

Installed's Thread

Posted by installed - 21 Jun 2010 04:48

Hey guys,

Hope you had a pleasant day. I joined the site recently and I don't really know anybody here so I'll introduce myself. It would be helpful if you guys do the same.

My name is Avraham. I'm a 26 year old single guy. I was brought up in a modern orthodox home. My family moved quite a bit when I was younger and I moved quite a bit as well later on. I come from a stable background and get along well with my family.

I would describe myself as a bit of an introvert (more than I would like to be anyway). I generally do better in a one on one setting but can definitely handle crowds as well. I'm pretty detail oriented. I notice the little things in life and admire perfection. I love music, mainly R&B, mainstream pop and classical music. I'm trying to gradually wean myself off the non Jewish music (for obvious reasons) but it's a process. My hobbies include gardening, photography, hanging out with friends, traveling, cooking, and watching porn (can't believe I'm writing this). Hmm what else... Oh, if anybody here is familiar with the enneagram, I'm a 9 with a one wing.

My email address is installedjew@live.com .

All the best,

Avraham.

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Re: Installed's Thread

Posted by teshuvahilaah - 21 Jun 2010 16:46

Avraham, pleased to meet you. Keep your head up and much success.

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Re: Installed's Thread

Posted by installed - 21 Jun 2010 16:47

And now for my story.

The earliest time I can remember myself engaging in anything sexual was at the age of 7. I had a next-door neighbour that I adored. She was one year younger than I was and we were inseparable. One of our favourite pastimes was to examine each other (playing doctor) when we were alone upstairs or in the back yard under the deck. My family moved when I was 10 so that ended things. I knew about sex when I was in kindergarden (a friend told me) but I didn't know the exact details until the age of 11-12. I discovered masturbation when I was 13 but didn't really enjoy it (it hurt me for some reason). I started masturbating on a regular basis when I was 14. At first I felt guilty about it but after feeling remorse and repeating my actions I rationalized that I obviously didn't have real remorse (because if I would, I wouldn't be repeating it). I masturbated on average twice a day and didn't need anything to stimulate myself.

I discovered porn at the age of ~15. I was always computer savvy and knew how to erase my tracks. At first, I didn't like the fact that I was watching porn and in a way I wished that I would get caught.

At that age, I enjoyed watching regular porn but I've developed a "taste" over time and I'm now more selective. I never enjoyed (and still can't) watching the gory/wild/dominating/humiliating/anal sex porn but any "normal" sex was okay. I started to become much more particular at the age of ~22. I currently enjoy watching photo shoots, nude photography/modeling and professionally edited videos (not the homemade/amateur stuff). I really appreciate the beauty of the female body and I prefer watching porn with attractive woman. I'm writing this because I realize that I have a huge problem! The porn that I enjoy is pure fantasy, it does not exist!

I didn't feel guilty from the aveira but I did (and still) have an ethical issue with it. I saw a documentary many years ago about the porn industry and it really broke my heart. The conclusion was that most female porn stars were victims of abuse as children and that many of them are currently on drugs and dealing with mental issues (depression etc.). I never paid for porn so I didn't contribute to the industry but I felt that I was getting pleasure from someone else's suffering and it always bothered me.

I had many opportunities to pay for sex (mostly while traveling in third world countries but also while in Europe) but I have my limits. There is also the hygiene issue.

Eemunah:

I don't think that I ever felt real emunah. I'm not "upset" at hashem for anything and I don't have any reason to be. The problem is that I'm apathetic and don't care (maybe a skeptic as well). I also find it more difficult to connect because I was born into it. I would pretend to daven in yeshiva and I hated gemara (even though I was one of the better students). I had an inner frustration with frumkeit but I kept it in. I felt that gemara was a waste of time. People spending hours making chidushim over irrelevant issues (not applicable to our time). I was also disturbed by the behaviour and lack of derech eretz of many of the bnei torah in my neighbourhood. My rabaim would try to make me excited when I would michaven to a mifaresh but I didn't feel any joy inside (people tell me that it is one of the greatest feelings). My rabaim sensed that I had issues (they asked me on several occasions why I don't shuckle during davening and learning). One rabbi actually got frustrated, politely took me aside, and told me a story about a gadol that was able to spot a mamzer solely due to the fact that he didn't shuckle. I didn't have much respect for my rabaim and didn't feel a need to talk to them about it (they didn't do anything wrong, I just didn't like them). At this point I feel that I have two sides to me. One side is full of emotion and compassion (I really feel for other people and I have derech eretz) but I'm ice cold and emotionless when it comes to hashem. I'm trying to work on myself but it's a huge struggle. The reason why I'm bringing in my emunah is that most people have guilt and it is the guilt that is driving them to change but it's not the case with me.

