

Voyeurism

Posted by Ministaros Nakeini - 09 Dec 2009 08:43

Dearest Chevra,

I have been part of GYE, for a little bit now- have gotten chizuk and inspiration from all of you Holy people-looking on as a quite outsider. I realized that I have not been posting- since I'm still afraid to admit my problem in public- I just created this new name- with a new e-mail, so that I am reassured of privacy- this realization was hard to admit to myself. I don't think I have ever admitted this to anyone else. However after seeing the chizuk and potential for growth that really opening up to this Chevra has- I want to come clean, and try and get rid of this double life.

Can anyone out there relate to lusting for Voyeurism? Lusting to see other people do regular things- but knowing that the ones being watched think they are completely private, and especially lusting, waiting in hope that you will see the most revealing things?

I'm going to need a little positive reinforcement- but I want to try and share my story- in hope of having a forum to really work on getting better. Reb Guard- I'm also going to need some guidelines about how to share my story- but at the same time in a way thats kosher, and doesn't cause others to fall...

thank you,

Ministaros Nakeini

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by the.guard - 09 Dec 2009 08:54

Welcome to our community, MN! Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up, up, up!

We would like to hear your story, but, as you said, try and keep details to a minimum and describe it in more general terms, as to not give people ideas or triggers. Thanks!

Dr. Benzion Sorotzkin, a religious psychologist and therapist, wrote a fascinating article called "[The Psychological Factors in Sexual Acting Out](#)" which can help those who struggle with these issues to understand the root of the subconscious needs they are trying to fill. Once a person understands this, they can fight it better, both on their own and through therapy (see our

Therapy Page for therapy options). I would like to quote from the article to help you understand better where your needs may be coming from:

Pornography, on a superficial level, simply serves the purpose of ensuring a more intense, momentarily self-soothing, physical experience. However, there often seems to be another level of emotional need being addressed.

A lack of affectionate intimacy in childhood often results in a frustrated need for intimacy without the tools to achieve it in a healthy way. (Like someone who did not get sufficient attention as a child, who now needs intense attention that can only be achieved by acting immaturely). This is often the appeal of pornography. In ordinary circumstances a person wouldn't see someone else unclothed unless they had an intimate relationship. Therefore, seeing someone unclothed via pornography creates the illusion of intimacy.

For some people, standard pornography is not intimate enough because everyone knows that the person they are viewing in a supposedly intimate moment is really an actress who is forgoing her privacy for the sake of money or drugs. They therefore, find it difficult to attain the illusion of intimacy with standard pornography. They prefer voyeurism where they believe they are "sharing" a truly private, intimate moment. They, of course, have to block out the fact that the person being observed did not consent to this "intimacy." (In the case of voyeurism via pornography they also have to accept the illusion that the observed are not aware of the fact that they are being filmed). An added emotional "benefit" of voyeurism is the feeling of power in forcing the "intimacy" on the other person. This is especially appealing to someone who was made to feel powerless in his early family environment.

Interestingly, many people suffering from voyeurism have no desire to see friends in intimate situations because when there is a real relationship there is no need for the illusion of a relationship.

For some people, the act of viewing someone unclothed is sufficient to achieve a satisfaction of the emotional need for intimacy. For others, the eventual sexual release adds a necessary intensity to the emotional experience (like an exclamation mark at the end of a sentence).

After the fact, there is usually a double disappointment: First there is the guilt and shame over the act itself. Then there is the painful disappointment that the hoped for emotional comfort (i.e.,

the illusion beyond the pleasure - as described above) was not achieved beyond the momentary illusion. It is like when a failed dieter eats cake to alleviate loneliness. The loneliness is alleviated for only a few moments while the shame and feeling of failure linger on. One wonders why the inevitable disappointment doesn't eventually undermine the illusion. I believe there are a few possible explanations.

