

Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 02 Jan 2022 18:43

Trying to post here on a somewhat regular basis so that I stay on course. I have to rewire my thinking patterns of over thirty years! I set the counter to the last date that I fell in masturbation. I have been able to stay away from other things for longer. I thank hashem for his kindness in helping me to this point.

this shabbos I was in Florida. Obviously there are a lot more nisyonos. I definitely was more successful than other times in not following my eyes and gazing with the help of GYE. (Not to say that I was successful in every instance- at some point my feet just took me in the wrong direction even though my mind was saying- STOP!)

One thing that helped me alot was a shiur I heard recently that describes the power of a tefila that one has immediately after he withstands a nisayon. When I feel a possible weakness to a temptation, I quickly resolve to turn away and then I immediately daven for something that is very important to me. Each small victory is another tefila. I don't want these nisyonos, but if they are coming anyway at least I have the opportunity to use them for something very meaningful.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Human being - 31 Oct 2022 01:02

You are unreal!!!!..... and so authentic and real at the same time! Please continue inspiring everyone. -Human being

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 08 Nov 2022 18:29

quick update... i am three quarters of the way through the Battle of the Generation for the fifth time! My siyums and celebrations of one year since beginning this journey all worked out well. I spoke in shul and people came over and said that i appreciated the words of chizuk that i said.

On December 7 i will iyh be one year since the last mzl....i hope to be able to celebrate that as well. BH life is keeping me busy and my menuchas hanefesh and my confidence continue to grow. Last week i sat with a member of the moetzes gedolai hatorah and introduced him to the book! In the past i could not handle having such a person look at me, let alone have a conversation. I feel truly blessed by hashem. I am hoping to add another chavrusa soon to learn more b'iyun...

just wanted to update...

best wishes

vehkam

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Geshmak! - 09 Nov 2022 00:49

I am hoping to add another chavrusa soon to learn more b'iyun...

AH!!!!!!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 09 Nov 2022 01:18

[Vehkam wrote on 08 Nov 2022 18:29:](#)

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vehkam

@Vehkam, I am so proud of your accomplishments. Keep going. We are all behind you 100%!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 09 Nov 2022 01:31

thank you very much. it is interesting (and understandable) that my greatest weakness and the source of my shame has now become my greatest strength and the source of my confidence.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 09 Nov 2022 01:42

[Vehkam wrote on 09 Nov 2022 01:31:](#)

thank you very much. it is interesting (and understandable) that my greatest weakness and the source of my shame has now become my greatest strength and the source of my confidence.

As well it should be a source of strength and confidence. We here all know what it takes to get where you are. Bask in it; you've earned it!!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Zedj - 09 Nov 2022 02:09

[Vehkam wrote on 08 Nov 2022 18:29:](#)

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vehkam

Dear Vehkam,

Thank you for being a tremendous source of chizuk for myself and to the whole gye family.

Looking forward to celebrating your next celebration!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Okay1 - 09 Nov 2022 23:28

Wow!! That takes so much courage - not to reply with an open window when someone reached out to you!!! Bravo!!!

You obligate us!!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by iwillmanage - 10 Nov 2022 23:27

[Vehkam wrote on 09 Nov 2022 01:31:](#)

it is interesting (and understandable) that my greatest weakness and the source of my shame has now become my greatest strength and the source of my confidence.

Such a powerful thought! It brings out the purpose of the phenomenal challenge to begin with; to bring us to levels of strength and greatness that would otherwise not have been attainable. And it also means that those years of acting out aren't gone or wasted, they brought you to where you are today!

????? ???? - ??????. The greatest light stems from the darkness itself. Ashrecho that you've experienced this on a personal level.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 23 Nov 2022 00:53

A good friend here on GYE mentioned to me that it might be helpful to talk a bit more about the contributing factors to my addiction. I will try to describe some of it. There are parts that i cannot write.

I was never comfortable with my body. I saw my private parts as shameful in their need to be covered. I did not know anything about sex or sexual feelings (until about 11th grade). However, I did go to sleep away camp quite young. I was molested in camp when i had just

turned 7. It was not penetrative, not that that really makes a difference.

