

Beginning Again

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 29 Dec 2008 15:33

Well, I began my journey to purity again with the beginning of Chanukah. My struggle has been an addiction to masturbation with occasional usage of porn. I've been through some times of cleanliness in the past, but have always ended up lapsing.

The Shabbos before Channukah I was called up for an aliyah for the first time in quite a while. Irony of ironies, it was the 4th aliyah of Vayeishev which speaks of Er and Onan. Since noone at my shul knows of my struggle, I tend to believe that this was a not so subtle hint from heaven. The hint has been taken to heart. I still need to implement some of the other steps on this board, but at least I have begun. Hopefully, I will make it much further than I have before.

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by the.guard - 29 Dec 2008 21:36

Dear Jew, Welcome home!

I am sure Hashem is happy that you took the "hint" :D

This website and forum are a "Teivah" (ark) in the Mabul of internet "Taivah". On this site and forum you will find people going through exactly the same thing as you, making great progress and giving each other support.

There are two secrets to breaking free.

- 1) Never accept it. Always keep trying. Never give up. Believe that with enough work and the right tools, you can break free.
- 2) Never let a fall get you down. That is the trick of the yetzer hara and just leads to further falls.

In a sense, it seems that these two principles conflict with each other. Because if you never

accept it and believe you can stop - so how do you not get down when falling? But we have to reconcile ourselves to this seeming conflict if we want to make progress. We have to work on BOTH these aspects in order to succeed!

Shmiras Habris is known in the Zohar as "Yesod". It is the foundation, the part that is underground, that no one sees. It is the real YOU. And if the foundation is weak, indeed the whole building is weak. That is why it is so important that you get control on this.

As a sexual addiction, it needs to be dealt with in the right way. There are tried and proven methods for dealing with this addiction. The home-page of our website has a whole list of the tools on our network. Grab a hold of them and don't let go. Here are my initial suggestions.

1) A strong filter is a must. Having it all within hands reach will make it almost impossible to start healing. See [here](#) for all the options and info.

2) Join the [daily Chizuk e-mail list](#), if you haven't yet. You will learn approaches and tips every day!

3) Join Elya's FREE weekly phone groups on Sunday 3/4 PM. (Ask me for the number and PIN). It's fully anonymous, no one knows you are even listening in. It is run through a phone-conference company. You need group support, you need to hear others who are going through the same thing, even worse off than you - and yet making wonderful progress.

4) Keep a log of your struggle here, in the forum. Aim for 90 days and post each day or two how you feel. You will get tons of Chizuk from what you will quickly come to consider your "spiritual family". Since you are already 7 days clean, i can put you up on our chart. You have passed Level 2! The chart is [here](#) and the rules are [here](#). Send me your info as detailed in the rules.

5) Read the stories of recovery on our site. You are not alone. People much worse off than you have done great feats of Teshuvah.

6) See a sex-addiction therapist. There are religious ones, but it doesn't have to be. See [this](#)

[page](#) for a list. If you can't afford it, join the Tuesday night conference call for only \$10 a session, with a frum sex-addiction therapist on the line.

We are here for you dear Jew. Grab on to this website and forum, and don't let go. It's your ETERNITY we are talking about here. Write on the forum when you feel weak, you will get a lot of answers and chizuk!

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by ein yeush - 01 Jan 2009 22:42

hey binyomin...dude thats really cool...im very happy for you.

and i can relate. i told myself that while yes, i had fallen before chanuka with masturbation and looking at porn,

i told myself that i'd do everything i could to not masturbate during chanukah.

but i fell....and i was like screw this. i cant even keep this up during chanuka?!?!?

but then i remember thinking no..... ITS A WAR TO THE DEATH with the yetzer harah.

so he shot me down. so what.

if i dont get back up then he's really won.

keep fighting bro! u will win!

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 02 Jan 2009 17:37

I guess it's time for me to relate my story. Some background info will give some context to my story. I am a convert to Judaism of several years now. I was raised nominally xtian and did an extended stint in evangelical type xtianity from college into my 30's. How I ended up converting I won't share here as it may reveal my identity.

I have been struggling with masturbation and intermittent porn usage for nearly 30 years. When I was around 13, someone shared some porn magazines with me. I was instantly hooked and soon began masturbating as well. Along with this, I also entangled myself in a very inappropriate relationship with a girl that was on and off for four years or so. These things laid a corrupt foundation for my life that has haunted me ever since. I quickly got to the point where I was masturbating twice a day or more. I met my future spouse in college. We were both religious xtians at that point, but while my xtianity generated a lot of guilt about my activities, it didn't do a lot to give me any means of overcoming. We married shortly after graduating college. I had hoped that this would give me the means to overcome the masturbation, but it was not to be. In addition to the power of the addiction, there was a physical problem that cropped up requiring our abstinence from sexual activity for several weeks. By the end of that time, masturbation was strongly entrenched in my marital life. Over the years I made various efforts to overcome the addiction but it was all done without understanding the nature of what was happening, and thus was unsuccessful.

When I was preparing for my conversion to Judaism, I heard of Tzvi Fishman and his website. I read his website, got his book and began to understand the depth of the dangers of sexual immorality. Shortly before my conversion date, I began what was my longest stint of abstinence from masturbation. This stint ended due to a combination of work related separations from my wife, depression, and failure to properly guard my eyes from impure sites (during this stint it was impure non-porn websites and exposure to immodestly dressed women in my work location). From that point I wavered back and forth between purity and impurity, sometimes lasting a few days and sometimes a few weeks. Sometimes the impure times were marked by some internet pornography usage and others it only involved masturbation.