Firstly, As Rav Dessler explains, Hashem gave the yetzer horah the power to create illusions that resist the lessons of experience. Otherwise, it would be virtually powerless. When faced with an acute or chronic frustration of a basic need (such as the need for intimacy, attention, acceptance, etc.) the power of the illusion intensifies in proportion to the frustration. One finds this with a person dying of thirst in a desert who imagines seeing an oasis up ahead.

Secondly, there is a little bit of truth in every illusion. When one is desperate this little bit becomes enormously appealing. For example, a shipwreck survivor on a raft in the ocean who, after days of unbearable thirst, will finally break down and drink the ocean salt water even though he resisted it for days because he knows it will kill him. None-the-less, since it contains the illusion of water, at some point, it feels like it's worth it to get that temporary relief. Likewise, someone desperate for intimacy may feel, at some point, that the illusion of intimacy is all he can hope to get and that may be better than nothing.

I would like to point out two important things though.

1) Self-knowledge and "understanding" **why** we act the way we do, doesn't generally get us very far. We need to "act" our way into a new way of thinking, not "think" our way into a new way of acting.

2) Whether someone suffers from voyeurism, fetishes, same-sex attraction or whatever, the common denominator to it all is **an addiction to "Lust"**. And once this is an addiction, we need to use the tools that can help us beat addictions. I will post some ideas in my next post.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by the.guard - 09 Dec 2009 08:57

Here are some ideas that can help you get started.

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#)...

Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best - and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other frum Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [this page](#) for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this

addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and

perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Tomim2B - 09 Dec 2009 09:07

Welcome Ministaros Nakeini!

Once a proper form of recovery is in motion, the specific type of lust we seek is irrelevant. The underlying cause of all addiction is **exactly** the same.

If we enlist ourselves in a 12-step program (which deals with the cause of our addiction), we'll be combating **all lust** no matter which or what way it manifests itself. I'd suggest getting in touch with Duvid Chaim and joining his anonymous SA phone conference.

Wishing you much success on your journey,

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by kanesher - 09 Dec 2009 12:11

I certainly can relate to the desire for voyeurism; while B"H I haven't gone there yet - thanks to GYE, if not, I would be there if I hadn't been able to stick my nails into the ground and start clawing the other direction - but I feel for me, whom pornography was never a major deal for -

my fantasys were always about people. And looking at a woman, a real woman, in the street and imagining her unclothed is the same desire - davka a real person, for a real feeling of intimacy, as doctor Sorotzkin wrote - Guard, could you link that? - and ironically I had the experience that more then once when a woman whom I had struggled with lust actually entired my life in a real way - the lust tapered way. Suddenly, she was real.

For us wounded children, intimacy will real people (read: our wives) is not as desirable as intimacy will fake/people we don't know enough that we can still fantasize about them because real people have needs, desires, failings - and hence that one intimacy that will heal all our pain is still out of reach. A fake, on some level, we can imagine will still parent us, so to speak, and with us not actually approaching them we can protect our selves which we believe to be totally broken, and hence not worthy of intimacy. Hence, via voyeurism, we can protect our wounded selves -which we believe no one would actually want to have intimacy with - and experience a sort of artificial ultimate intimacy - a safe fantasy environment with a physically real person, not a prostitute whom sense is incapable of intimacy, yet not real.

Problem is the practical dangers are tremendous, as well.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 09 Dec 2009 13:52

Welcome to the forum. It took a lot of guts for you to post here. And posting here is the first step to recovery [just keep on doing it]!

I second Tomim, the root of the problem is we're all addicted to lust, and it doesn't really matter how our addiction has manifested itself.

Lots of luck,

--Eye.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kedusha - 09 Dec 2009 18:25

[Mr. Jew wrote on 09 Dec 2009 18:00:](#)

Some people its incest, some people its young children (pardon my bluntness).

