

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 Vehkam - 27 Nov 2022 14:19

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 27 Nov 2022 12:19:](#)

Posting these details is a chessed gadol! Anyone who follows your posts knows that BH you have put all this behind you and are forging ahead with a beautiful life connected to Hashem and emotionally sound. So many strugglers out there need to know that one can get better no matter how deeply one has sunk, and no matter how hurt/damaged one was along the way. Your story and your escape from the matzav you were in is as inspirational as it gets. it makes graduating from this mess appear realistic - which it is b'ezras Hashem.

Thank you so much for your kind words and for your friendship. HHM, you are the gold standard of caring for your fellow yidden and you are a role model for me. i can only hope to inspire a fraction of the countless people that you have helped in so many different ways.

I try to capture all of my emotions and feelings along this journey in writing. As time goes on, it is helpful for me to go back and read it. I have tried hard to write it in a way that is 100% truthful, but still avoids highlighting the details of where i came from. This escape itself has been a gift from hashem. The feeling i get every time i am able to help someone else is beyond priceless.

Recently, i have had less opportunity to post publicly. BH i am in a healthy place and i am not struggling. It would not be appropriate for me to keep writing about how great i am doing. That is not the point of this forum and would probably make me less relatable. Just last week i was wondering if i should start limiting the time i spend on this inyan. Perhaps i have written all there is for me to write. I davened to hashem to please help me know what direction i should take. Later that very day "out of the blue" two separate people reached out to me for chizuk. I believe that i was able to be helpful to both of them.

I don't take anything for granted. I am bli neder starting my sixth cycle of the battle of the generation tonight. This book is my guide. I try to see the world through the perspective in the book. I recognize that for a lot of people it is necessary to have much more than just a change in perspective. However, for many it is an integral part of recovery. That is why i keep recommending it.

In addition, especially for those that are carrying a load of guilt, talking to another live understanding person is a game changer. Many are hesitant. It took me a few weeks on this site before i was even willing to text anyone from my number. The benefits of reaching out will outweigh any risks thousandfold. Take your time until you are ready, but once you are somewhat comfortable, please push yourself to connect to someone. You can very well be saving yourself for eternity.

best wishes,

vehkam

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best wishes,

vehkam

Just so you know, Vehkam, you have been helpful to me and I appreciate knowing you are out there!

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Re: Work in progress
Posted by Vehkam - 07 Dec 2022 00:23

quick update.... i started teaching gemara to some high school boys in the evenings. Don't have a chavrusa yet for learning b'iyun but that will have to wait for now as my schedule is a bit tight. Will iyh be celebrating one year clean in a few days. I need to start thinking about some new goals. Sent out another copy of the book this week as well b'h.

best wishes

vehkam

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Re: Work in progress
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 07 Dec 2022 00:32

[Vehkam wrote on 07 Dec 2022 00:23:](#)

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vehkam

One year! Vehkam, that's great news. So happy for your success. Curious, though...another copy of what book?

TG

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 07 Dec 2022 00:33

The battle of the generation... see my signature.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Hashemschild.1 - 07 Dec 2022 05:21

[Vehkam wrote on 07 Dec 2022 00:23:](#)

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best wishes

vehkam

WOW WOW WOW!!! How in the world did you get to a full year being clean? I'm up to day 22 and it's so so hard. You are truly amazing! but please share with us how you got to 1 whole year.

Also hatzlacha to your new job of teaching.

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Re: Work in progress
Posted by Vehkam - 07 Dec 2022 10:00

There are many people that have been successful In breaking free. Of course the beginning is the hardest.

You can go back to the beginning of my thread and see some of the methods that I use. The key for me was changing my perspective which I accomplish through reading the book The Battle of the Generation every single night.

In addition there are many things I do proactively throughout the day to strengthen my connection and desire to serve hashem. When the constant desire to serve hashem is stronger then the desire to look at inappropriate material, it no longer is a huge struggle to stay clean.

thanks for your kind words. By the way, the teaching in the evening is not a job - I am volunteering...

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Re: Work in progress
Posted by Vehkam - 08 Dec 2022 22:02

I am sitting here waiting for the sun to go down, for the gye counter to allow me to clock one more clean day. One year clean. ?????? ???? ?????? I am overcome with emotion. I just reread many of my posts from the past year. I am thinking about how I have changed and I

have been able to impact others. I am not looking at anyone else. I am looking at myself and i feel like my life has taken on a purpose that is unique to me. I feel like I have a place and I belong. Hashem has carried me for this entire year and I daven that he continues to do so.

If you have not read through my thread and are wondering how I was able to get through the year please take the time to read through my posts carefully. I believe that there is a lot of good information. No two people are the same but my thread should be helpful to a lot of you.

I tried to stop many times before but this time was different I went all in and came up with a plan. This included connections and therapy. I could no longer hide. I have been on offense for a year. They have been thousands upon thousands of opportunities for urges but with hashems help I did not let them in. My body still works and I am not asexual however my motivation remains strong and I have not had to deal with overpowering urges (while I was awake)for this entire year. They did not become overpowering because I was committed to move on from them as soon as they occurred.