Hitting rock bottom:

I started dating last year. I have a hard time meeting many girls at events but I do well on regular dates. I always stress how important frumkeit is to me **but I hate lying**. In reality, I feel a real emptiness, numbness and close to zero yirat shamayim. I don't know what stops me from eating at a McDonalds or turning on a light on shabbos. The strange thing is that I think that I would be devastated if my child would drop frumkeit. I guess it's my pintle yid. I also find most girls I date to be unattractive (no wonder) and decline decent prospects just because of that. I also **waste so much time** watching porn. I struggle with procrastination and I feel that porn is the root of the problem. The funny thing is that I have full control over my eating habits while other people seem to be struggling with that taiva. Just as a side note, I stopped dating for the time being. I want to sort out my problems before marriage.

To conclude, I don't want to live a lie. I also don't want to give up frumkeit and I strongly believe that porn and masturbation are the two things that are keeping me back from "establishing a connection" with hasham.

I can't thank Dov and GYE enough for enabling me to have this amazing opportunity. I currently feel a huge sense of relief. I look forward to grow with all of you guys and hope that we all rebuild our connection with hashem and with ourselves.

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by StrugglingGuy - 22 Jun 2010 03:21

installed- ill let the pro's do most of he talking, but im here for u if u need someone (just like everyone else is).

have u tried learning other things like parsha, navi, mussar, chasisdus, etc.? A person only learns what he finds stimulating. Maybe you should try something other than gemara for now... Torah is the cure for the YH, after all.

theres some awesome, fun, torah on revach.net. check it out...

yaakov

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by StrugglingGuy - 22 Jun 2010 03:24

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by installed - 22 Jun 2010 03:31

Hey Yaacov,

Will definitely check out the site. I started reading some Tanya and I'll see how it goes. Problem is that I'm going to be on the go until September so I can't really get a chavrusa.

Some people are not too fond of the enneagram but I read it on a flight several years ago and really got hooked. I've read at least 5 books about it and it is amazingly accurate (at least for me). It's actually interesting but the book mentions that my personality type has inner rage and that was one thing that I didn't think was true but when I was writing my post last night, I noticed that I'm full of rage and have an amazing ability to hide it (even from myself). Dov or anyone else, I have no idea if I should be writing about this here. Please let me know if I'm off topic.

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Re: Installed's Thread

Posted by the.guard - 22 Jun 2010 10:36

Check out www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Time/TorahIdeas.asp for many great ideas of how to make Torah more part of your life.

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Re: Installed's Thread

Posted by Dov - 22 Jun 2010 23:40

Off topic? You decide. It's your thread....I'll try to keep the exercise we are in the midst of in mind, that's all.

Installed (I forgot which *real* person you are!) Thanks for sharing so much of your story with us here. About the guilt, I appreciated the distinction you made, but have to tell you: I have met some guys who *did* have joy from these chiddushim you are referring to (mea culpa) - and were going out to schmutz later that very day. Sure, it made them feel sick, but it apparently was not enough to overcome their comfort in wallowing in a cesspool of tingly schmutz. It gets familiar, it gets comfortable - and anything else gets *uncomfortable*. Imaging if it is even uncomfortable for 'normal' people! Uh-oh...no wonder so many addicts avoid some real life stuff. Nu. You don't sound like you are avoiding that much...but some people I know believe that

procrastination/laziness are just avoidance. I try to avoid the *uncomfortable* as much as possible, and think that I must not be the only one who is selectively lazy. Just food for thought. (burp)

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Re: Installed's Thread

Posted by installed - 23 Jun 2010 03:22

Hey Dov,

Thanks for dropping by. Can you please clarify the last few sentences?

