

struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 14 Apr 2010 14:54

So here I am a few days in to this and so far so good. Clean since morning of April 12, does that make today April 14 2 days or 3? I am counting it as 3 (don't think it is too bad to cheat at being good).

My story...

I am a successful businessman happily married about 4 years with some wonderful children. As a teenager I started M after being exposed to a certain radio program. Later on I started looking at P as well. Well about 5 years ago I got inspired after reading the "Light of Ephraim" and got the backbone to stop being mz'l. In the last 5 years I only fell once in that. I still had a P problem that I could not seem to get over. I would still sometimes touch myself while watching P but not to the point of mz'l. Well the night of April 11 I told my wife I was working late and instead spent a good deal of time watching P. As morning was approaching I was on a news site and came across a link to this site, and it was an awakening, and I have decided to make a real effort to get better.

I told my wife that morning which in itself while I think a good thing to do is something that needs much thought given to it.

So far I have been trying to work on avoiding lustful thoughts. It is amazing how the last day or so when I go outside and see something I can identify the thought as being lustful and then I can try to get away from that thought. So far so good. I have also been trying to avoid lustful thinking about my wife and instead trying to be a more loving and attentive husband. Well will have to see how that all works out and is obviously something that I will need to develop over time.

It is amazing how much more productive my day is now that I have been able to avoid this snare for a day or so.

I think I have spent a lot of time the last day or two in the forums, I should not forget to read the manuals and to make an effort to be part of the groups.

Thanks everyone here for being so inspiring.

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by DovInIsrael - 14 Apr 2010 15:01

go man go!

you can do it!

think about it like getting a degree in being a HUMAN BEING!

you will of course need lots of LSD to get through the material and course work though!

oh, for those of you new here...LSD refers to LOTS of SiYATA D'SHAYMAH

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 14 Apr 2010 15:08

Like running a marathon at finding yourself exhausted at mile 26 yet realizing there are thousands more miles to go and you gotta be strong!

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by briut - 14 Apr 2010 16:53

[strugglingyid wrote on 14 Apr 2010 14:54:](#)

I have also been trying to avoid lustful thinking about my wife and instead trying to be a more loving and attentive husband. Well will have to see how that all works out and is obviously something that I will need to develop over time.

Welcome aboard, chaver. You've said a lot of beautiful things so far, and I hesitate to share anything intrusive that might color your thoughts. But I'll jump in with one personal observation. You talked about turning lust (for your wife) into love, and how it obviously takes time. To which I say,

I'm not sure I even know how to tackle that work while trying to get/stay clean. For me, having that lust for her is a comforting avenue to increase my love for her (and for channeling some other lusts into a better vessel). So I'm not quite ready for that step until further down the road, even though the step is important. For you, of course, it could be different.

I will give a plug to any married man to re-read The Garden of Peace by R' Arush (english transl. R' Brody). I think his urging that guys tackle shomer ha'bris issues before even dreaming of a good marriage was part of my push into this site. It remains a major force in learning how to have a good Torah marriage. I can't even say any more about it until I know you've read it... twice.

Keep reading, keep posting.

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 15 Apr 2010 10:30

Briut, I hear you man.

I think perhaps this attitude I am taking towards avoiding lustful thinking with my wife is something that is connected to the fact I told her about my problem. Now I felt I have to really reexamine the way I relate to her to make sure that it is in a positive beneficial way. I do not think relating to her with the driver being lust is a good thing now since I am trying to overcome this addiction. I cannot think that if I use her to feed my addiction that would be very good.

Now here is where I am going to start sounding really crazy...

I am trying to now relate to my wife with a true loving manner. Let me be clear in no way does this mean I am eliminating marital relations as that is an important part of building a healthy relationship. Further, it is something she desires from me, so if I will relate to her with love I need to attempt to fulfill her desires. What this does mean is that I am trying to not instigate things except when I feel she is wanting or it would be helpful for our relationship. Also it means that I am trying not to focus so much on myself as on her needs. If she would indicate that she is not interested in relations but I am interested it would mean that I say I understand and when you are ready I will be here, as opposed to getting upset and frustrated easily (my usual past response to this). Perhaps in such a situation we could just be cozy with each other without any drama. Probably makes the wife more comfortable with you because you show you care for her feelings. If you care she can trust you with them. Telling her I have this problem has been a major blow to her trust in me, perhaps this is a way I can gain it back in a much more meaningful and stronger manner.