The molester was probably in his early teens. For some reason the person who was supposed to be teaching our learning group (just a few kids my age) often did not show up. Instead this teenager was put in charge of our group. For some reason I was always getting in "trouble" even though i was not particularly a troublemaker. The punishments for my "trouble making" quickly became inappropriate in nature. Somehow, he convinced me that i deserved it and i was scared to tell anyone. He also convinced me that he was my special friend. I was mortified when he made me pull down my pants. He would sometimes give me a choice of how and where he should pinch or hit me. I did not like it and i did not want him to do it but i did not feel like i had a choice so i just let him do it and hoped that it would not last too long. It usually didn't.

?Apparently, he was doing this to another kid as well. One day he decided that he was going to punish both of us together. I was friends with the other kid. We told each other that we would not look at each other so as not to embarrass each other. (at that age the idea of my privates being seen by someone else was worse than the touching that this teenager was doing). When he heard us tell each other that we would not look at each other, he said that he would make us look. I was miserable. Somehow either someone got wind of what was happening or hashem just had rachmonus on me, but I was transferred out of his group before he had a chance to implement this punishment. I never told anyone about this and i really did not think much about it until many years later.

There were some other incidents that contributed as well. One of them was probably even more impactful than what happened in camp but i hesitate to put it in writing because the person involved could not have known how deeply they were scarring me and i would not want it to ever be attributed back to them.

What happened because of these incidents was that i sexualized certain feelings. As i matured, i did not mature with a healthy understanding of sex and sexual feelings. Those sexual feelings and urges that i had were distorted and problematic and they could not be satisfied in a normal healthy sexual relationship. In fact i could not decipher the difference between healthy and unhealthy attractions. I had a very difficult time feeling connected and accepted anywhere. I was unaware of this and have only recognized most of this after the fact.

I fantasized a lot. Even before i knew anything about sex. Through fantasizing i discovered masturbation. That was my safe place. Even when i was doing well in Yeshiva, i needed to masturbate and fantasize. I felt compelled to do it even though i absolutely knew it

was wrong. When i became old enough to access pornography and live interactions i had absolutely no resistance. Both of these further fueled my fantasies into deeper and darker places. In my fantasies i was deeply connected to the sexualized feelings that i had developed from when i was young. Of course, as soon as i was finished, i was blanketed by deeply feelings of remorse, guilt and shame. Since i was not equipped to deal with the problem, the only way out of the guilt was to go back into the fantasies. Eventually the fantasies were not enough and i needed live interactions with others to make the experience fulfilling.

Beneath the surface of all of this was a need to connect and share. These feelings and fantasies were not things i could possibly share with anyone in my frum life. So i started to connect with other people that shared similiar interests. Over the years some of these people became close friends. They knew i was religious. It was hard to hide it. It is hard to explain as it seems absurd, but i felt a need to make a kiddush hashem by my behavior even in that world! In the beginning i would not use foul language. Eventually that wore off. It is impossible not to be affected in that environment and although i was still very religious, my language, kashrus, learning and davening were all affected.

I hope that this provides some missing context to my story. There was always an idealistic side to me. The part of me that was engaged in these behaviors was very much compartmentalized. Alas, the guilt held me back from realizing true growth for way too many years. The behaviors that i engaged in were never really something that i chose from scratch. There were absolutely deep-rooted factors that led to my unfortunate choices. Given an even choice my dream was always to be a complete shomer torah umitzvos. I didn't choose to party away decades of my life because i thought i could get away with it. I never felt like i had a choice. It also was a pretty miserable existence having to hide so much. I would not go back to such an existence for all the money in the world.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 23 Nov 2022 01:06

[Vehkam wrote on 23 Nov 2022 00:53:](#)

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@vehkam, thank you. My heart is breaking because I so relate to your experience. I'm so sorry that happened to you. No, you didn't choose to party away decades of your life and I didn't choose to spend 40 years having unsavory sex with strangers and here we are. I am always available to you to talk. By email, pm, phone, anything you like. Thanks again for this post. TG

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 23 Nov 2022 01:13

Thanks TG. BH i am in a very healthy emotional place now. I am quite content and happy with who i am. I only wrote the post so that people who read my story have the correct context. It sheds a bit of light on why i was able to make such a dramatic turn around.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 23 Nov 2022 01:19

Of course, @vehkam. Sorry. When I read posts like that it hits a certain spot in me that is very intense about my own experience. Thank G-d you are in a good place and happy!!

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Human being - 23 Nov 2022 18:48

Even though you are in a healthy place bh, It is so courageous to share any story of molest abuse or bullying by this kid you went through. I am just taking it in, hearing the story and swept away by your courage. Love love and more love. And more love.

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