

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 Rebbe 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 MarriagePosted by foolie - 05 Jun 2024 02:40

Here are a few points you might consider pondering:

1. Do you like your job

2. is there any toes in what you are doing other than working so you are doing something and not nothing
3. If you had no chiyus in kollel and no chiyus working then perhaps you might consider getting treated for depression
4. Find something you actually want to do if you can't find any activity that you would like to do again I recommend you try speaking with a mental health professional

Good Luck!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by tzitzis dude - 05 Jun 2024 04:48

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 05 Jun 2024 02:12:](#)

Hey there everyone. Thank you for reading and responding to my posts. I left Kollel recently. For many people, this is considered a bitter and difficult transition as they go from being fully immersed in Torah to engaging with a mundane world. I didn't have the same experience. My Kollel years were fraught with difficulty in finding my place. I didn't find a place that had a Chevra, Rebbe, or Limud that I liked, and I struggled greatly to "make it work". I finally left to find a profession, and it didn't come with the requisite sadness that society had led me to believe was a given. But I am still so unhappy. The work day is long. I get up much earlier, go to the quick minyan, run home, help get the kids to school, and then head off to my job. After a full day, I come home drained and in a sour mood, with no energy to do the things I once thought were standard, like davening, learning, and tidying up the house. I am snappy towards my wife and children, which leads to a worse emotional state. I feel that there aren't many things in life that give me Chiyus anymore.

Yowch. Ooff.

I can sort of relate. I left Kollel after around 5 years, and the last couple were tough, mainly because my marriage was going through growth/development pains. So it was actually a bit of a relief to start working.

As to my job, on one hand I do enjoy it, while on the other, my boss can be a bit of a grouch (maybe he just needs The Grouchery?) and is constantly finding ways to criticize me.

And then, getting home, especially when it's later in the day, can be rough. My wife had been alone with the kiddos for hours, I've been itching to finish working for the day...

B'kitzur, I feel for it, buddy.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by BennyH - 05 Jun 2024 20:49

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 05 Jun 2024 02:12:](#)

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Oooooof, this is tough stuff. And oh, how I can relate. Unfortunately, I don't have much advice to offer as I'm in the midst of working this through myself.

It would seem that in order to feel fulfilled, there needs to be at least one element of your life that gives you joy. It could be work itself (for a time this was my passion), it could be your kvias ittim (for a time this was my passion), or it could be the time you carve out with your wife that makes everything seem right in the world.

I think Apex People are the ones who find meaning in every moment of every day. They live as if every task and every interaction is specifically designed and tailor made for them to deal with at this very moment.

I'm in awe of those people and am very very far from that. But from what I understand, the wellspring that waters that drive is a ?????? in emuna and bitacon. Everything is seen through crystal clear lens for them, while for people like you and me, we see everything through dusty and grimy lenses.

These people are never down, never depressed, they're always pumped because they *want* ?to face every day, they're not worried about anything, and they're at peace with everything. There are big tzadikim about whom we have stories that illustrate that, and then there are thousands of "regular" people who live this way.

There is a phone hotline called Life of Bitachon (732-719-3898) that propagates these yesodos and this way of life very well, and I know it can be intoxicating. I know I'm not ready for it yet, right now it feels like too raah-raah for me, but I want to get there one day.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by mggsbms - 07 Jun 2024 17:44

[Bennyh wrote on 05 Jun 2024 20:49:](#)

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 05 Jun 2024 02:12:](#)

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Benny this sounds like utopia to me, I've around a while and haven't bumped into too many people like you describe, unless my glasses are so murky I can't see them..

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 29 Oct 2024 02:04

Hi everyone. There are a couple of points I would like to hit up.

1. Someone suggested that my problem might be depression. I've been to many therapists in my life, and while I've experienced feelings of depression, it was usually chalked up to my inability to deal with my other mental issues. Once I worked on those, the sadness dissipated. That being said, my cynical tendencies are not helping my situation.

2. I had a streak of ninety days recently. I think the idea that helped me the most of anything is a YouTube short. In it, a lady was talking to a drug addict about how to deal with his addiction. She told him that he has to accept to deal with any pain that would result of him being sober, no matter how horrifying. This helped me a lot. When I was extremely stressed and "needed" to let loose, I was able to tell myself that I already knew this was coming, and had accepted it already.

This helped me embrace the pain of not giving in. I only messed up once I decided that I didn't want to deal with the pain.

3. I messed up recently. I had a streak from Erev Rosh Hashana until yesterday. I want to try the above-mentioned method again. Wish me luck.

4. Welcome to all new members. I've skimmed a lot of posts, and for many people, it seems that the root cause is not masturbation. I feel comfortable saying that most people on this forum can use a good therapist. If you haven't tried it yet, please do. For those that have tried and it's not working, stay with it. I went to many therapists before I even tasted mild success. It was so worth it once I found the right one.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 20 Feb 2025 02:44

Hi fellas. I'm not even sure who is on this platform anymore. To all the old chevra, if you're still around, I miss you. To all the new guys, welcome!

