

On the way... Again

Posted by Hopefulposek - 26 Jul 2023 16:54

Hi everyone,

I made it to 90 days once before and then had a fall shortly after. I have made several attempts since then but have not been successful. I'm hoping that starting this thread where I will post updates and insights throughout this journey will help me stay motivated and grounded. Any chizuk or advice in response to the updates my journey would help me on the way. Thanks everyone for being such a supportive community.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 01 May 2024 17:59

It's been a while since I posted anything, life has a way of getting hectic around the holiday season.

Basically things are good and great and difficult.

Not watching porn is good.

Started going to therapy to work through lots of childhood trauma and emotional abuse. started to see some progress but I'm coming to terms with the fact that therapy is not a quick fix, no band-aids on the heart. so this is good.

When I started therapy I feel like my desires got stronger and my emotions more out of wack. I think this is because until now I would shove away uncomfortable feelings but now I'm trying to feel them and not ignore them, so it causes more struggles. Also I started identifying as a lust addict which may be helpful in some ways (by not giving an inch) but I think it contributes to feeling urges stronger.

Until next time, keep on marching forward across the plains and meadows of life, trying to not get knocked down by the storm blowing across.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 20 May 2024 14:07

Not sure how to put all my thoughts and feelings down but here goes,

I have tremendous appreciation and recognition of all the guys here on GYE, this is where I really started my recovery and it's amazing to think back to how things used to be and how much they've changed. Going from unable to last more than a few days (and only when I was really committed to quitting) to feeling totally free from porn and masturbation is incredible.

I'm starting to realize that for my recovery there are really 3 stages (each one having many many steps and taking tremendous amounts of work):

stage one is breaking the constant use of porn. this was not easy and took the better of 2 years but I feel like I've made it past this stage. but it must be understood that just breaking the regularity of the habit does not mean I was free, I still struggled from time to time and many times almost fell, and in some cases did fall. breaking out was more a product of following the F2F program and continuously recommitting after every fall (again not easy and I didn't do it every time). I honestly can't even really explain how it happened. Surprisingly this now feels like the easiest part of recovery.

Second stage is reapproaching intimacy within marriage: having an improper approach to intimacy with my wife caused a lot of frustration (which is a trigger for porn), there were weeks when I felt the constant pain of rejection, worthlessness, and loneliness. these were the times when I figured it would be better to get divorced and go back to porn just so that I didn't have to live my life in such misery. I considered suicide a better option even though I knew that was crazy. Note this was after being clean for almost six months, totally clean of any porn or masturbation, but getting dealt those blows to my heart which stemmed from poor intimacy almost made me give up. I wasn't having the usual urges to get a fix, but I needed to get out of the pain and I knew that if I always had porn to turn to, then the rejection wouldn't hurt as bad because, simply I had something else I could always depend on. I am still working on this stage. it takes a long time and work from both husband and wife. It's not just working on the bedroom but on the whole relationship, as well as readjusting my perspective on intimacy in the marriage.

Stage 3: this is for myself the most difficult to face. But first a bit of background.

I grew up in a home filled with anger and fear, there was always yelling and crying. It was normal to be belittled for not doing something right or for not knowing something. When I was 10 I was sexually abused by my brother. The craziest part was that by that time I was so emotionally damaged that I craved to connection it formed between us because, I wasn't connecting with anyone else in my family. the sexual abuse didn't last long but the emotional neglect and abuse continued and to some extent still exists today. for over 20 years I have been shoving my emotions down always pushing myself to be strong and don't get knocked down the the emotional tidal wave that threatens to consume me. But I now recognize the damage that it did. I have a deeply imbedded belief that I am worthless and no one will ever really love me or care about me. When I make mistakes I believe that everything I do is worthless. My years in yeshiva, my friendships and my marriage. This has hurt me so much by limiting my ability to be honest with people and take risks. It also makes me unable to do what I feel what is right, instead I trade it for doing what others will approve of (namely my father who continues to put me down for not doing what he feels is important).

My experiences also damaged my ability to deeply connect with people. How can I trust someone, they might hurt me, and they will surely never love me.

