

Mental Health and MarriagePosted 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 Ish MiGrodno - 06 Mar 2022 03:33

When I try talkin' to my wife in French, it usually comes out wrong.

I tried sayin' je t'aime, but it somehow came out je te deteste..

I'll stick to English.

Or Lithuanian.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 06 Mar 2022 14:18

[Ish MiGrodno wrote on 06 Mar 2022 03:33:](#)

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I'll stick to English.

Or Lithuanian.

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Nein! nein! nien!!! Mir tor nit reden dem goyishe shprach!!!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 07 Mar 2022 04:06

Hi everybody. @ cordnoy, I'm not really sure what the point of your previous post was, can you please elaborate?

The Kollel situation is still rough. I'm not sure if it's worth it to stay at this point. I am miserable to the point that I don't want to get up in the morning. I think the only thing holding me back from tapping out is a lack of clarity as to what the next step is. I don't want to leave yet, but I don't see another path.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 07 Mar 2022 09:06

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 07 Mar 2022 04:06:](#)

Hi everybody. @ cordnoy, I'm not really sure what the point of your previous post was, can you please elaborate?

I think that spelling and grammar is a pet peeve of Cordnoys, I don't think there were any hidden pearls of wisdom.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by Avrohom - 08 Mar 2022 04:55

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 07 Mar 2022 04:06:](#)

The Kollel situation is still rough. I'm not sure if it's worth it to stay at this point. I am miserable to the point that I don't want to get up in the morning. I think the only thing holding me back from tapping out is a lack of clarity as to what the next step is. I don't want to leave yet, but I don't see another path.

Sorry to hear that you're in such a rough situation. I just looked through your thread - not all, but a number of posts - you are an incredibly articulate, self-aware, honest individual. You know your strengths and weaknesses and aren't afraid to seek advice. You're an inspiration to so many here, through your story and the Chizuk you give.

Given that, I wonder if there's something else that you're aware of going on - and that's why you're not too satisfied with your Rebbe's answer or ready to move out. Maybe talk it over with someone else, (friend, another Rebbe, therapist - whomever - as a sounding board) and see if you can get more clarity.

Hatzlocha with everything!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 09 Mar 2022 03:03

Hi everyone. Thank you for your support and advice. Things have gotten a little better as far as learning since my last post. I started learning with the Rosh Kollel for an hour a day and that helped give some structure to my Seder. I also finished Brachos and I started Shabbos. Some suggested talking about the situation with a confidant. I've already gone down that road and I haven't received any advice that I didn't yet know. In fact, it was frustrating me even more because I was hoping they would offer me a cure-all solution. I think my work here is to realize and come to terms that there is no easy fix. I have to do my best with whatever life offers me. I don't want to switch Kollelim, I don't have enough energy left for that. I want to stay one more Zman, hopefully with good Chavrusas, and then I'll re-evaluate.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 22 May 2022 04:24

Hi guys. Recently I saw a very interesting thread. The author described how he has been fighting the good fight for three decades, and he has reached a point that he doesn't think he will ever succeed. He challenged anyone to prove this belief wrong. I think the question really being asked here is "Why shouldn't I just give up?" Honestly, I'm not in a strong position to answer this question, as I haven't even been alive for thirty years, so I can't imagine how difficult it is to be in such a predicament. However, I think the answer is simple. Why not give up? Because *giving up* means *giving in*. It means sinking to new and unimaginable lows. It means giving up everything worth fighting for in life, G-d, family, love, and well-being. The road of least resistance leads to intense pain and suffering. Even if the author's assumption is true that complete "success" can never be reached, what happened to all of the small victories along the way? When we reach the Next World, we will see the accumulation of a lifetime's worth of struggles. And besides, I believe the entire premise is wrong. If we recognize the existence of an all-knowing and omnipotent Creator, then we inevitably reach the conclusion that our circumstances are precise and intentional, and even more importantly, that we have what it takes to rise above our struggles. In a related vein, I saw an opinion posted here that someone who was never married might be allowed to masturbate. I cannot imagine the suffering and loneliness of such a person, but can anyone honestly say that they are absolved of their obligations to G-d? Would any self-respecting Rav give them the green light for this? Only G-d

Himself can decide what was beyond our abilities. Every person, regardless of his situation, has to move towards growth without despair and self-pity. This is the **only** way.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 18 Aug 2022 03:01

Hi guys. My wife gave birth a few weeks ago (smash the thank you button to say Mazel Tov). It's amazing to be a Totty, but very stressful. These off-weeks have caused a huge upsurge in some urges that had a lot of expression during the pregnancy, and weren't so bothersome until now. I started masturbating a lot. I also tripped up because of the stupid jifs that were on my iPhone (totally blocked Internet by the way). The pictures on Maps also posed a problem. I deleted them both so that took care of that issue. We are almost at the end of these weeks, so I just have to hang in there a little longer.

