

From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by qi - 05 May 2013 15:38

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 Dov - 20 Feb 2014 04:58

Hearing you loud and clear, Doc.

When I start to literally accept G-d's Will as guiding my life today, things start to change. Giving myself to Him even partially and even very poorly, works just fine...as long as I really mean it. I will never really give myself to Him, and believe that nobody does - and He knows it.

And none of this is about religion.

If it is for me, then I am probably just being coerced by my guilt, philosophical allegiances, etc. This experience I think you are looking for is so different. For a change, it is not an 'obligation' in any sense except *to myself*. It's free, enlightened self-interest. The closest to Love and altruism I will probably ever get.

For an addict, Step 3 as *a product* of yiddishkeit or Torah, is sterile. For it isn't my will, but G-d's, the Rabbi's or the Torah's, or my fathers', or whoever. It may be good, but it usually does not work at all. For it to finally be real and actually change the way I feel and exist, it's **gotta** be *self*-will. My choice.

And though sanity rarely visits us for long without sobriety, this can work in our lives even if you or I are still masturbating. It's what Chaza"l mean when they say "afilu rosho uboteyach baShem - then Chessed yisovevenhu." Practically though, for addicts the sanity really is not there to make a real decision to do anything real like this. Hence the cycles of falling, crying, falling, etc, for decades.

Sanity usually only comes *long* after sobriety starts.

But faith that is based on surrender to and acceptance of G-d's Purely Benevolent Power is a thing *anyone* can choose and learn...Jew, gentile, whatever. But it requires patience and an acceptance of imperfection in it, right from the outset. In other words:

humility.

If this is not gibberish to you, you may get enjoy reading the 12 and 12 chapter 3 (on the 3rd

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step) and chapping it better. If it is gibberish to you, you may read it anyhow.

Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Dr.Watson - 21 Feb 2014 14:12

Second meeting. Got a sponsor.

He told me to read the doctors opinion in the big book every day for 2 weeks. I've read it before but I never fully took it in. One bit that really got me was "the torture of cravings". I haven't looked at porn in over 2 weeks and I've found myself looking at women in the street for a fix. I went shopping for shabbos yesterday and was trying to be shomer einayim and I noticed, maybe for the first time, just how many attractive women there are in between my house and the shop. I couldn't look anywhere, and just noticing them out of the corner of my eye gave me urges. Torture is a fair way of describing it, it caused me real pain to feel that urge but not look.

I also read in 'mask in the mirror' that as an addict I sexualise stress, tiredness, resentment, etc. It's very true. I've fallen a few times this week before I even got out of bed. This morning I woke up very tired and my brain starting thinking about sex. Why? cos I'm tired. So...?What do you mean so? You're tired so the way to deal with it is to think about sex and fall again. That way you can numb yourself from the tiredness until you feel ready to get up. What could be better?

B"H I caught it but it was still a struggle. Still, I'm happy that my day started properly.

Have a good shabbos my friends.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof

Posted by Pidaini - 21 Feb 2014 18:33

Thanks for sharing Doc!!

The looking on the street is one of the hardest things for me still. They're everywhere, and it's really warm here in EY. I can feel the affet taking that extra look has on me, it's really not safe!! I need to take it one trip at a time not looking. I remember seeing an idea somewhere to stop for a moment by the mezuzah and asking Hashem to help us keep our eyes away from bad sights, and even if we see them we should be able to turn away right away (like Dovid Hamelech asks in Tehillim, seee Tor siman 1)

Bravo on the struggle in the morning, it gets easier, with time.

For now, it's just one foot in frontof the other, and then the next and then the next. Enjoy this step!!

KUTGW!! KOMT!!!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dov - 23 Feb 2014 09:55

Slow ride....take it eaaaaasyyy...

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 24 Feb 2014 03:47

I'm feeling quite stressed right now. I had urges earlier today so I called a member of my group. We spoke, and a few minutes ago he called me back again. My wife went to sleep a while ago

so I closed the door and spoke quite freely about what was on my mind. After the conversation it occurred to me that she might not be asleep yet and could hear every word. So I tiptoed in and she's not obviously asleep. I whispered to her but she didn't respond.

I have no way of knowing if she is actually asleep or pretending to be asleep because she heard my conversation. I'm not ready to tell her yet as I haven't been sober long enough, and she's going through stress of her own right now and this would be too much for her. So I'm stressed which is not good.

Thing is, I think she would/will be upset if/when I told/tell her about all this, but I don't see why she should be. There are only 2 alternatives that I can see, neither are better. Either I look at porn but don't work on it, or I never look at porn cos I don't have the urge to do that. The first is clearly bad, the second would mean that I have no avodah to do, as well as being pretty unrealistic. I mean, addict or no addict, all men enjoy seeing such things and the availability of it nowadays is ridiculous. Does she really think I've never seen any porn?! I highly doubt it, she's probably just never thought about it.