You don't sound like you are avoiding that much...but some people I know believe that procrastination/laziness are just avoidance. I try to avoid the uncomfortable as much as possible, and think that I must not be the only one who is selectively lazy. Just food for thought. (burp)ces?

Good night,

Avraham.

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Re: Installed's Thread

Posted by installed - 23 Jun 2010 03:22

==> Over what, exactly, am I powerless? **Pornography and masturbation.**

==> I've done things while acting out on my addiction that I would never do when focusing on recovery. **Watching pornography.**

==> How does my personality change when I'm acting out on my addiction? (For example: Do I become arrogant? Self-centered? Mean-tempered? Passive to the point where I can't protect myself? Manipulative? Whiny?) **Not much, perhaps a bit self-centred.**

==> Do I manipulate other people to maintain my addiction? How? **Not applicable to me (still single).**

==> Have I tried to quit using and found that I couldn't? Have I quit using on my own and found that my life was so painful without drugs that my abstinence didn't last very long? What were these times like? **I kinda tried several times after Rosh Hashana / Yom Kippur but can't really say that I ever tried seriously. I'm currently trying and it's a struggle.**

==> How has my addiction caused me to hurt myself or others? **My addiction caused me to focus on myself. I hurt myself by wasting time and perhaps my connection with hashem. I'll be hurting other people if I don't stop (my future wife and children).**

Unmanageability

==> What does unmanageability mean to me? **At times, I feel like I'm living a double life which makes me feel worthless. I also believe that it was not my responsibility to take care of my addiction; it is my wife's responsibility to satisfy my needs.**

==> What trouble have I had at work or school because of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my family as a result of my addiction? **I didn't have trouble with my family but my addiction interfered with my productivity levels at school and at work.**

==> Do I consider the needs of others? What effect has my lack of consideration had on my relationships? **I'm not married yet N/A.**

==> Do I accept responsibility for my life and my actions? **Yes, I accept responsibility for my life and my actions.**

Am I able to carry out my daily responsibilities without becoming overwhelmed? How has this affected my life? **Depends on the "responsibilities" but I can always do better and want to be more productive.**

==> Do I fall apart the minute things don't go according to plan? How has this affected my life? **No.**

==> Do I treat every challenge as a personal insult? How has this affected my life? **I don't get the question.**

==> Do I maintain a crisis mentality, responding to every situation with panic? How has this affected my life? **No.**

==> Do I ignore signs that something may be seriously wrong with my health or with my children, thinking things will work out somehow? Describe. **Yes. I act out even though I date from girls. I know that my actions are a betrayal of their trust but I act out anyway. I always rationalize my actions by thinking that things will work out after marriage.**

==> Have I ever harmed someone as a result of my addiction? Describe. **No but my addiction will hurt someone if I don't resolve it.**

==> Do I have temper tantrums or react to my feelings in other ways that lower my self-respect or sense of dignity? Describe. **No.**

==> Did I act out on my addiction to change or suppress my feelings? What was I trying to change or suppress? **Yes. I usually act out when I'm under stress or when I have something important to do but don't want to face it (i.e homework). Acting out is an escape from reality. It enables me to suppress my feelings of responsibility.**

Surrender

==> Do I accept that I'll never regain control, even after a long period of abstinence? Not yet. I guess it's a process.

==> Can I begin my recovery without a complete surrender? **No.**

==> Can I continue my recovery without complete surrender? **No. I must surrender in order to recover. Living in denial is not a solution.**

Spiritual principles

If I've been thinking about using or acting out on my addiction in some other way, have I shared it with my sponsor or told anyone else? I've shared it on the forum. **I don't have a sponsor.**

==> Have I stayed in touch with the reality of my disease, no matter how long I've had freedom from active addiction? **Yes.**

==> In what ways am I practicing open-mindedness? **I believe the members here that suggest that marriage won't solve my problems. I also believe that there is a slippery slope and that if I continue, I can end up doing things in the future that seem impossible to me today.**

==> Am I willing to go to meetings regularly? **Yes.**

==> Am I willing to give recovery my best effort? In what ways? **Yes. By reducing many of the triggers.**

