

From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by qi - 05 May 2013 15:38

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Hello all,

I'm in my late 20s and have been masturbating since I was 12. By the time I found out it was wrong I was so used to it I couldn't stop. I saw lots of pornographic pictures online but wasn't addicted until I discovered pornographic videos. I tried hundreds of times to stop but when the inevitable fall happened I despaired of ever fully recovering. That changed about a year ago when I started really trying to stop and when I fell I got right back up.

However, I'm far from recovered. The longest I've gone is 40 days with no P or M. I found GYE a few weeks ago and joined last week. I think it's fantastic that we have a frum site on this. And, it's much better organised than goyishe equivalents.

So here I am trying to kick the habit of a lifetime for a lifetime. I'm interested in the 12 steps although I don't fully understand how they work. But here goes:

Hi, my name's Qi and I'm a porn addict. Porn has damaged my life considerably. It affected my school work when I stayed up till 2 am looking at it. It affected my learning when I needed to leave mid seder to M. It affected my shidduchim in a profound way. It made me depressed when shidduchim were hard. It affected my shteiging because nothing else matters compared to this. It affected my moods. It affected my relationship with my family. It affected my relationship with HKBH.

When I first found out it was wrong I still didn't know how bad it was. I'm ashamed to admit this but I actually masturbated on Yom Kippur once. HKBH please have mercy on me and forgive me.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by some\_guy - 30 May 2013 04:00

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Its good to accidentally write long posts. You take a simple idea and let all the thought and pressure behind it out at once. Its really relaxing. I always reread my post. It just helps.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by Chachaman - 30 May 2013 05:13

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Personally, I don't think that I was addicted as some to begin with, so I'm just sharing my own experiences (from a 17-year-old bochur's perspective):

I had difficulty at first saying "okay, I'm going to install a filter and block EVERYTHING". It seemed impossible to not have that lifeline, or that "what if I really want to fall? I should at least have a lifeline". Thus, it took me a long time to block everything on my iPod, computer, and Android phone that could lead me astray.

Recovery is a slow process, and perhaps build up your filters step by step. Maybe by the time you're making a neder against p\* sites it's too late--perhaps try to avoid triggers? TaPhSiC isn't about nedarim about porn sites per se, but things that might trigger you to get there. I also think the idea of hitting bottom would help provide a strong motivation to go completely shmutz free--for me, if I don't have sufficient motivation, I'm toast (and the Y"H does its best to kill motivation).

Anyway, kol hakavod! It sounds like you're in a good place right now, and there's no where to go but up! I agree with you--eBay, YouTube and especially Facebook can be triggering (I guess I'm also trying to wean myself off Facebook, a lot of people post triggering things, or its only a click away.)

Hatzlocha! KOT. All the best!

\*Edit: after thinking for a little while (okay, just a minute or two), I also think it might be dangerous to link pornography to procrastination, because if you do, the instant you start procrastinating, then you'll watch porn, and vice versa. It's like if you lose one battle, you automatically lose both, when that doesn't need to happen.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by Dov - 30 May 2013 08:21

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Dear Qi/Getting there,

You wrote above that you are ready to try these 12 steps for real. Excuse me for asking, chaver, but after reading all this and hearing your pain, relating so deeply as do others here, I have but one question to start with:

Is your first name really Qi?

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by Gettingthere - 30 May 2013 12:37

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Thanks for your continued support guys.

Dov, lol thanks for lightening the mood on this thread, it needed it.

When I joined the forum I started with one letter, the first on the keyboard, but it need to be 2 letters so I added the i because it was the only letter that made any sense. But now I think I need a more proper name, especially as I don't want to be named after a TV show, so I changed it. I didn't realise there was a member called reallygettingthere so I might change it one last time.

chachaman i hear what you're saying about linking porn and procrastination, but the truth is that losing one battle makes me lose the other already, that's why I think they're connected and need to be worked on at the same time.

The leader of my procrastination group introduced himself as having 'an addictive personality,' he said he used to be addicted to other things as well as procrastination. Apparently studies show that procrastination has the same brain pattern as using any addictive substance. It also releases dopamine, just like porn etc.

I see porn and procrastination as two sides of a coin. Avoiding porn is *sur meirah*, and avoiding procrastination is *aseh tov*.