I sent this recently to a rav that I am getting to know. He is incredibly accepting and has been very supportive.

I was 19. I knew that the things I was doing were wrong. I also did not feel like I had any way to stop. I was desperate to talk to someone. Someone who would not judge me someone who would understand. I believed that person did not exist anywhere. I did not think it was safe to reveal my secrets anywhere. So I told no one. And every night I cried.

I tried once after I got married. The person was somewhat helpful but they didn't understand. They told me I was playing with my life. And I was. So I stopped for a couple of months at most. And then I fell back into it.

Acting out was my secret. The longer I did it the bigger the secret was. One thing led to another I became entrenched in a deviant lifestyle. I made friends with many people from that lifestyle. It may have been just a few hours a week. At times perhaps the greater part of a day. But during these times I shed most of my commitments to live as a frum yid and engaged in as much promiscuous behavior as I possibly could.

The sensations and highs were liberating and intoxicating. The opportunity was at times the stuff of dreams. When I was done I would compartmentalize my guilt. Put back on my tzitzis, white shirt and black pants and go back to frum society as if nothing had changed.

I fooled myself into thinking that I was doing a good job of hiding everything. That I could continue the frum path and one day just stop all the deviant behaviors. Nothing could be further from the truth. I could not stop. The longer I engaged in these behaviors the less desire I had to stop. Every aspect of my spiritual life suffered. My learning, my davening, my speech, what I ate, who I related to were all affected. I was addicted to a lifestyle that was destroying me. And yet nobody in the world knew.

It took me over three decades of struggling but bh With the help of Guard Your Eyes and intense therapy I am just about a year fully clean and sober. I am a healthier person than I was for my entire adult life. I am active on the GYE forums and try to help others whenever I can.

I think back and ask myself what should I have done different. In whom should I have confided? Who in my life would have understood and who would have been able to help me? Sadly I still believe the answer to that question is that no one could have helped. I don't believe that there was someone out there with whom I would have felt safe sharing and I don't believe there was anyone in my life equipped to help me and not to judge me.

This includes all of my family, rebbeim, rosh Yeshivas and friends. That level of acceptance just was not there.

We need to change that. We need to get the message out there that good people are suffering. None of us want to be addicted or to feel compelled to engage in these behaviors. Yet all of us want to be understood. To have people around us with whom we can share and who will be able to help us without judging us. This needs to be our goal. The world is a different place and the time is right for these conversations. Thank you for reading this. please do your part in creating that nonjudgmental atmosphere which would give us addicts greater opportunity to be helped. Together we can make a difference.

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[Vehkam wrote on 08 Dec 2022 22:02:](#)

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Mazal tov and huge hugs to you, Vehkam!! What a milestone. What an accomplishment. So glad I'm here to see it and celebrate it. Be well, my friend and keep on moving higher.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by frank.lee - 08 Dec 2022 23:27

Thank you Vehkam for being part of my journey. Inspiring me with your posts, reaching out to me, and always having smart, solid insights to share with everyone!

Keep up the good work and may Hashem give you all the blessings!!!

About your letter about who can we talk to, I agree that it is a critical fount of salvation. And you must have come to the same conclusion as you bothered to write and send it. I think know there are some askanim/Rabbanim who seem that they get it, care, speak out, and can be potentially good mentors in this area. But the real famous ones are probably super hard to get to.

We should get this done, train and publicize leaders/mentors in every community who can fulfill this role. What steps are needed?

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Posted by Vehkam - 08 Dec 2022 23:44

[frank.lee wrote on 08 Dec 2022 23:27:](#)

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It's a slow process. There are so many different issues out there.

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Re: Work in progress
Posted by jackthejew - 09 Dec 2022 11:28

[Vehkam wrote on 08 Dec 2022 22:02:](#)

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) I personally have taken much inspiration from following your journey and the great posts you put forward.

I have spoken to my Rebbi about this common feeling that everyone will judge us and not accept us. I once told him I used to be convinced that if my Rabbeim would know, my life would be over and I'd definitely be thrown out of Yeshiva. He answered, "I don't know how accurate that preception is, at least here in our Yeshiva. You should know there was a Bochur here once who was probably watching porn on Shabbos, and the Hanhalah didn't throw him out."

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 09 Dec 2022 17:47

Mazel Tov on your awesome accomplishment. May Hashem help you further!

I think the reality is that today there is much more acceptance, however there is a bigger issue. If a fellow puts aside his shame and embarrassment, and opens up to a rebbi - now what? Is the rebbi trained to give the guy a bear hug? Does he know what to say? If that one chance that our struggler gave us is squandered, we may not get another opportunity.

Probably there should be a GYE training course given to people (rebbeim, mentors, shul rabbonim) who really care, are passionate, and are willing to volunteer time, to share what is available and be aware of the various methods that have worked.

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Re: Work in progress

Posted by Vehkam - 09 Dec 2022 17:50

Very well said HHM. That is definitely something that was in my mind.

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