My path I understand is not for everyone. I have not m'z'l for a few years so I can deal with having things pushed off without doing that. My issue is looking at P, driven by lust which I hope I can recognize and avoid. Dealing with my wife this way is a way for me to avoid lusting. I hope and pray to Hashem the path I have chosen to walk is the correct one. There is so much unknown. What will my marriage be like as time goes on. I took a huge chance, in the hope I can build something wonderful, but there is always that possibility my path can destroy it, if I do not own up. On the other hand I am not sure I could do this without telling her, so the thought of being 70 and still being in the same place was not very appealing so I had to take this chance. I hope it works out well. I really do.

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Re: struggling yid's journey
Posted by briut - 15 Apr 2010 14:32

[strugglingyid wrote on 15 Apr 2010 10:30:](#)

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SOUNDING REALLY CRAZY?? ARE YOU KIDDING?? YOU'VE GOT STUFF FIGURED OUT THAT I'M ONLY STARTING ON AFTER 20 YEARS OF MARRIAGE (, which I'm too embarrassed to admit except on the anonymity of this forum - G-d bless you all).

To truly have the emotional intimacy and separate it from "mutual objectification by consent." To have p* separated from m* to the point where even your p* sessions don't demand m*. To know that trust in your wife is the only path to success for you and for your spouse and for the marriage itself. To still be working on building rather than learning to love the status quo.

MAN, I STAND IN AWE. AND IF YOU'RE DESCRIBING 'CRAZY,' THEN BRING ME A STRAIGHT-JACKET.

Please keep posting your story, your progress, your tips. I think I could learn more from hearing your stuff than I could from years of therapy, trial & error, and even R' Arush's Garden of Peace. And don't think I hand out such a plea all that often, but I ain't kiddin'.

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Re: struggling yid's journey
Posted by DovInIsrael - 15 Apr 2010 20:02

struggling yid -

wanna try something really bizarre?

i make no promises...but mght actually work

(no, I am not suggesting that you spend an unlimited time listening to me and my wierd jokes to liven you up. that woudl be cruel and harsh!)

PM me, for details.

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Re: struggling yid's journey
Posted by strugglingyid - 16 Apr 2010 08:46

Briut, you flatter me.

For some reason when I was growing up I was the only one who had these issues. I always thought I was the weak one. I am not sure that attitude helped me overcome M. Glad I did overcome it because that was really hard to do. I would not let myself take long showers nor touch myself when going to the bathroom so that I could avoid coming to M. I cannot remember how well I avoided P then, but somehow I managed to avoid M. Perhaps that for me was the strangest thing. I would fantasize and watch P but not M and I would know that every time I watch it will automatically be unsatisfying because I will not M so why the dickens am I watching this stuff. Yet I did it anyways, such is the power of Lust. This is the fight I have been having

these last 5 years now.

I find now when I am with my wife that too much stimulation in a manner similar to M (her to me, not myself) is a bit of a downer for me and does not leave me feeling very high. It reminds me all the pain I was in when I was doing that to myself and the difficulty in breaking free. Fortunately normal marital relations seems to be what we both prefer so it works out.

The one thing I think that I learnt that helped me at least overcome mz'l was that we have to be happy and proud of each step we take. Just because we totally mess it up in some other area does not mean that the steps we took are meaningless. If you believe in Hashem you must believe that if you are still here there is a reason for that. The only reason I learned that we are here for is to become close to Hashem. If that was impossible why would we be here then. So if I can fix one thing or one partial thing well that is a big step and if I am still here that probably means something to Hashem. The fact I have other areas to work on should not be a reason to fall in the other areas. You have to LOVE YOURSELF and believe that you are a good guy. I think the Y"H loves to knock us down. He tells you well you already watched some P so why not M now to make it feel good. Since you fell already you are feeling low and the Y"H says your already a lost case so go for it. You gotta scream back at him NOT SO, I messed up here, why do I need to mess up further. So you can completely draw me into your tricks. Good riddance!

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 16 Apr 2010 09:35

The importance of being selfless:

Well only 4 days into my journey and it is a great challenge. I find myself going nuts. Everywhere outside I go I see things I should not be seeing. I have to remind myself at least once every 5 seconds that I want to be free of this lust, so do not get drawn to the fleeting feel good feeling of looking after some underfed woman who could not afford enough material for a full set of clothing. Man this Lust thing is really crazy. I think though I have been able to meet that challenge so far...

