

struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 21 Jun 2010 18:39

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i watched some p\*\*\* today for the first time in a couple months...

i started with p\*\*\*, erotic lit, and mast\*\*\* probably when i was around 15, 16 i guess.

I started to mast\*\*\* mostly on shabbos afternoons thinking about girls (jewish girls in my neighborhood, etc.). did i realize this was wrong? was there a struggle back then? No. It felt very pleasurable and i did not think anything of it. at a certain point i probably started regretting it; why am i masturbating? I am wasting my time on shabbos. I don't think, though, that those feelings were like: this is assur and im still doing it. It was more like "O I feel a little unclean now"

I guess the lowpoint was when i just started fantasizing long stories of seduction with girls- again girls in shul, my sisters friends, my friend's sisters, the list is quite long unfortunately. in fact there are few girls i can think of in my neighborhood that i have not 'masturbated to' at one time or another.

Another

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 15 Sep 2010 03:13

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 15 Sep 2010 03:14

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OK this is weird- the word "kitshata" or whatever comes up even when I try to write a different word!!!

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by MosheF - 15 Sep 2010 13:19

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[StrugglingGuy wrote on 15 Sep 2010 03:12:](#)

I am extremely confused.

If it helps you at all, I am extremely confused too and I identify very much with you. On the one hand, we are told that hashem judges us by every minuscule minute of bitul torah, never mind the big stuff. My Rabbi gave a speech last week and he basically scared the hell out of everyone, how hashem judges not only the last few weeks but the entire year, every teffila, if you don't have kavana the first brocha you are not yotzei at all, how many times were we yotzei davening, every loшон hora, every minute bitul torah, how many hours have we wasted on shabbosim, Sundays, talking by davening, tznus etc. and then he went on to say how you can't fool hashem and you have to make a serious resolution to get better, not just lip service. I guess what he was trying to accomplish was to get everyone to do serious teshuva. I'm sitting there thinking, why the hell am I even bothering with all this, why come to shul this yom tov, I'm doomed, I may as well just skip to Vegas for RH and YK. I can count on one hand how many hours I learned this entire year (and I've finished masechtos in previous years), I can count on both my hands (and toes) how many times I've davened shachris, let alone with a minyan this year. The biggest problem I have is that I can't and will not make a resolution this year because I can't keep them, my addiction has brought me down so badly, I'm not even going to fool myself this year. Every year I tell hashem how I'll get better next year, this year I just stood there crying to hashem that I really want to get better but I can't, please help me. But I ain't going to fool you or me with worthless resolutions to stay sober.

So I opened a Rambam in Hilchos Teshuva (I think perek gimel), he says that only hashem can judge a person because he knows the person's struggle inside out and he goes on to say that one person can do many aveiros and it will not be counted while another does a small aveira and it is a big deal, Only hashem can judge these things (something to that effect).

Hashem can't and doesn't expect me to become a tzadik overnight, and I honestly don't know what he wants me to do about my sobriety, in my opinion he wants to continue acting out, I can't figure out why. I know I've tried and continue trying to become a better Jew and my relationship with hashem is a much better one than a year ago. No one understands my struggle in keeping my yiddishkeit afloat and no one but hashem can understand why it's so hard for me to pull myself back together.

So screw my rabbi and his speeches and I walk into shul, proud to be a jew, proud to be close the hashem, proud to tell hashem "it was hard for me to come to shul, but I'm here because I'm your son and I'm going to make you my king today", only you know how hard it is for me, only you know how much worse I could have been and how I could of easily been a mechalel shabbos, sleeping around with other women and screwing up my own life even more. You know how strongly I want to get better, you know how badly I want to be a better Jew, a normal frum guy, you know how I love learning but can't seem to open a sefer anymore, you know I hard I try, you know how many tears I've shed, why do you make it so hard on me, why o why, please help me get better this year and then the tears start rolling.