I started weaning myself off of one of my medications, and my anxiety jumped through the roof for a bit, but it came back down thankfully. I started listening to Rabbi YY Jacobson (I know, I'm a little bit late to the party), and it's incredible how well versed he is in psychology and techniques in dealing with trauma and anxiety. Much of what he says mirrors the things I learnt in therapy. Listening to him has helped me actively employ these techniques and it has been very helpful Baruch Hashem.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by Captain - 18 Aug 2022 03:14

Mazel Tov!! Welcome back. Great to hear from you

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 23 Aug 2022 22:59

In middle of the clean days my wife started seeing blood. Deep breath. It's a test from Hashem. I don't know how I'm going to do this, but here we go!!!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by Vehkam - 24 Aug 2022 00:06

so frustrating. sorry that happened... hatzlocha.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 24 Aug 2022 03:05

Mazel Tov! Great news to hear. Taking time to become clean is (unfortunately) common after childbirth. It can be very nervewracking. Hang in there buddy. You have come such a long way. Your little baby is fortunate to have a totty like you.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage
Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 25 Aug 2022 03:09

Thank you to everyone for your support and encouragement .The aveirah of Motzi Zera Levatalah can be hard to understand. I remember hearing that the biggest sin is to use the power of creation, which is a Godly ability, for our own pleasure. I was looking at my daughter the other day. She Bli Ayin Hara is a beautiful baby. This idea became more of a reality.

I have been having a hard time with Shmiras Einayim. The aisles of Evergreen are filled with pitfalls, and usually I manage to fall into every single one several times. I recently realized that going shopping would cause me to have a certain, anxious-like feeling. The best phrase I can use to describe it is Pizur Hanefesh. My peace of mind was disturbed. I strongly believe that this pleasure seeking is a part of it. The need to see and gaze and pry and investigate and glance and peek pulls my mind all over the place. Then, once I spot someone who is worthy of my attention, I try to get as much viewing time as possible as casually as I can. Then my heart starts coveting that which I know I will never have. Then I feel guilt about looking at someone who is not my wife. All this to buy tomatoes and a cucumber. Today I decided I am not interested. It felt very liberating.

Someone asked if it makes sense to thank Hashem for enjoying forbidden pleasures. I think it does not. Should the disturbed teenager cutting herself thank her parents for the kitchen knife? Should the drug addict thank Hashem for cocaine? A temporary pleasure with disastrous consequences in this world and the next is not where we are supposed to find gratitude to our Creator.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 23 Sep 2022 05:03

Hi everybody. Ever since I joined GYE, I have had the opportunity to build relationships with some of the most amazing people there are in this world, and I am not exaggerating one bit. Demolished, now known as Rebuild613, reached out to me and put me in touch with HHM, who literally stopped my porn habit instantly, for which I am forever grateful. Eventually, I connected with IMG who has been a constant source of encouragement and the occasional 2 AM text conversation about stupidity, as well as a guide for dating and marriage. OivedElokim has proven to be an extremely dedicated friend and comrade in this battle. When I first spoke to IMG, he told me how his GYE friends have been a community and network that he feels accountable to. I thought he had serious issues. How can one feel accountable to a bunch of anonymous strangers with cheesy inspirational usernames? Baruch Hashem I am now eating my words. You guys have enriched my life in a way that I never thought possible. I can't wait for the day that we can all shed our masks and rejoice together in our victory against the Yetzer Hara. For now, this will have to do.

A short while ago, someone by the name of Vehkam joined GYE. His insightful, moving posts captured the attention of many people, myself included. I followed his powerful story of Teshuvah from a double life to one solely dedicated to Hashem. If you haven't read his thread yet, go read it right now! I needed to meet this intriguing individual. He graciously agreed to see me this past week. I can't describe what a crazy experience it was. The weirdest thing about it was putting everything I knew about this guy into the person that I was now sitting across from. It was really strange. Never felt anything like it. Also, I learnt that his username wasn't pronounced like Beckham, but rather it is from the Passuk sheva yipol tzaddik *vehkam*. ?Whoops. My goal of this meeting was to discover how someone could go from a life of running after desire to being a true Eved Hashem in only six months. I wanted to discover how his success can be replicated and spread to myself and the masses. This is what I learned. I hope he reviews this post and ensures that I am not misrepresenting his message. The first question that was burning a hole in me was as follows. How, after three decades of chasing desire, did he decide to change his life around? What was the turning point that reversed all those years of sin? He told me that at his age, which isn't even that advanced, he

started to wonder how he was going to spend the remainder of his time left on this world. In his case, this was related to marriage. Was he going to spend the rest of his life in a world of promiscuity, or was he going to find a real life partner. Perhaps every person can apply this to themselves. Are we going to go through life living in two worlds? Are we going to engage in behaviors and make decisions that are coming from an unhealthy and distorted place, or are we going to live life the way it is supposed to be? He then decided to embark on an honest journey to really get to know himself and discover why he made all those harmful decisions. It wasn't to absolve himself of responsibility, but rather to empower himself to own up to his mistakes and to take control of his own future. This also has broad applications. We must understand who we are and what makes us tick. Why do we mess up? What void are we trying to fill? What twisted perceptions are guiding our harmful choices? Vehkam also attributed a large part of his success to the book *The Battle of the Generation*. I started reading it as well. It provides a holistic approach to winning this fight. The author tries to provide the reader with a go-getter and positive attitude toward this struggle, by viewing desire as an opportunity to grow rather than an obstacle to growth. It also helps the reader cultivate a real relationship with Hashem, which is essential in combating the Yetzer. Vehkam said that the *constant daily* reading of this book helped him maintain the state of mind necessary to succeed.

In any area of life, it is worth it to follow the lead of those who excel in their field. Vehkam certainly fits that bill in regards to conquering the Evil Inclination. I am going to try to follow his example and spread the lessons learned in this journey. Please join me.

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