

Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 13 Oct 2020 20:55

Hi. I am 26 years old. I have been struggling with inappropriate content since I was in ninth grade. My well meaning father ironically got me an iPod touch as a reward for learning over the summer. After hearing my friends speak about things they had seen, I ventured into the forbidden territory. I tried stopping so many times. I made promises. I put on codes. I eventually smashed the iPod. But the Scourge always found a way back into my life. This wasn't the only front I was fighting though. I had a very low self image growing up. I felt out of place. My family was also semi-dysfunctional and I had a very difficult OTD brother. Then when I was in twelfth grade I started having obsessive thoughts about the craziest things. My self esteem plunged even lower. I was convinced that I was sick and totally beyond help. It was so frightening. I suffered alone until I got to Israel. I finally told a Rebbi what I was going through, and he referred me to a therapist. It took me about six months to even consider the possibility that I was normal, and another six months to get to a point that I was ready to move on to the next stage. I finally went home to start shidduchim. I was convinced that I would get married right away, put my past behind me, and start a beautiful new chapter in my life. After all I had been through, surely God was not going to let me suffer anymore. But my life started spiraling downward very quickly. Being home in a toxic environment brought me back exactly to where I was before therapy. The stress and anxiety of dating was also overwhelming. I went out with the first girl until she said no to me because of my family. I wasn't sure that I wanted to marry her, but I was heartbroken. My dreams of a happily ever after were broken. Then, at the advice of a relative, I moved out of my house. My parents were hurt, confused, and angry. I was filled with guilt. I felt homeless, and I became even more depressed and anxious. It came to a point that I couldn't bring myself to date anymore. I was bouncing around therapists, hoping that someone would fix me, but not believing that they could. I eventually found a therapist who managed to convey to me that the only way out is by accepting my situation, and taking responsibility for my own life. Slowly, I started getting control of my emotions. I began to realize who I am and what I'm capable of. I even started being happy with my life and not blaming God so much for my circumstances. I started dating again, which was a huge milestone. I still had never confronted my 'habit' head on though. I felt guilty about going out and also using the internet. I read some articles about internet usage, and I realized that my habit was really an addiction. I saw the negative effects it can have on a marriage. Studies also show that it's detrimental to mental health, by causing anxiety and depression. It's time to fix up my act. I want to be clean going into marriage. I want to feel good about myself when going on dates. I want to be the best me.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by Zedj - 02 May 2021 05:06

Gut voch!

Your amazing!

keep em coming!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 03 May 2021 17:11

I had a really rough anxiety and OCD trigger the other day, and I slipped up. Sigh. Starting again. Going to text my partner Aaalll every day for accountability. Will also try to be especially on guard when anxiety flares up. I really want these two weeks. It's tough to have to start over.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by ihadstringsbutnowimfree - 03 May 2021 20:18

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 06 May 2021 19:32

Hi fellas. I'm only one day clean. I keep on falling and falling and falling and falling. I keep on trying to get up, but it seems that a fall always follows. I'm hoping for the day that I go up and don't come back down. The Psychologist Ish MiGrodno and I scheduled a serious talk about this struggle. What I don't understand is why is it so hard. Why do I never keep to my convictions? I've decided to stop hundreds of times, yet it's never worked. What will be different about the time that I really do stop, and how do I get there?

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by DavidT - 06 May 2021 19:54

Hi

Did you try SMART recovery tools yet?

1- **Change-Plan worksheet**, identify steps you can take toward your goal (envisioned future) and consider people who can help you get there. Create strategies to help you progress and identify signs that show you're making progress. If a strategy doesn't work, don't give up; use it as an opportunity to try something different.

You may also use this tool as a problem-solving worksheet because it can help you break large problems into smaller steps to focus your efforts so that you don't get overwhelmed.

2- Coping with Urges

Identifying your triggers is an important part of your recovery. Awareness gives you the power to understand and deal with urges; however, even with awareness and planning, you will experience urges. It's a normal and natural part of recovery.

An awareness and understanding of urges is crucial to recovery. You identified what triggers them, but do you know how long they last? How intense they are? How frequent? Most people with addictive behaviors don't realize that urges usually last only seconds to minutes and then pass.

