

**Mental Health and Marriage**Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 13 Oct 2020 20:55

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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 tzitzis dude - 28 Dec 2020 02:17

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Hey, there!

Not to seem like I'm jumping on the bandwagon, but I legit feel for you, can relate to you.

I'm also going through a "family situation", plus nisyonos of the regular type. You should just know, you are really being mechazek me.

Keep us posted!

-T.D.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by Changing - 28 Dec 2020 09:41

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Hey! Good for you for taking your life in your hands and actually working on yourself. Your courage is amazing. Hashem should give you lots of strength to continue upwards and onwards!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 28 Dec 2020 18:22

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Wow. Thank you all for the encouragement!

My rosh yeshiva just confronted me about first seder, which I haven't been showing up to recently. I was very open with him and we discussed a possible plan of how to make it work for me. It's going to take a lot of effort but hopefully this time I will be able to make it happen. Things are rough on the home front. Just had a whole fight with my mother about coming home. She keeps on dropping very not subtle hints that I should be coming back. Besides for the fact that it makes me feel really guilty, it also makes me think that she doesn't really have my best interests in mind; just that she needs me around for herself. Maybe that's not totally fair, but it's how things seems to me. My Rebbi also mentioned that it might be beneficial to be totally straight up with any any prospective girl's parents about my family situation *even before going out*. I've been going into dates with the terrible burden of carrying this secret, and it's been affecting my mood and performance. Maybe this will ease things up. But once I go public, there is no going back. I do plan on asking my main Rebbi, but does anyone have any advice or experience with this? Thank you all for being there. Peace out brothers.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 28 Dec 2020 18:59

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[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 28 Dec 2020 18:22:](#)

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I'm sure it feels liberating, speaking things over with a Rebbi, do you do that often? It's something that I really struggle with although I feel great every time I muster up the strength...

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by starting - 28 Dec 2020 20:58

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Sounds risky to me. Not sure most people in the big world realise how common and widespread these problems are.

Many girls (and their parents) would probably find it easier and safer to avoid anyone with a recent history of porn or masturbation.

But then, I don't know you. If it really affects your dating experiences to a large extent, maybe you should tell.

If you are determined enough to stop, consider pushing off marriage for a couple of months and works on rewiring your brain to realise that it's just a habit. You can and will stop. You don't need this. Once your brain accepts that this is just not something you do, it should be easier for you to put it behind you and date based on who are *now*.

Whatever you do, Hatzlocho

We are with you. Keep us posted

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by Hakolhevel - 28 Dec 2020 22:11

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[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 28 Dec 2020 18:22:](#)

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I personally agree with others, I would not necessarily say before.

I have a medical condition and I was advised to let my date know on the 3rd date. Which I did.

If my condition had been public, her parents nevr would have let her go out with me and we

would nver have gotten married.

As others said, everyone has skeletons in the closet. Let her know you a little bit first before giving over that info. I know it's hard, it was hard for me, wodering, will she dump me when she finds out?

Such is life

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by OivedElokim - 29 Dec 2020 00:05

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Buddy I feel for you. HaShem will be merachem on you, because he is a Rachaman. You just got to hang in there, have bitachon and present your own best solutions to life's challenges, one day at a time. In tough situations it's difficult to be objective , so continue to seek out advice from those who want the best for you , as you seem to already be doing to some extent.

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If I can be of any help, or you just want to chat-please pm me anytime.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 29 Dec 2020 04:18

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[starting wrote on 28 Dec 2020 20:58:](#)

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Whatever you do, Hatzlocho

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"Hakolhevel" post=360037 date=1609193506 catid=1

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 28 Dec 2020 18:22:](#)

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Such is life

I think he meant his family situation, and not the GYE stuff. That would be a whole different conversation (that I equally have no input on).

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by Hakolhevel - 29 Dec 2020 06:00

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Sorry my post wasn't clear. I probably shouldn't have used the quote button. I was referring to the family situation. Regarding gye stuff. I have no idea, either.

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 31 Dec 2020 18:03

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I don't do it often, though I have awesome and supportive friends. Nothing beats the advice of a good Rebbi though

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 31 Dec 2020 18:08

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[wilnevergiveup wrote on 28 Dec 2020 18:59:](#)

[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 28 Dec 2020 18:22:](#)

Wow. Thank you all for the encouragement!

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I'm sure it feels liberating, speaking things over with a Rebbi, do you do that often? It's something that I really struggle with although I feel great every time I muster up the strength...

Sorry about the previous post, I meant to respond to this post. I don't speak to Rebbeim often, even though it is helpful. I BH have amazing friends though, but they can usually only listen and not offer advice

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by hashemyeracheim613 - 31 Dec 2020 18:15

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Just a short update. I have been getting up for davening, but I still haven't worked out first seder. I'm really struggling with masturbation. At night I tend to ruminate and all my negative thoughts and emotions come to haunt me. It can take me a while to fall asleep, and I need something to make myself feel good. The urge can be crazy strong; I'm sure you're all well aware of this. It's been getting out of hand. How do I fight this?

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 31 Dec 2020 20:14

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[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 31 Dec 2020 18:15:](#)

Just a short update. I have been getting up for davening, but I still haven't worked out first seder. I'm really struggling with masturbation. At night I tend to ruminate and all my negative thoughts and emotions come to haunt me. It can take me a while to fall asleep, and I need something to make myself feel good. The urge can be crazy strong; I'm sure you're all well aware of this. It's been getting out of hand. How do I fight this?

Nice that your getting up for davening, how does it feel?

What are your goals as far as how you spend your day?

I found that when I am in a rut it helps to make tiered goals. For example I have a bare minimum which can be my goal until I am feeling a little better. I then have a slightly bigger goal but I keep in mind where I really want to be as my ultimate goal. I try not to focus on how far I am from the final goal rather just keep it in the back of my mind so that I don't lose sight of it.

For example, recently I was in a funk where I was really struggling with going to davening and seder. I know that I need to get to all sedarim and daven but focusing on that was making me depressed because I was really having a difficult time with it. What worked for me was making a bare minimum which was daven with a minyan, at any time, and show up for seder even for five minutes and daven mincha and ma'ariv even without a minyan. This was the short term goal, even though this is usually nothing to be proud of for me, then this was considered a huge accomplishment. Making these goals helped me actually feel accomplished. I then was able to work through adding times that I had to do those things before until I was able to get back to my regular yeshiva schedule.

I am still growing but B"H I am working through this slowly.

In your case I would suggest figuring out what are some of your goals in learning, avodas Hashem and in life in general and try to work through them to figure out what you need to do to get there.

I hope this helps, feel free to reach out if you are interested.

All the best,

Wilnevergiveup

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Re: Mental Health and Marriage

Posted by starting - 31 Dec 2020 20:40

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[hashemyeracheim613 wrote on 31 Dec 2020 18:15:](#)

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I struggled terribly with this.

One thing that I think helped me was to consider it a separate struggle. What happens in bed stays in bed. I learned not to let this affect my daytime nisyonos.

Eventually, with the help of my mentor and several phone calls, I managed to avoid touching myself at night. This keeps the challenge one step back, meaning that the fight was whether to touch myself or not and then, if I messed up with that I started that again immediately before it could be a masturbate-or-not question, so the whole fight was generally about 'slipping' not

about 'faling'.

Disclaimer: This can be very dangerous if you would be ready to throw in the towel after losing the fight about touching.

Hatzlocho

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