The hardest part of my day now is journaling my feelings and memories of my childhood. This is hard because it forces me to face the brokenness inside, admitting how unhealthy I have become.

But it will not stop me.

I have worked too hard and come too far to let this stop me. I will feel the pain and I will relive those memories so that I can grow. So I can continue to be free from the death grip of addiction. So that I can love my wife and know deep down in my heart that she loves me too. So that I can be here in tis world to help others who went through hell and need someone to give them a hand and pull them up to the heavens.

I will not let what someone else has done to me, not matter how bad and evil, define what I will make of myself.

And I will not stop to make Hashem proud of me.

I hope that some of you will find this helpful and if you have any questions or want to chat you can PM me.

Thanks again for being the most amazing group of warriors in Hashems army. And also a great

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by chooseurname - 20 May 2024 14:50

Thank you for sharing. Your strength and self-awareness are inspirational.

Are you talking with someone about this? Not a friend, a therapist or experienced Rebbe. Abuse (physical or emotional) and neglect are things that are easier to deal with with some coaching.

In marriage as well, having someone help you work on communication (either individually or as a couple) can be very helpful and is nothing to be embarrassed about.

I will not let what someone else has done to me, not matter how bad and evil, define what I will make of myself.

And I will not stop to make Hashem proud of me.

Wow!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 20 May 2024 23:12

[chooseurname wrote on 20 May 2024 14:50:](#)

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In marriage as well, having someone help you work on communication (either individually or as a couple) can be very helpful and is nothing to be embarrassed about.

Yes, I'm working with a therapist and also getting guidance from an experienced rebbe.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 21 May 2024 00:56

but seriously each one plays an important role in a good support group throughout my recovery.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 21 May 2024 21:50

As I'm processing all my childhood abuse and trying to reframe how I view myself I've had trouble feeling like I have the proper time and space to Process these feelings outside of therapy sessions. This is very much due to my being in yeshiva full time and taking care of a lot of things at home. I started considering cutting down some of my seder time in order to just be able to relax more and have more time, but I'm nervous that this would breed an unhealthy obsession with it which would be detrimental. Does anyone have any thoughts or experience with continuing to function in yeshiva or a job while going through very difficult therapy? Should I just take off a few weeks of yeshiva to go somewhere relaxing in order to properly process everything?

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by chancy - 22 May 2024 15:36

[hopefulposek wrote on 21 May 2024 21:50:](#)

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Its really hard to say in general, everyone is different.

But overall, you def need to give yourself time and place to process and to let go. it doesnt need to take a lot of time.

Find out for yourself what it would take. Maybe every day after seder got a nice walk or sit in a park for 10-15 min and just relax. Maybe you need more or maybe less, some days might differ from others.

Dont overburden your system, its not helpful. Find something fun to do as an outlet. Working out is a great relaxer.

Good luck and stay healthy.

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 27 May 2024 18:39

Hey everyone,

Wow life got very busy very quickly, BH I've been staying clean pretty well and not having many issues. I got back on the B of the G Boat and hoping to continue. Also got back on jogging regularly and started daily journaling. I'm taking time off of seder everyday in order to have the time I need to focus on staying clean and the activities which are helping me.

Basically, I took some time and read through my thread from the beginning and it was definitely an eye opener. Firstly it allowed me to appreciate how far I've come, and it also reminded me of many good tactics that were helping that I had fallen out of the habit of doing.

I decided that I want to start mentoring/giving chizuk to guys, not because I think I have anymore to add than the rest of the wonderful chevra here, but because it would benefit me greatly to be helping others, also after being on this program for almost 2 years I hope I have something I can offer.

I asked my rabbeim if I could act as a chaver/chizuk for guys in my yeshiva who are struggling, meaning that they could come over and talk to me if they felt comfortable and if it would help. They were very excited about the idea and hopefully we'll see something come of it. But I want to ask, is this something that other yeshiva's have? Does anyone here know of this being the case in their yeshiva that there is someone who also went through the struggle who is not just another rebbe and is available for chizuk and guidance?

I'm also trying to figure out someway to get the yeshiva guys access to GYE even though they don't have access to the internet, if anyone has figured out a good mehalech for this let me know and I will see if it can be implemented in my yeshiva as well.