One way to understand your urges is by recording them in an urge log.

An urge log is a table in which you record specific information about your urges. After a few entries, you may notice patterns and similarities about your urges. The log then becomes a road map that will help you anticipate situations and emotions that may trigger urges. You also may notice certain thought patterns associated with your urges, which are helpful in self-management and problem solving

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by Striving Avreich - 07 May 2021 08:50

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 06 May 2021 19:32:](#)

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don't come back down. The ~~Psychologist~~ Ish MiGrodno and I scheduled a serious talk about this struggle. What I don't understand is why is it so hard. Why do I never keep to my convictions? I've decided to stop hundreds of times, yet it's never worked. What will be different about the time that I really do stop, and how do I get there?

I recently saw a quote from dov that went something like

Lust isn't the problem, living life without it is

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by ihadstringsbutnowimfree - 09 May 2021 22:14

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 10 May 2021 00:28

Thanks to everyone for the advice. I am giving a warning to those reading this; lot's of negativity is on the way. I don't buy this planning ahead thing that everyone is speaking about; also this idea off knowing when you fall and why. I fall always. In bed, in the shower, in the bathroom. Also, it can happen at anytime. What starts it? The fact that I want it. Why does it always have to be attributed to something? There is something called the sexual drive. I've had it since I was 13. Way before any stress, anxiety, or anything else even existed in my life. I feel that I've tried everything. Nothing is working.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by Ish MiGrodno - 10 May 2021 00:40

Dude - you've been off of porn for 7 months and you say nothing's working?! If I'd have accomplished that at age 26, I would have "put it in the bank"... and hopefully addressed the masturbation thing the following year (I did neither : (

?Glad to hear you are a healthy human; let's speak for the 400th 1000th time and continue looking for eitzos - there is lots more schar this way!

Your ~~overly optimistic~~ realistic friend in Grodno ~ IMG

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 10 May 2021 18:52

I spoke to my therapist last night about my issue. We are going to try urge-surfing. I hope it works.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by ihadstringsbutnowimfree - 10 May 2021 21:34

The urge surfing meditation has helped me, it's one of my tools. If you do something habitually and compulsively, then it's a habit, a cycle. I go to 12-step meetings every day, most people there are just like me, except for the ways they act out, which can vary (I've heard some freaky stuff). But it's all the same thing going on. Before I started being around other people with my problem I thought I was unique. I'm not unique.

You think you're the first person to PMO at 13? The first person with high sex-drive? The good news is you're not, which means that there are others like you, which means there are solutions out there.

You just haven't found a solution that works for you, yet.

I suggest listening to Dov's 57 talks or 12 step workshop (you don't have to be a 12-stepper to get benefit).

guardyoureyes.com/GYEFiles/MP3s/12Steps/Dovs%2012-Step%20Workshop.zip

guardyoureyes.com/tools/kosher-isle/shiurim/category/dov-s-recovery-talks

Get outside of your head, and go listen to the guy who hasn't jerked it in over 20 years, you might learn something that us sex drunks can't teach you. You got this!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by ihadstringsbutnowimfree - 10 May 2021 21:47

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by ihadstringsbutnowimfree - 10 May 2021 21:55

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 11 May 2021 11:31

From what you write (and from our conversations) it sounds like you do not have a kedusha issue. BH you have removed pornography from your life, which shows you who are. What you do seem to have is a stress issue. So many of us trained ourselves to use masturbation as a self soothing pacifier. It became our default activity to calm ourselves down. For years, if anything tense came my way, i would masturbate with a vengeance, or better said, with desperation. i knew of no other way to self regulate and calm down. I came out of the mikva the day of my chasuna and masturbated again. I had no other tools. So buddy, calm down. you are an erliche yid who has made an incredible sacrifice. You have given up the thrills and escapes of pornography, and are living a holy life. Masturbation? Iyh you will work on it. With time and training and support you will b'ezras Hashem kick the habit. But realize that you are presently not doing it out of lust or hashchasa. Accept yourself and celebrate how far you have come. Iyh you will build a beautiful holy happy and kosher home.

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