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by ur-a-jew - 15 Sep 2010 19:52

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[MosheF wrote on 15 Sep 2010 13:19:](#)

The biggest problem I have is that I can't and will not make a resolution this year because I can't keep them, my addiction has bought me down so badly, I'm not even going to fool myself this year. Every year I tell hashem how I'll get better next year, this year I just stood there crying to hashem that I really want to get better but I can't, please help me. But I ain't going to fool you or me with worthless resolutions to stay sober.

There are so many thoughts that run through my mind reading through this post. Here are just a few. Your tears are priceless so don't hold them back. The Rambam says that there are two types of tefilah. The first is the regular tefila that we say every day and the second is tzeaka b'as tzorah. There is no set nusach for the latter and it does not even require words. It is a tefilah that comes straight from the heart. And it sounds like that's where your tears are coming from.

With respect to resolutions. If I had to bet, I would say the resolutions in the past years were lofty resolutions such as I will never look at porn again. If that or something similar was your resolution then its no wonder you were unable to keep to it. All of us make the mistake of making those resolutions and then are unable to keep them. You're an addict and you don't yet have the tools to keep to such a resolution.

But what about if you resolve something simpler that you would daven Shachris with a minyan once a week. I venture to say you can keep that since at some point in the last couple of years I imagine you were doing that. If that's your resolution and next year you can say I davened Shachris 52 times this year with a minyan a more than 100% increase over the past year. You've done teshuva and you've accomplished something.

Now without resolving to do so, if every time during your (at least) once a week visit to shul you ask Hashem to give you the strength and conviction to come to shul another time that week and to help you control your lust, I would think that with persistence it will make a difference.

The same should be with your approach to viduy on yom kippur. Focus on one thing you did wrong. If not davening is that one thing. Make that the focus of your viduy. Have that one thing in mind when you say "chatanu." Sit down before Yom Kippur and see what the importance of tefilah is. Study some of the halachos. And make a concrete plan as to how you can insure your (at least) once a week visit will happen. This will accomplish two things. One when you say your sorry "chatanu" you appreciate what you did wrong and you now have a plan how to fix it. Hashem doesn't want perfection from you, He wants you to try and work on change.

I have no doubt if you (and me with respect to my one thing) take this to heart, you will be considered a "baal teshuva" upstairs, your Yom Kippur will actually be meaningful, and your coming year will be much different than the past.

Gmar Chasima Tova

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by Dov - 16 Sep 2010 03:47

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Who knows if you are an addict? Only I know if I am, really....and Hashem. Teshuvah is a big word. Where it may lead is impossible to tell, thank-G-d. 'Planning the whole journey out' has been poison for *me* since day one. I do not know what *you* need, just what works for me.

So I suggest doing whatever *you* think you need, be"H.

But please at least *consider* doing it just for today. Try it - what do you have to lose? Will your 'tomorrow' fall off? I sincerely believe that I cannot go to the bathroom for tomorrow, today. Neither can I 'work up' to tomorrow to make it work out better. All I have found that I can actually do about tomorrow, is live today real well. Live it humbly as I can, as *with* Him as I can, and make today what it's all about.

Sorry if this is just words to you, but it's all I've got.

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 16 Sep 2010 04:28

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No- I liked it actually...Davka the question of whether I *am* an addict or not and therefore what approach I need to be taking is something I need to think about...

what defines an addict?

All I know is that I:

a) am drawn to erotic lit whenever I am expose/expose myself to it

b) have had a string of mstrbtion for many years- the amount of times in a certain time period has changed but I have not shaken it totally yet, obviously...

(Ill post more tomorrow IYH)

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 27 Sep 2010 15:42

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Chevra and Dov-

Not to sound like I am smarter than the system or the expert on the 12 steps, but when looking at the 12, it seems to me that I have done many of the steps (esp. on Yom Kippur) - I have met with a counselor and admitted everything I do, I ask Hashem over and over to remove my lust because without Him, I am done.