From reading other people's posts I have seen that the some of the biggest challenges is dealing with the wife while trying to overcome our Lust addictions. There are 3 categories that I

have seen so far. (1) those who do not tell their wives but wish they could. (2) those that were found out and wish they were not and (3) those that did tell and are glad they did even if it means they have this difficult challenge now. [note: this was not a scientific study and is just based on the few posts that I did read] Myself, I choose the 3rd category and so far I am glad I did. It is only 4 days but I think if I keep my side of the bargain then we will be alright.

I think I figured out subconsciously before my telling my wife the secret to good marital intimacy. The great secret was making her feel really good. Not just really good, but really, really good. Not to be demanding but to be giving. After telling my wife, I really thought really hard about how to get over my Lust Addiction and I came to the realization that I have to not relate to my wife in a lustful manner, rather only in a loving manner. Approaching her with a demand for relations is something I think is lustful since it is selfish. Approaching her to give her a good massage, rub, and to tell her nice things without the demand for relations attached well that is being selfless. In these last 4 days I have worked really hard on that and hope to continue working hard on that for the rest of my life. At first my wife like anyone else's in this situation was not sure she could be intimate with me again. My response was I understand (c'mon I did really abuse her trust and security in me, how could she open up after that) and I love you and I hope you will one day be ready for me again. And then I proceeded to just be nice to her, to tell her how wonderful and important she is to me and to give her massages and anything she wants without demand. You know what? in these last 4 days something wonderful has happened. While I feel my actions created a wall between us, my loving and giving actions have begun to build a bridge over that wall. I give my wife Chizuk by accepting fully that she is right to be upset with me. There is nothing she did wrong. This is something wrong with me. The fact that I owe her so much because this took away from our lives together so much is all the more reason I should be willing to relate to her with an open giving without demand. How could I demand, by what right do I have to demand when I owe more than I could ever repay, because the time I took away from her is something I can never give back. The beautiful thing that happened in these last 4 days is that marital intimacy is once again something part of our lives. Do I deserve this? The answer is no. The real answer is my wife is a true Aishas Chayil who is willing to accept my overtures to her. This was marital intimacy without a demand for it. I did try initiating something a different night and she got stiff and I told her it was ok and we can wait until she is ready once again. But maybe that once accepting her pain and not pushing, and the constant feel good I am trying to give her is what made this possible. And this is at only 4 days, not weeks.

Be Selfless, not Selfish. Giving not Taking. Loving not Lusting. Our addiction is to the negative side here of these, the way out is by being on the positive side of these things. I went in a few days from a wife who cried to me that she does not know if she will be able to be close to me again to a wife who opened up warmly and lovingly to me. Give and give and give selflessly. Do not think for a moment to take as you already took more than you had right to. Give lovingly and stop lusting. You will be free from your sickness and finally able to accept the beauty that Hashem gave you in this world.

I write this not because I enjoy describing very personal details of my life even anonymously (I most assuredly do not). I write this because I know there are so many others who unfortunately cannot bridge this gap. I hope there is something here that makes your relation better and stronger.

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 18 Apr 2010 08:46

A special thank you to GuardYourEyes.org. This Shabbos was one of the best shabbosim I have had in a long time. The relationship between me and my wife has grown in bounds. It is hard to believe a few days ago I told her something that must have hurt her more than anything else I have ever done. Telling her was not meant to hurt but to strengthen. I mean the object was to rid our marriage of lies and secrets. If not for stumbling across this site and all the wonderful chizuk here I am not sure I would have been able to take these steps. Part of these steps for me is the recognizance that I owe my wife so much and that I just have to be willing to give all I could for her without taking a thing. Amazingly this is basic Shalom Bayis Shiur material that is so often not internalized. My wife has told me that she sees that I am trying to be extra good to her and she appreciates it. She is more talkative and open with me now then I can ever remember.

I am scared also. These last few days has been a real high. Can this last? Will I be able to meet the challenges in the days, weeks, months, and years ahead? I think the philosophy of taking each day/moment by itself is the only answer here. Each day is an opportunity to work on myself and my relationship with my wife. I will try to make the best of it I can. In another day I hope I will be clean for a week! Thank you for all your support.

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 20 Apr 2010 06:20

Still hanging in there and feeling good! Thank you Reb Guard and everyone else that is a part of this magnificent journey.

Yesterday (Sunday) I was reading some stuff about how people fall into this nonsense from Ben Zion Sorotzkin's website. It made me start getting very analytical as to why I might be this way. Ultimately I recognize that I have to be the one to change myself, no matter who or what

shaped me. I was telling my wife my various theories as to how I ended up with these issues. Somehow I think this got her thinking to much and she got kind of scared. She told me that there were many times she begged me to change my crazy work schedule (many times I would work late at night, supposedly) I that she never could get me to listen. She says she feels that what she says does not matter here. I tried explaining that in a way she is right because this is a problem with me that I need to work on to overcome and all she could do is to love and support me in this. But the fact I am working on this very seriously should mean something to her. Anyway she was quite upset and for most of the day was cold to me.