I'm going to try working on both simultaneously, but you're right, if I fall in one I'll try to be extra careful in the other.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by Dr.Watson - 30 May 2013 13:32

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OK, last name change: qi-->gettingthere-->Dr.Watson

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by Dov - 30 May 2013 17:27

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) more serious note:

...But if you want to *really* work those steps, then what you wrote may have been really sweet - but that's not the way addicts traditionally do it. The way we classically do it is and always has been (and always will be) simply like this:

"Hi. My name is Dov (that's my real first name of course) and I am a sexaholic (or whatever I happen to be admitting). No addict in successful recovery ever made it by getting up the courage after sufferring just too damn much, finally decided, "Yes! I am going to do whatever it

takes to get better! I can't take this anymore!!", and got up in from of a crowd and said:

"Hi. My 'name' (wink, wink) is Teshuva613neverzeralevatola120....and I am an addict. Phew, that was hard!"

The crowd would be stunned. Trust me.

It just doesn't work that way, Amigo. Can you feel the power of just plain first name use - just really being who you really are? Can you feel that natural resistance to it? That's because it is real. Dangerously real. Do you feel like it'd be kinda like suicidal? Maybe not. But if you do, then I suggest that shows you that it has real power. Doing it would be taking realer action than you may have ever taken before...maybe not. I don't know you. But I am operating on a hunch here and only *suggesting*. The sheer power of simple honesty makes it a thing we twist and turn - really squirm - to avoid. But it's the way addicts have always done their real First Steps ("We admitted"). Sadly, *admitting the truth about ourselves to other (safe) real people is the only way we eventually come to truly admit it to ourselves*. We frum porners and masturbaters (sex with ourselves) are masters at hiding and lying. In fact, that's our prime blockage, far more than our porning and sex with ourselves are. *So, recovery is much harder to really succeed at while hiding behind a fake name. It may feel like the easier, softer way - but it is really the hard way.*

Yes, some people get better to some degree using a fake name. And some people can stand on their heads while balancing plates on their feet and live on cabbage for a year. Wonderful. Why do things the hard way? Do you and I need to do this uphill? Do we need to go about recovery the hard way? And do you want to subsist on the same recovery hanburger as many others eat? Sure, it's possible - but what do you want for yourself? The best?

So, if you want to get steak instead of leftover hamburger, I say go for it, chaver. Do what I do and use your real first name. If it is Chuna-Feitel then I understand your hesitation; if you have already given out personal identifying details (like your street address, mother's maiden name, what you do for a living exactly, or your photograph) I also understand it would be stupid to use your real first name here where just anyone can read it. But if it is a basically normal name...why strengthen your faking and hiding muscle even more than it is already? If you are really here for recovery and really sick of the problem you have as others here are of theirs, then I invite you to make a **real** go for it, brother!

Hatzlocha!

- Dov

PS. Check out Captain Kirk post here on GYE, if u can find it.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Dr.Watson - 30 May 2013 17:52

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Thanks Dov, I get what you're saying. It's interesting that you mention that we frum porn addicts are masters at hiding. The thing is there is no getting round the fact that our frum community is very judgemental. It's a real shame, but it's undeniable. I never cease to be amazed at some of the reasons shidduchim are rejected, or kids are turned away from schools etc.

It's a real shame but our community is very judgemental and therefore people have to hide their problems which sometimes make them worse. This happens to a ridiculous extent but I don't want to be the first to swim against the tide.

This has bothered me for ages. In yeshivah people are always putting up notices saying 'chavrusah wanted for such-and-such time' no name, just a number. You call the number and there's a message saying please leave your name and your number and I'll decide whether or not to get back to you. I never did. If the guy is going to act like that I don't want to learn with him. same thing for diras, moving sales, everything. I think it's ludicrous and I imagine you agree but in such a climate of secrecy I don't feel able to share much.

Let me put it another way: currently there are 593 people on this forum. 20 members with user names and 573 guests who read but don't contribute. I make that 3.3% of users who have any kind of name. (On YBR right now there are 77 guests and 45 members, or 36.9% of users who have names.) Now, I'm not blaming those that don't want to sign up, I'm not judging and I fully understand their reservations. At the same time it makes it difficult for me to give a real name. I hope you understand.

If it helps at all I've started attending live procrastinators anonymous meetings in my area and I use my real name there. Partly because I'm the only Jew there, partly because they I can see who I'm talking to, and partly because the stigma of being a procrastinator is not as great.