Recently the struggle was particularly bad. Over the summer I lost my job (I had developed such a bad attitude toward that employer that I had nearly stopped working at all). Thankfully, within a month I found new employment. However, the new job involved relocation, and when I got my family moved with me, there was real and significant strife. My wife and children were headed off the derech, we were headed for divorce. On the surface, it had to do with the fact that my wife and I seemed to be headed in different directions religiously. Under the surface, I suspect that my many years of sexual immorality had caught up with our relationship; I wasn't fighting for the marriage the way I should. Not surprisingly, new efforts to improve the relationship with my wife have also spurred me to a renewed commitment to fight the Y"H and guard the bris. I am also just in the past couple of days beginning to involve her more with this battle. I try to avoid all the gory details with her, but I am letting her know what are my particular areas of struggle and how she might be able to help me. We are just beginning, but it seems to

be positive. They don't seem to be in quite as much danger of going of the derech, though I still have concerns (especially about my teen son). Well, that's a start for now. It will be Shabbos in a few more hours and I need to do a few things.

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by the.guard - 03 Jan 2009 16:48

Wow, ben. Thanks for sharing your story. It seems you have a great soul, a Jewish soul, and G-d has brought you under the wings of truth, but he wants to give you even more. He wants to help you learn how to give him your heart. And so he gave you this struggle and through it, you will learn great things about truth, preserverence, life, marriage, and G-d. It is good you are involving your wife. She can be a big help to you, and it will also help your marriage if she understands where you're coming from and sees that you are honest with her and working hard.

Since you know the x-tian philosophy, I thought I'd share with you what on x-tian once wrote me about our site:

I have to write to you to thank you so much for your website and especially for the daily chizuk. I have been trying to deal with pornography for literally decades. Your site has helped me to begin to actually deal with this problem successfully. I have to tell you something quickly. I am not Jewish (but I listen to rabbinic teaching constantly). I have learned over the past year how Jews actually live out their religion. My religion talks about love and grace but not about the true importance of law and deeds. As a result, all of the websites that are intended to help with battling the porn problem never get in and recognize the reality of the yetzer hara and doing battle there. The instruction of our websites is to pray about it as though God will take away the problem when the time is right. On top of that they teach not to really worry about it since grace will cover our mistakes.

Now I know better. Not that grace will not cover mistakes, but that we have more responsibility than that. You have helped me to understand that we have to work on ourselves and the specific deficiencies the Creator has allowed us to have. As a result I can understand the purpose of this world and the world to come much more clearly. And I need all the help I can get. So do the rest of the men of my religion. I hope I can somehow help some to wake up to the reality of our irresponsibility. I have to be careful who I share your jewel of a website with because many won't understand. I pray that someday they will wake up.

I couldn't go another day without sharing my gratitude with you.

As far as the site goes, I'm not trying to be diplomatic, but I have taken advantage of every part of it. I initially found the tips helpful. I tried not to go through them all at once so that I would still have some to look forward to. I like that you have tips that are from different perspectives. The email chizuk list is helpful because I have to face them each time I check my email, which is encouraging. I have checked into a lot of the filters because the one I was using was defeatable.

I have to say that I feel the whole site is appropriate for me and the aspects of lust and porn that I have to deal with. I am excited about the direction you are going. I pray that this site will be a beacon to those like me who love G-d yet battle with this generation's struggle with lust and easy access.

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by Ano Nymous - 03 Jan 2009 17:17

Wow that is some POWERFUL stuff Ben and GUE. I wish you the best of luck in defeating this YH Ben!

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 15 Jan 2009 14:49

I'm still on the derech to my 90 days, but I am finding I am hitting some particular struggles. I want to bring these out into the open before I am overwhelmed. I am hoping that revealing these struggles combined with any advice you guys may have will cripple the Y"H.

First, I find that guarding my eyes is quite difficult. I have a many years long habit of stealing looks at women in public (dressed modestly or not). Last night, I was strongly tempted to do this again, but I forced my eyes away after the initial glance. Unfortunately, the image was already stuck in my head.

The other struggle I have I find difficult to describe. It has to do with the urge to masturbate. It seems like a real, physical feeling, although I suppose it may actually be a physiological manifestation of the psychological addiction. At any rate, this urge is with me almost constantly, though at a low level, thankfully.

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Re: Beginning Again

Posted by the.guard - 15 Jan 2009 22:02

Dear Ben,

These two struggles you mention, are the two struggles that ALL of us have on this forum ;D

In honor of your first question, I added now a new Q&A page to our FAQ section. I've been wanting to do this for a while, but since you asked about Shmiras Ainayim, I decided the time had come to put up this page. You can find it [here](#). It's a bit long, so you might want to read it over a day or two. There are many great ideas there that can help you. Find the ones that talk to you the most and REMEMBER them when in the street.

The second question you ask is also why we're all here. Many of the ideas you'll get from the page above will help you in this too. But remember, it gets progressively easier. The more you convince yourself that these things are simply "not an option" anymore, it will become much easier.

May Hashem be with you!

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