In any case it's a conversation I'd like to have with her, but at a time of my choosing, not because of circumstances. It would be very ironic though to manage for 15 years to sneak around and watch porn without my family ever finding out, and then joining SA only to be caught trying to fix it less than 2 weeks later.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dov - 24 Feb 2014 04:09

Good heavens! Why tell her anything about it at all? I don't get it? Eevery case is different. Don't listen to "Rules of Thumb" about a subject like whether to tell your wife or not and when to tell her, etc. Please.

And your 'two alternatives' are pretending you can crawl into her head and figure out what she is thinking and how she will approach it...boy. Few men have ever figured out women...Odom harishon himself seems to have screwed up in that department worst of all, not exactly setting us men on the right track, no?

U r driving yourself crazy, sweet brother Doc. Recovery and sobriety are the two big concerns right now. Not your marriage or relationship with your wife. That will happen in step 9, or whenever. But when it becomes apparent that your wife should be told, **G-d will let you know.** Till then, I suggest this is part of your disease, that's all. Relax. Once again, the immortal (not really) words of Foghat, "Slow ride....take it eeeeassssyyyy..."

Or as the AA's say it: ***Easy Does It.***

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Pidaini - 24 Feb 2014 10:25

Smile, or
Dear Doc,

I don't know about Dov (your wife found out, no?), but I can say that I was and at times still are *exactly* where you are. I think I've actually posted about those times when I was sure that the "show" was over.

Hashem has been extremely kind to me, and has given me friends to talk to, and He has showed me *very* clearly that it is not yet the time to tell. Yes, my wife knows something is up, she knows I am keeping something from her, but right now, it's better that way.

Take a deep breath, calm down. If she confronts you, good, if not, great.....take it as it comes (and chances are that we are just paranoid, take that into a lot of consideration). We have the feeling that we need to be in control of when we tell her, how it comes out, etc.I need to let go, Hashem will do it (if He ever does) the exactly perfect way that it needs to be done. I can relax.

KUTGW!!! KOMT!!! and KIT!!!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dov - 26 Feb 2014 03:05

Personally, I try to follow one rule:

Never lie to my wife. If she asks me a question, I answer it honestly - lying about it 'to protect her' or 'to protect the marriage' is not the way for me. And G-d takes care of us and our marriage far better than I did or could now. 'Meshaneh mipnei hasholom' is a thing for others, not for me.

And the beautiful thing is, that as an addict and for my first few years in recovery I had *no clue* what 'Honestly' meant, but am learning now one day at a time. It is an amazing journey for both of us.

There *are* probably some people who ought never tell their wives some of the things they did, even if their wife asks them directly if they ever did them. But I thank my G-d every day that I am not one of them.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 03 Mar 2014 03:29

B"H doing OK. Sort of.

I'm in such a bad mood.

There's no reason for it. I don't know why. But I just feel so angry.

I did a few good things today despite the rain and my headache. I feel like I was really moser nefesh. I feel like a martyr. This is really bad. I know that feeling, and what happens next has never been anything good.

I want to do the right things and be a good guy and a good Jew, but I don't want to feel like I've suddenly become a tzaddik. It's such an annoying feeling. "Oh look at me, I haven't masturbated for over 3 whole days even though I really wanted to, I'm such a holy man. Look at that guy there barely concentrating on maariv, he doesn't know what avodas Hashem really means like I do. Of course, I'm not davening well either, but that's different cos that's not my avodah. I have this other yetzer hora to deal with and I'm doing soooooo well Hashem must think I'm soooooo amazing....." Aaaaaaaaarrrrrrrggggggggggggg.

Even though it's beyond stupid and I know it's stupid I just can't shake off the feeling. It's so annoying. I want to break something!!!!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Pidaini - 03 Mar 2014 07:58

Boy do I relate, ho ho ho!!!!

I suffer from "the entitled" feeling after "tzaddik" times. Everything is supposed to be just perfect!!! and when it's not, it's not just not good, but it ruins everything....."v'chol zeh einenu shoveh li"!!

Oh, and then....I get upset at myself for feeling that way, I know better, I shouldn't be feeling this way....(that usually does a lot of good)

There are two things that I've learned about how I deal with these times, One is not to take them *that* seriously. I am human, I have feelings, and it's not necessarily something that I can control. So if I know what the correct next step is, then I can take it even while feeling bad.

The second thing is that I found that talking about the feeling, either to Hashem and/or a friend goes a long way. Validating the feeling and showing it where it's wrong really helps me a lot, and I usually don't do well when I try doing it alone (as I did this motzei shabbos, and last night....hey!!! this is exactly what I need!!! thanks doc!!!!!!).

Feelings aren't stupid, I don't enjoy when someone calls a friend of mine stupid, feelings are exactly that.....feelings. Don't beat yourself up over it, just KOT through it!!!