Keep on fighting!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by vehkam - 27 May 2024 18:53

Kol hakovod. I don't have ideas regarding the internet but I would gladly send you a few copies of the Battle of the Generation to have on hand...

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 28 May 2024 11:28

[vehkam wrote on 27 May 2024 18:53:](#)

Kol hakovod. I don't have ideas regarding the internet but I would gladly send you a few copies of the Battle of the Generation to have on hand...

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 31 May 2024 01:44

BH I had a really good day today, I left morning seder an hour early and spent the time at a local park journaling, and this is what it consisted of.

I am important. Not more important than others, but still very important.

That's because Hashem put me here with a mission. There are things in this world only I can accomplish, and those are very important things, because Hashem deemed them important enough to create me to take care of them.

Also, I'm awesome, I do awesome stuff. Thinking about all the torah I learn and the people I've helped and picked up their spirits, I definitely do awesome stuff. Plus there are all those challenges that I've faced and actually won!

Bottom line, I am unique, and there are many important tasks which I can do. I can have a

tremendous impact on this world and on the people in it.

If anyone else is struggling with feelings of self worth, I hope this helps you feel a little better.
Note: This isn't the first time I've meditated on these words but for some reason today it clicked and I walked out of there feeling like a million bucks!

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by proudyungerman - 18 Jul 2024 01:36

My friend, how are doing?

Please don't disappear on us again...

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by hopefulposek - 24 Jul 2024 15:33

Hi, Thanks for reaching out (and also to those who PMed me) I didn't realize how long it's been since I posted anything and fell off the GYE grid. Life has just been a bit crazier than usual recently so haven't had much time, also BH I have been having continued success in the areas of P and M and so just haven't felt the need to sit down and type out my thoughts. That being said I would like to share some things which have helped me and some realizations that I've had the past few weeks.

Therapy has helped me a lot, a few weeks ago I was "Graduated" by my therapist to continue on my own and I just feel better about myself in general and am more aware of taking care of myself.

I no longer feel the pull to gravitate towards P and M that used to threaten to overtake me in times of stress and frustration (even when I didn't realize I was stressed). There was a moment on shabbos a few weeks ago (almost a month now) when friday night I had some wine for kiddush, and then a bit more and then another glass for oneg. I wasn't drunk yet , then I started feeling this powerful force pushing me to drink more, to be able to escape the feelings, or to be able to feel them I don't know which one. I was curled up on the couch just resisting the urge to continue drinking myself away... until I gave in and kept drinking. The next day, shabbos morning, I told my wife I wasn't drinking alcohol anymore. I recognized the pattern that whenever I would drink even a small amount (a cup not a sip) I would get more easily swayed

by my emotions and feel the pull to "escape". So far been doing just that and it's working out fine. I don't know if this is something which others struggled with but it was a big step for me and I'm happy I did it. To be clear I do not identify as an alcoholic or anywhere close, I just recognize that I do not find the effects of alcohol on my emotinoal state worth the taste and the relaxing effects.

Something which comes up many times on here is how to have a normal intimate relationship in a marriage. I had a pretty bad intimacy and it was causing problems (I basically told my wife that it was so bad I would rather her not go to the mikvah). and we had talked about it before and I had talked to rabbeim before but there did not seem to be any progress. I talked to my therapist about it and he suggested something which we tried with some improvement.

At one point we (my wife and I not my therapist) decided to read books on improving intimacy together. This was, surprisingly, actually helpful and i now believe that at some point in the future we can have enjoyable and positive intimacy.

At the same time I feel that it would make a big difference to go to a sex therapist as a couple in order to have someone directly help us with our unique situation and problems.

At this point I still have desires and I still struggle moderately with not taking second glances at women in the street, but I don't find myself in the same state of mind and being I was in 2 years ago or even three months ago. I feel like a regular healthy person with regualr healthy desires, and I owe it to GYE and all the amazing chevra here.

Thank you, and IYH I will keep on posting

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Re: On the way... Again

Posted by vehkam - 24 Jul 2024 15:42

great to hear from you. it is great that you are continuing to shteig. Keep it up!

never complacent,

vehkam

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