I had a pretty awesome streak for some time. Then, when things became difficult in every area of my life, I jumped right back into my old ways. At this point, everything feels like it's achieved a strange equilibrium. Things have gotten easier with my job and leaving Kollel in general, but at the same time, I don't feel like I'm growing at all in my Judaism. I have a few things that I try to hold on to, but even those are the bare minimum. I'm not OTD or anything, but I am hardly doing any positive obligations of Yiddishkeit. I hope to tip the scales back towards doing the things I know will fulfill me and give me purpose. But if more stressors are added to my life, I'm afraid I will backslide into the dark place where I recently found myself.

A GYE friend and I decided to go for 90 days. Today is Day 0 as I messed up already. I will post tomorrow for Day 1. I hope he decides to join me in posting our journeys.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by yitzchokm - 20 Feb 2025 08:00

I just read through your whole thread. It is amazing to see how much you changed throughout

your journey from your starting point. As HHM once posted, your problem seems to be anxiety and not masturbation. It is possible that the same is true for your religious practice. Perhaps through resolving your anxiety you will find it easier to be more involved in your Yiddishkeit. You once posted that you were going to try out Urge Surfing. Did you find that Urge Surfing or other meditation exercises on GYE resolve or heal your anxiety?

I found that Urge Surfing, SOBER and other mindfulness exercises calm me down very much. I used Urge Surfing for anxiety even without a sexual urge and I labeled my Urge as anxiety. I used to have panic attacks and ever since I have been doing these exercises I have been successful in lowering my anxiety level to 2-3 out of 10. For about a year my anxiety level is almost always 0-2 and I almost never have to do mindfulness exercises anymore. Medicine also helped but it was primarily the exercises on GYE that got me to where I am today. My diagnosis is bipolar disorder and anxiety is only a secondary illness.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by azivashacheit101 - 20 Feb 2025 14:01

well when ya got my illness of anxiety+OCD then try urge surfing, mindfulness and SOBER it ain't fun sir!

Wait an I doing this right???.....Is this the correct way to do mindfulness????.....how long, slow and deep is that breath supposed to be?????????.....is this actually gonna work or help?????.....what the bleepaty bleep do you mean veiw your whole body from above are you sopposed to see both your stomache and back at the same tme??? a 360 panamaric view??? just the front????.....this urge surfing thing is killing me!!!!.....why is it sopposed to work????.....do i feel the urge too much????? too little???? just tottally wrong?????.....AAAAARGHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by azivashacheit101 - 20 Feb 2025 14:14

[azivashacheit101 wrote on 20 Feb 2025 14:01:](#)

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Don't mind the spelling people, you see misspelling is part of my personal form of mindfulness.....you see when you take a deep breath (with an unclear & unspecified amount of deapth, pace or time) and stare deeply into the utter deapth of a misspelled word... then eventually you will pass into a deep slumber and climb out of your mind to the realm of a spiritual holyistic out of body experiance.... you will then decend in peaceful meditation back into you battered body with a new and improved hallucanating mind and soul.....try it guys it may just work for you.

all kidding aside I'm not knocking mindfulness it just makes me personally crazy (or more crazy I should say I'm a wackjob without it too!)

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by yitzchokm - 20 Feb 2025 19:48

I guess you would be better off with something like Distraction where you get involved in something fun and enjoyable that is readily available. I don't think it would get rid of anxiety but it would at least give you the a different option instead of falling. Are there any other tools that worked for you?

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 21 Feb 2025 03:15

Day 1. Started with a stressful morning as usual. It took a bit to gain my footing after that. I came home to some chaos but it wasn't too bad. Overall I feel depressed. I can't mess up on Day 1 though, so I think I am good to go for the rest of the night.

I don't remember committing to trying urge surfing, but it sounds like something to look into. I have OCD+anxiety also, but I have found mindfulness and acceptance to be helpful, and to accept the OCD thoughts that come up at the time as part of the exercise.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 21 Feb 2025 21:21

Day 2. Classic stressful Friday. Didn't have time to fall (though to be fair to myself, that didn't stop me on previous Fridays). Day 90 seems very very far away. I think I am good for today. Good Shabbos.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 23 Feb 2025 20:53

Shabbos, Day 3. Was fine, didn't have much motivation to fall. Sunday. Worst days ever invented. Kids are cooped up at home, everyone is grating on each other's nerves. The one day I potentially have to get some stuff done and maybe even relax, I spend trying to entertain everyone, which is usually a disaster. I took the family to a restaurant today for the lunch special. It was a disaster. The food came out late, the kids were crying, when the food finally did come out my wife was MIA due to trying to eat, so I was trying to feed the kids myself. When I finally got them to calm down, my wife was already done with her food and she started mooching mine, so I snapped at her, and everyone came home in a worse mood than when they started. This is a pretty standard occurrence. As sad as it is, and I wish it wasn't this way, my least favorite time is that which I spend with my family. I am very grateful to have them, but I wish our outings didn't always turn out like this. All the boxes are checked for a fall right now, stressed, frazzled, feeling unaccomplished, and bored (stuck at home again watching baby).

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by boardg - 23 Feb 2025 21:52

keep strong. we're here for you

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