desire but sometimes it lessens as you wrote. Now that you feel like that, its a good time to try to completely stop. Try to break it into small increments, for example aim for a day or a week or two or a certain amount of clean days a week, but you don't have to don't overstrain yourself with aiming for complete control in the beginning. Hatzlacha!

Grant

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillenial - 10 Nov 2020 22:03

This is day 23.

Baruch Hashem still clean.

I can always appreciate a day without too many urges. I mean can't we all.

As a kid I would've never had appreciated something like that. I guess that's part of growing up.

Baruch Hashem, so far, today has been such a day.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillenial - 11 Nov 2020 19:44

Day 24

“What can get me through this?”

It’s a question I sometimes ask myself when confronted with an urge.

What indeed is something that boosts my confidence, something that tells me that I can do it?

When it comes to this stage, having fought for a few weeks, what assures me is that I know that almost any desire that comes up now is probably not as strong as the desires I’ve had throughout my first week. And knowing that I’ve made it through that period, gives me the confidence that I will be able to go through this one as well.

Cause you see, one of the strongest confidence boosters is past experience. Knowing that I have done something in the past, means that I probably have the ability to do the same in the present.

It doesn’t mean that I shouldn’t remain cautious. Rather it means that I can continue to battle with calm confidence, knowing that I have the strength to overcome it one more time.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by Grant400 - 11 Nov 2020 20:31

[anonymousmillenial wrote on 11 Nov 2020 19:44:](#)

Day 24

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It doesn't mean that I shouldn't remain cautious. Rather it means that I can continue to battle with calm confidence, knowing that I have the strength to overcome it one more time.

And what happens when you are confronted with something that you know is for sure bigger and harder than any urges you had before???

You remember how before starting everything seemed impossible and everything seemed too tremendous to overcome, but in reality it wasn't like that. So too in every single case, even if you tell yourself "this time is too much", remember how many times before now you thought the same thing. Yet you still overcame it.

Nothing is too big for us, we always have a choice.

Grant

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 12 Nov 2020 21:24

Day 25

Some days I don't have much to write.

Why do I even bother posting on such days?

Because I made a commitment on day 1 to try to write every single day. A commitment that'll

carry me through the days where I might feel too ashamed to write that I had fallen.

What I have found, though, is that having the necessity to write every single day pushes me to be creative. It pushes me to search my inner recesses to come up with an angle that I haven't explored just yet. It gets me thinking on how to overcome this challenge on different fronts and multiple layers.

And to top it all off, it keeps me accountable to an amazing support group here at GYE.

Why am I sharing this?

I'm sharing this because you might be someone who reads the posts, but you yourself don't post. You might be scared to share your comments (believe me, I was). Maybe you're thinking 'nah, it's not really my kinda thing'. I'm telling you, give it a try. Try it for at least two weeks. Every single day. And if you still don't like it and don't think it's for you, well, then we'll talk.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by starting - 12 Nov 2020 21:32

Thanks for sharing. Every day.

Btw, we all really love those short sweet posts:

Made it clean another day b"h.

Next goal is 30 days and I'm really feeling good about it! Quite confident about it as I'm really ready to make this the new me.

Warning: Spoiler!

Hatzlocho

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by YeshivaGuy - 13 Nov 2020 00:10

[Grant400 wrote on 11 Nov 2020 20:31:](#)

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You remember how before starting everything seemed impossible and everything seemed too tremendous to overcome, but in reality it wasn't like that. So too in every single case, even if you tell yourself "this time is too much", remember how many times before now you thought the same thing. Yet you still overcame it.

Nothing is too big for us, we always have a choice.

Grant

Soo true. Amazing!

Thank You

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 13 Nov 2020 15:17

We're 26 days in.

Wishing all my fellow GYE'ers a most amazing and clean Shabbos.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillennial - 14 Nov 2020 19:49

Day 27

"Update". click.

"I'm still clean". click.

One day. Another day. Another day.

Slowly the days start piling up.

Almost a month clean.

The way forward is not to focus on the long road ahead. If I would do that it would be way too daunting. I would give up before I even started.

No, the way ahead is taking it one week at a time, one day at a time and sometimes even one minute at a time.

A gutte voch to all.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillenial - 15 Nov 2020 21:57

Day 28

Still clean.

Had a wet dream last night. Besides for that all is ok.

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Re: The struggles of a human
Posted by anonymousmillenial - 16 Nov 2020 21:45

Gravity.

The natural pull downwards.

Do you feel it?

When we're kids and we don't know how to walk, every step is a battle, a tremendous effort. An effort to defy gravity.

Now we don't even think about it. The forces of gravity might always be there. But it's us who have moved on.

We're still kids, but our playground has a different setting. We need to remember never to give up.

The reward:

gravity might always be there, but we will have moved on.

Day 29

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Re: The struggles of a human

Posted by Grant400 - 16 Nov 2020 23:38

[anonymousmillenial wrote on 16 Nov 2020 21:45:](#)

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Day 29

Nice post! Love it!

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