KOMT!!!!!!

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 03 Mar 2014 20:42

As if to answer me straight away, I've been slipping today. Oh the urges!! I really want to just act out and be done with it. It's got under my skin, I just want to scratch.

I'm so irritable right now. I've had a feeling for a couple of days of just wanting something to eat or drink that will really 'hit the spot' but I can't find it. I'm climbing the walls fighting myself. Aaaarrrrggg.

I have a meeting in a couple of days that's a really big deal for me and I need to prepare, but so far today I've done almost nothing except fighting myself. It's so frustrating. I can't be bothered, I just want to call and cancel the meeting. How stupid that would be.

I called another member and he reminded me of the obvious truth. I am not in control. I cannot make the meeting go well. I need to prepare as it's my hishtadlus, but that's all it is. How it goes is up to Hashem and what He decides is best for me.

It really helps. It takes away the stress a lot. I'm not trying to ace the meeting, I just need to show up having done enough hishtadlus and the rest is up to Hashem. Whatever's best for me, I'll just get out of the way and let Him decide for me.

Easier said than done.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dov - 03 Mar 2014 23:04

Good luck at your meeting!! Hashem is with you, as much as He is with all the other people there, and is in charge of the outcomes completely. Wow - it's so nice to see that you have helpful friends to turn too, also. What great feedback you got!

And speaking of meetings, when I go to a meeting at work (on a good day) I am trying to focus on how I can be helpful to people there. It helps me listen, helps me get out of my own head (that's huge for me), helps me be a part *of*, rather than apart *from*...

Regarding your previous post about the superiority feelings and the maddening backlash of slipping again, I have what to share, too.

You are saying just what I have posted about so many times, and about which some posters guys get upset about or just shrug their shoulders and walk away: 1- I expect no schar whatsoever for my sobriety. 2- And I do not consider my sobriety a madreigah in any respect. And by the (very) same token, 3- I do not expect more sex from my wife because I 'held back and was faithful to her'.

I do, however, expect the same little smile and wink from Hashem that He probably gives *all* the sober alcoholics, pillheads, gamblers, and perverts who die sober and in recovery, as they pass by on their way 'up there' to their Big Judgement. Perhaps a nod, that conveys: "Hey, I know you had it rough, good job, dear. So glad you could join the rest of the human race."

That's about all.

Maybe I am wrong. Maybe He will give me a ticker tape parade down Shvilei D'rakia Avenue. None of my business, and I am not interested.

The day I need to get paid extra *because I am a recovering addict*, I will be in grave danger. The greatest danger is that I will drop my sobriety when I see that I am not getting paid enough! And that is the same whether the person 'paying' me is G-d (with *schar*, a feeling of *deveikus*, or a fun life here), my wife (with admiration, sex, or whatever), or people (with whatever I'd want from *them*).

It's good that you have been having urges today! I have been having them, too. Most of the time I just let them go and they do. But when they hurt on the way out I need to pray sincerely and calmly for the people I lust after or for the people I resent or am afraid of, or for myself to be helpful to them...and the lust disappears every time. I never pray for Him to take away my lust. I get busy with real life by praying for what matters, and the lust is like road kill - I rarely even feel the thump in the road as I ride past it. Usually I do not realize the lust went away until later in the day. And that's just the way I like it. If I was *aware* of and ***felt*** my lust go away right away after or during praying, then I'd end up in your exact predicament: feeling holy, G-d forbid. That'd flush the entire gift down the toilet for me. I'd soon end up crazy, in my head again, and lusting/resenting/planning/fearing. Blyechhh...

Finally, I see it that the reason that normal guys davening around me are careful from *shmutz* or daven well, and do *mitzvos* is generally because they are so good. But the main reason I am careful from *shmutz* *is because I am so sick*. It does not bother me to be lower than everybody around me in some respect. ***Everybody*** is higher than everyone else in *some* way, and lower than everyone else in *some* way. That's just the way, for me. And it's OK.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 04 Mar 2014 14:29

I did a lot of slipping yesterday, but technically remained sober, although I didn't feel sober.

In the past I have suffered many physical pains and infections due to my addiction. Sometimes it's been the excessive masturbation that did it, sometimes it was because of masturbating right until ejaculation, then stopping, then starting then stopping. After all, I didn't want to be motzi shichvas zera levatoloh! But that's what I did again yesterday.

A while ago on this thread I was on antibiotics because of it and someone suggested I keep the empty box as a reminder. Well I did. I decided to keep it with me for a while to remind myself that if I so much as get a (deliberate) erection today, or look for one picture online, I will almost certainly do something that will seriously hurt my health.

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Re: From a deep pit to a tall roof
Posted by Dr.Watson - 11 Mar 2014 03:59

I fell again today, but less than last month:

docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Aih3MiAjSuHTdDliYi1VX056T3I2LUNhOHQwcktMSVE&usp=sharing

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