So what does it mean that working the 12 steps takes time? Do you mean hashkafically that (there is an inyan that) Hashem wants us to daven for this OVER AND OVER? I get I understand that the whole thing is a process but dont we already do all these things in shmona esray?

[Not to get away from the theme of this forum but I have been struggling very recently]

Again I am trying to learn, not be skeptical...

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 27 Sep 2010 15:46

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Another point- coming off of a Yom Kippur where I cried out to Hashem that I dont want the lust nor its pleasures - the best time to ask for lust removal is when you are sober obviously- I **do not** feel like a hypocrite or liar when I fall again shortly afterwards, because even when I fall now, it is a function of the lust placed within me, and it is not really me. I guess I just have to keep asking Hashem to remove this spirtual machala from me...

Does this make sense or am I missing something?

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 05 Oct 2010 17:35

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Thanks everyone.

I am not sure where I am right now though. I had (what I thought was) a very good simchas torah in a small community bringing simcha, etc.

My problem was last night. I didnt get to sleep early enough, which led to waking up really late. Staying in bed is a huge nisayon for me and I went back to sleep. I missed seder. You know what happened next...

I have asked Hashem to remove my lust many many times but it seems that whenever the yetzer hara steps up, I do not and I fall. I dont know if I am actually winning battles (as of know i have an avg of mstrbtng once every 5 days)- or if the YH just has me on a set cycle. If it is the latter, I have big issues.

I have meeting in a few hours with a new counselor here at school. I am not sure what we will talk about. I didnt feel bad about anything I did today- this is my problem for today at least.

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by Dov - 07 Oct 2010 00:57

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Dear Strugglingguy,

Not to discourage you from your good work in any way, but I feel there is something I need to say. This board and the entire idea of the group, is to foster recovery through direct working of the program. To me, that means, as I have tried to make clear in the calls and everywhere else, writing and spending time just about every day with written or other concrete work on the step one is up to at that time, and progressing from step to step. It's not really much of an investment, actually, and almost never actually takes up as much time as we'd otherwise be wasting screwing up. Really.

In addition, I have tried to make it clear that working the program this way requires another ingredient for success. Namely, being sober one day at a time. If I act out, I remove my **need** for salvation. I do not need the steps - in other words, *I do not really need G-d, yet*. If I have my drug, I don't really have what I truly consider a *problem* because when the going gets tough, I can always just take off my pants. That is the way it is for me, at least.

I struggled with going in circles for years and only needed to do this when the results of my messing up got to the point that I had enough, for real. So I bear no derision for anyone who has not really suffered much at the hands of their own acting out yet...that was me for many spiritual, innocent, and painful years.

So, this is the intro for my response to your previous post describing what you have done numerous times as seeming to be like the steps.

[StrugglingGuy wrote on 27 Sep 2010 15:42:](#)

Chevra and Dov-

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[Not to get away from the theme of this forum but I have been struggling very recently]

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Very nicely said, and all I can really say is that no, this is *not* what 'working the steps' means to me. We have *all* done stuff like you describe before many times with no real change in our lives - so how **could** it be anything like the big deal all those addicts make about the steps?

No. The thing all the 12-step-recovering addicts in the world are making such a big deal about, is different. It is different *because* it is **different**! All those times we have done the steps and ended up exactly where we were before, **we did it by ourselves**. It was our own brains that were working it all out. A blind man leading himself. Now that's really nuts, no? We hid the full truth about ourselves - in order to get better...? Not going to work. And when we did tell it to others, it wasn't to other people who were **real** to us. It was usually to someone we really had nothing to do with in the **rest** of our real lives. Who didn't know the face we were projecting - so they wouldn't really be able to really see what big fakers we were. Hey, it's embarrassing! And if we **did** open up to someone who knew the 'normal' version of us, then it was usually a person who had **no clue** about addiction, lust struggles, insanity, whatever.