In the past when my wife would get moody on me I would often try to prod her to get her in a good mood again. Usually I would end up just annoying her further and we would end up with a fight. This time I remembered my earlier thoughts from when I told her of my problem. My thoughts then were, that this would be a difficult journey and my wife may not always take it so easy, but I will be strong and I will be good to her and understanding to her no matter what. I was able to be pleasant and nice to her in every interaction we had the rest of that day even if she did not respond in kind. At the end of the day she finally came around and our night was one of emotional closeness. She told me then that she was kind of wondering if she would have a negative reaction to my admission about my addiction. Till then she really had not had a negative reaction to it, and this was the first time. I told her I understand and I realize that she is right to have a negative reaction to this, but that I am trying and I want to be good to her. The end as I said already was that she got over her negative reaction pretty quick. In a way I think she wants to be angry with me as I did something that really hurt her. She might want to see that I am bad guy and this is all just part of a pattern. When I am good to her no matter what she sees that the truth is I am a good guy, just there is some bad part to me that we are working on removing.

On Monday we had a good day with no issues.

I think writing this all is a tremendous chizuk for me. There are times I am feeling down and start thinking maybe... If I get here and start reading and typing suddenly I remember the great feeling of being free. Yes it may mean I have to deal with the real underlying issues, but rather than putting a festering bandage on a wound and thinking that the wound is fine as a result, I will finally realize what I need to do in life to become who I am meant to be.

Avoiding lust is such a wonderful thing. I do not need to glance at the women wearing hardly anything. My soul is so much greater, A treasure I would hate to waste. Oh to avoid lust is what I desire most.

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Re: struggling yid's journey
Posted by briut - 21 Apr 2010 19:32

[strugglingyid wrote on 21 Apr 2010 18:10:](#)

I wonder if anyone who reads my posts can make any sense out of what I am saying, sorry if I confuse you.

I read, I learn, I admire. I tend not to post these days, but please understand that your insights into these challenges speak very personally and deeply to some of the stuff I'm tackling now. Hearing your voice helps me find mine. Thanks.

And don't forget the folks reading this who don't register and post but merely lurk in the background -- you're probably making a broader impact than you know.

You have a lucky wife.

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Re: struggling yid's journey
Posted by strugglingyid - 23 Apr 2010 17:26

It's Erev Shabbos and not much time to post...

So far so good. Avoiding lustful thoughts has not been that hard so far. I think that sincere commitment I made to giving up lust is really making a difference. The daily chizuk e-mails also help tremendously by keeping you focused and thinking about this issue in a healthy manner. I used to have to look again because I needed to see. Now I give it over to Hashem. I do not

need to look because I will be perfectly fine if I do not look, actually better. I will not be feeding my addiction which will lead me to fall again.

Good Shabbos everyone! May we all be blessed to enjoy the peace and deveikus of shabbos (these are real spiritually refreshing things unlike our sickness).

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by strugglingyid - 25 Apr 2010 17:44

Still clean, but the fight has suddenly gotten real tough. I am struggling every minute not to think lustful thoughts. Every waking moment and asleep these thoughts are intruding. I feel like jumping out of my skin. I tell myself that I do not want this. I want to be free. But then I am fighting these thoughts again. Gotta keep on fighting, although it does not feel so good when these thoughts are cascading through your mind. Coming here and getting chizuk from all the other people here fighting this definitely gives me a boost. I will not fall! What am I thinking? Is falling supposed to make me feel better? What stupidity is this going through my mind? After I fall I will be depressed about it, I will need to tell my wife and see what a low-life I can become. Why in the world do I even consider falling? Gotta start thinking straight. If you read this just post that I am doing great and should keep it up. Hate to sound desperate but I could use the chizuk.

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Re: struggling yid's journey

Posted by rashkebehag - 25 Apr 2010 17:53

why don't you try thinking in learning when the thoughts come up? It doesn't have to be anything deep, just a possuk or a Rashi in chumash, the best would be a vort that you heard or thought of. It helps. Otherwise think the possuk Lev tahur bro li elokim vruachnachon chadesh bkirbi. think that and run your hand over your forehead. Do it 3 times, its a very cleansing action.

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