==> Do I believe that I'm a monster who has poisoned the whole world with my addiction? **No.**

Do I believe that my addiction is utterly inconsequential to the larger society around me? Or something in between? **It can be consequential in the future but not currently.**

==> Do I have a sense of my relative importance within my circle of family and friends? In society as whole? What is that sense? **Yes. I'm a good son, brother, and friend and mean a lot to them.**

==> How am I practicing the principle of humility in connection with this work on the First Step? **I'm accepting my failures and I'm surrendering.**

==> Have I made peace with the fact that I'm an addict? **Yes.**

==> Have I made peace with the things I'll have to do to stay clean? **Yes.**

==> How is acceptance of my disease necessary for my continued recovery? **The only way for me to recover is to realize that I'm addicted. I won't be able to work on the solution if I feel that I'm in control.**

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by Dov - 24 Jun 2010 04:12

[installed wrote on 23 Jun 2010 03:22:](#)

Hey Dov,

Thanks for dropping by. Can you please clarify the last few sentences?

You don't sound like you are avoiding that much...but some people I know believe that procrastination/laziness are just avoidance. I try to avoid the uncomfortable as much as possible, and think that I must not be the only one who is selectively lazy. Just food for thought. (burp)ces?

Good night,

Avraham.

Yow, ich binn pooped...last post of the evening:

Sometimes procrastination and laziness are just avoidance behavior and I discover that I have a problem with Fear, resentment, or some other mishega'as that motivates me to avoid

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by installed - 24 Jun 2010 16:40

Dov, thanks for the reply.

I see what you're saying...

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by Dov - 25 Jun 2010 06:23

Wow...that was easy. it was quite a shock to me the first time I heard it from an old AA curmudgeon....

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by aaron4 - 25 Jun 2010 13:23

I have issues with procrastination and avoidance too. Yet try as I might, I usually can't fine the underlying R.I.D. element and have not figured out how to overcome this yet.

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Re: Installed's Thread
Posted by installed - 25 Jun 2010 15:50

Hey Aaron4,

I hope you are doing well. There are several practical things that I do.

1) I make myself a list of priorities and force myself to stick to it. I used to be all over the place. I would start something but would then intentionally distract myself. I would look for something that needs to be done which is less annoying. I messed up on several assignments and therefore decided to start this habit. I don't allow myself to start a new thing until I finish the first thing on my list.

2) When I started to work on this problem, I used to log all my daily activities in detail and would give it to my brother. P & M were logged as "wasting computer time". I was at first embarrassed from myself but eventually my bro really gave it to me (we are really close) and he got on top of it. This only works if you are comfortable with criticism (it can make things worse for some

people).

3) I strongly believe that if I get my P & M under control it will help as well. It's not that I spend so much time doing it but it is the lack of self discipline that is so destructive for me. The urge for

4) As I wrote above, I read the enneagram once on a flight and I really got hooked. I find it to be extremely accurate and it enables me to catch myself in the act of a typical negative pattern that someone like me is prone to do. Generally speaking my personality type has a problem with dealing directly with issues (for example, will have a very difficult time saying "no"). **It explains why** etc. and it is so accurate that it is almost scary. I was also able to better understand the needs and insecurities of myself and others because of it.

sex is obviously so much stronger so I'm making a kal vchomer

5) I started using K9s internet block. You can set it to block all internet access for x amount of time. Getting a notice of a new email or checking GYE can be a major distraction.

6) Dov was saying that "Sometimes procrastination and laziness are just avoidance behavior and I discover that I have a problem with Fear, resentment, or some other mishega'as that motivates me to avoid". and this is certainly true. Dov, you were michaven to the enneagram.

These things worked for me. I'm far from perfect and it will probably be my nisayon for life. I always say that even though it is difficult, I have to be thankful that my life is in order, and that it is doable. Many people have nisyonot that are much more difficult and potentially destructive (like jealousy, anger, greed, stinginess etc). We all have our own nisyonot and that is what we are here for (I'm talking to myself).

Anyway, I hope that this helps. If you have any questions or would like to discuss it, don't hesitate to contact me.

Good shabbos.

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