My version of recovery - what I needed - was (and is) to get together with other men who think, tell, live, and know the exact same lies I do, want the exact same things that I want, who see me with my stupid, trance-like, salivating expression that I get while I stare at the computer searching in true desperation for that perfect, sweet, image that I **need** - cuz they know it themselves. I get together with men like that, who are crawling out from under their own wreckage with no pride at all, and let them hug me. Goyim, Jews, whatever. I get to know these men and get together with them weekly and share myself, make relationships with them, and we get to know each other. We get better together, while we watch many of our number fall to the wayside. Nu. Better them than us....

So where I come from, the 1st step is done in our hearts, of course, but in order to have a better chance to actually believe it, we write out as much as we can remember of what we have done that got us into some trouble as a result of lust compulsion and desire throughout our lives. Then we review it with a sponsor and then we share the entire thing with a group of other addicts - the guys who really understand us. They may still be sick, but they are in recovery and understand us, and that's priceless. On the other hand, advice to a struggling lust addict that is not based on personal pain and success, but based on a mussar sefer or a shmooze is often dramatic and beautiful but totally useless, it seems to me. We need to do the work **ourselves** if it is to be real enough to actually *work*. I have never yet met a single person who actually got sober from 'inspiration'.

Second step - real writing and real work - not just thinking in generalities. Same for each of the other steps. We get mushy and generalize the ideas, watering them down into the same useless mush we have always watered Torah ideas down to - and that's why they do not lead to

change. That's gotta stop. Writing it for ourselves - not to impress anyone else - and sharing with others, is the only way i know to make it real.

Love you and miss you!

- Dov

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Re: struggle's thread

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 07 Oct 2010 21:24

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Thanks. So my new counselor and I began the steps from the beginning.

I have decided to record what we spoke about here and see what everyone else has to say about it.

By the way, my conselor and I are not sure if I qualify technically as an addict (as I have brought up here before) but we agreed that if I admit I am an addict becuae it seems that every 5 days I feel the need to mstrbt, then we will work with that definition and deal with it using the 12 steps.

**I have learned something from this group in particular. I am now honest with myself- whether i am an addict or not, I admit that I am powerless to stop my urge to mstrbt. I used to not believe this. Thank you for showing me the truth.**

Step 1: We admitted that we were powerless over lust -- that our lives had become unmanageable.

2 parts to this. Yes I am powerless over lust. Maybe I have thought I am not in the past, but I realize now I have been for a long time. Do I always lust? No. The point I understand is that

**when** the YH comes along, I am powerless. That is my issue in particular.

The second part, however, we were not sure applied to me. If I am going to be honest, I need to be honest about what I am **not**. Has my life become unmanageable? We did not think so. BH, I am in a yeshiva/college, have a lot of friends, running programs B'EH, etc. etc. So I do not think my life is unmanageable. I do not run around everyday looking for lust, BH.

More to come, IYH. I ask you guys to please push me along and remind me to keep posting. As of now I have a weekly session with my counselor.

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Re: struggle's thread  
Posted by Dov - 07 Oct 2010 23:42

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Dear SG,

This sounds beautiful to me and I am so happy for you! Hatzlocha and chazak ve'ematz (and good chodesh, friend).

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Re: struggle's thread  
Posted by StrugglingGuy - 08 Oct 2010 16:56

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thx dov

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Re: struggle's thread  
Posted by StrugglingGuy - 12 Oct 2010 23:18

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2nd visit with the counselor (he is really good)

I am confused a little; which path i am going to take? cold turkery approach or the cutting down approach? it makes sense for me to take the cutting down approach: will i mstrbt again? i dont know, it does not matter. one day at a time. if i mstrbt again, was it to the same degree as last time? did i hold out a littlke longer? if so, that is a victory. like in football, we will stay with the playbook for a little bit; stay with one approach and with Hashem's help.....

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