Your bluntness is besides the point. If someone is on the verge of acting on these types of things (and certainly if he has already done so), he needs serious help, beyond what the GYE forum is able to provide, and our children need to be protected from him.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kollel Guy - 09 Dec 2009 19:08

[Kedusha wrote on 09 Dec 2009 18:25:](#)

[Mr. Jew wrote on 09 Dec 2009 18:00:](#)

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You are absolutely correct - and the handbook says exactly what you just said, just in other words.

HOWEVER, once the proper measures ARE taken, and the person IS living responsibly - according to what his situation neccesitates, I don't see why such a person can't join the gue family, and do teshuvah along with us. We more than anyone understand the concept of accepting people notwithstanding their negative aspects. And aderabah, i think we could gain tremendously from hearing about the struggles of one who has in a sense - much more to deal with than the average addict.

Yes, it's very easy to dispise such a person - for good reason, but we know 100%, that if he's an einikle of the avos, we are obligated to dig as deep as neccessary to find the potential tzaddik in this person. And by doing this, i think we will be able to judge ourselves positively as well.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kedusha - 09 Dec 2009 19:17

[Kollel Guy wrote on 09 Dec 2009 19:08:](#)

[Kedusha wrote on 09 Dec 2009 18:25:](#)

[Mr. Jew wrote on 09 Dec 2009 18:00:](#)

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I'm not disagreeing with you, but there would be certain obstacles. For example, there would have to be a zero tolerance policy regarding any "falls," where a child (or any other person) is being harmed. One of the benefits of the forum is the ability to be honest about our setbacks. Such a person could not be honest, without risking being turned over to the police.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kollel Guy - 09 Dec 2009 19:35

That's a good point, didn't think of that. And it does seem wrong to be dealing with a guy who's telling us about his most recent fall, and talking to him like a normal person, giving him tips how to be strong and stuff... But technically, how does this make it more likely to happen again?

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kollel Guy - 09 Dec 2009 19:38

Are you saying that such a person won't be helped by the forum AT ALL , bec. he wont be honest with us?

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by the.guard - 09 Dec 2009 20:03

Often addicts have fantasies that go WAY out of context with what is right and wrong, such as adultery, kids, incests, you name it. See the Ohr Hachayim in Acharei Mos where he brings the Gemara of the goy who bought a piece of meat in the market place, cut it open, used it to pleasure himself, cooked it and ate it. Like he explains there, an addict's mind can see everyone and everything as a potential for sexual pleasure. HOWEVER, there is a HUGE difference between someone who has such fantasies but never ever acted on them, and someone who has actually acted them out in real life. For the former, he would have plenty to benefit from on GYE. For the latter, we'd send him straight to tools 17 and 18 of the GYE handbook, **with no tolerance for anything less.**

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kedusha - 09 Dec 2009 20:22

[Kollel Guy wrote on 09 Dec 2009 19:35:](#)

That's a good point, didn't think of that. And it does seem wrong to be dealing with a guy who's telling us about his most recent fall, and talking to him like a normal person, giving him tips how to be strong and stuff... But technically, how does this make it more likely to happen again?

If he acted on his desires today, then he's obviously predisposed to molesting children. Even if we were to give him all the Chizuk in the world, we still would not want our children to go near

him, and rightfully so. By continuing to support him, without requiring the most radical forms of intervention (as Guard discussed), we would be enabling his behavior and putting children at risk. As Guard's post indicates, that is something that GYE would never do.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by kutan - 09 Dec 2009 20:24

People who have a ta'ava for children or young teens... and have found themselves 'acting out' in this way, have issues that are not for GYE.

Those behaviors are not the result of addiction or taavah, but rather from... other things, that are only conrollable through intense therapy with a SKILLED therapist in these areas.

OHEL can help, by the way, and are confidential.

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Re: Voyeurism

Posted by Kedusha - 09 Dec 2009 20:26

[kutan shel hachabura wrote on 09 Dec 2009 20:24:](#)

People who have a ta'ava for children or young teens... and have found themselves 'acting out' in this way, have issues that are not for GYE.

I think we're all in agreement.

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