If I gave my real name I wouldn't feel able to be as truthful in my posts. I've hidden my name but my posts are all honest.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by mr. emunah - 30 May 2013 19:01

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Agreed,

we have to remeber that this site is open to the whole internet, and it probably wouldn't be a good idea to put a nice sign on my front Lawn saying "HI I STRUGGLE WITH P & M how bout you?"

we have to remember where we are.

that being said, you can get real friendships with members (I frequently communicate by phone or email with at least 3 members on a Real name basis)

Hurray for GYE!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Dov - 30 May 2013 19:59

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All you did was point out that others are judgemental, dishonest, and that it has bothered you for ages. And you would be the first to swim against the tide here?

Sorry, but I have been using my first name on this forum from the first day I came here. And many other guys here do the same - yes, they have usernames, but they sign their posts with their real first name. Just to be real.

Now the fact that you clarified you would not be able to be as honest if you started using your real first name here, is a very deep insight.

It proves beyond a shadow of doubt that even though a person would NOT be writing any real self-identifying info (like what *country* they live in, even!) honesty here about whats really going in in our minds and hearts or what real challenges they (we) are having, would be much more challenging...in other words, **more real**.

Ouch, indeed.

Here we are, masturbaters all - yet we sugarcoat it by saying we have a '*porn* problem' - and using the real simple first name is so rare.

Nu. GYE started to provide a safe place for frum guys to admit the truth about themselves without fear of being identified. I think the usernames thing is taking that way too far. Yes, it technically is why GYE is successful - *but no real self-ID is done with a first name (except for Chuna-Feitel)*! Aye, but it's so scary. I know. I have been there in that hole for years. Will never forget.

But I appeal to you GYE guys (like you Dr Watson) who have the guts to actually *post* here: Yes, you have already taken quite a step by actually posting at all! But please consider utilizing GYE for all it was created for. Make recovery friendships here with other frum recovering real people, share private emails and chat with each other here, call each other on the phone. No need to 'sign up for a partner' - just PM each other and ask for cell#s! It's great to have real voices of real people to talk to. When and if you becoem comfy with it, then meet in person for a talk every week over a quick cup of coffee and make recovery friendships that will last a lifetime. They are the most precious relationships many of us will ever have.

Safety is a key to freedom, yes: but it can also be a prison. I am not telling you what you aught to do - just offerring you a key if u want to use it, amigo. I see deep potential in your posts. Just a hunch, Watson.



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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by Chachaman - 30 May 2013 20:13

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in case anyone cares, my first name is Robert.

its very interesting: right as I was about to submit, I thought "What if a family member reads my take on the parebtal divorce situation located in my posts in tcholent group?

And then I thought: nu, everything I said was truthful, and if lets say a family member were to read it, it might constitute a real step in dealing with the issues.

I bet a lot of people on the forum might be identifiable if a family member read their post. is that very likely? maybe a. 00001% chance, if that. And even if they do--hey, we're on our way to recovery, so who cares?

I'm not giving my city (well, I told one person privately already), I'm just giving my first name, Robert.

it actually feels really good to do so.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by gibbor120 - 30 May 2013 21:49

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[Dov wrote:](#)

PS. Check out Captain Kirk post here on GYE, if u can find it.

You can find it if you click on the dov quotes link in my signature. I moved it up to the first post since it is referenced so often.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by gibbor120 - 30 May 2013 21:58

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Just to give a bit of balance to this discussion. I do not put my first name on the forum. The internet in my opinion is not the safest place to put your name. I wouldn't want to be identified by a relative or someone I know, unless I choose to tell them.

On the other hand. I generally give my name in PMs, and I have spoken to others on the phone and in person with my real name... So it doesn't have to be all or nothing. Once I have chosen to connect with someone in particular, I am comfortable using my real name.

Yes, using your real name is important, but not necessarily in every context.

My 2 cents.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof  
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 31 May 2013 01:24

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I share the same sentiment as gibbor120.

my chavrusa, with whom i discuss GYE periodically, looked at the forum and said that within 5 minutes he figured out my user name. being one of the people that were mentioned by both Mr.E and gibbor who speak to people and use their real name, and speaking with and meeting many others from the forum I definitely do value the importance of keeping things real, but the open internet is a place to practice caution.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Chachaman - 31 May 2013 03:48

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My point is is that if someone that I knew read my posts, they could probably figure out who I was. My response:

a) I don't care that much, and

b) Part of the recovery process is opening up.

I'm not giving my last names or initials. I'm not creating a lawn chair or telling my friends "hey, check out GYE, my names Chachaman", but if someone happens to discover it, it's not the worst thing in the world.

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