

Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by onthewayup - 18 Nov 2021 01:06

I do think this forum is expert opinions rather I am just trying to get other opinions.

Before I ask my question, I will give a general overview of myself. Its good to be general since I am not asking just for myself but rather the entire subject

I am 23 years old and have been struggling with these issues close to 10 years. Things during high school were the worst and my desires blared and I had little tools in my arsenal to fight it. My only hope was yeshiva without any devices and trying to prepare for the long bein hazmanim. Towards the end of high school I started having some success in this area and holding out for long periods of time. I got to 90 days twice and was really making progress. I went to Israel and disconnected myself from technology and was totally clean from any illicit material or masturbation. After a full year clean, I came home and after 3 weeks had fell again. I fell a few more times but it wasn't out of control. I had this sort of thing repeat itself for the 3+ years I spent in Israel. I once had a streak over a year only to blow it towards the end of a summer. Okay, so I was doing okay. I had grown tremendously in yeshiva and was a different person. Then came Corona. And, truth be told, being locked up I didn't fall until about 3 months after being in that situation. It then slowly then speedily spiraled out of control. I finally caught myself around the following elul but it the damage was done. I had returned to high school days and now had more access than ever. The following year was better but I still fell a few times. A streak of 90, a streak of 60, 40, 30; that was my story. The following year came and by now I was 23 and supposed to be dating. I started off with a 85 day streak and then blew it. 5 days later, I fell twice in a day and felt out of control. I have already gone out during that 85 day streak but now I am in a quandary. Do I put this all on hold and get it under control. Don't get me wrong. I am doing a lot (not everything) to help myself. Filtered devices, Taphsic Shvuah, GYE partner where we speak weekly, davening for help, committing not to use other devices and more.

I may even consider therapy although it will be hard to make it happen keeping it private and financially.

What do I do? I am a good bachur. I learn, I have friends and my family and others, although they haven't been down my back about dating, they do expect me to get going. Telling everyone I am taking off for a year or even a few months will get them alarmed and will require explanation. I am not pressed to go out tomorrow, but I need to have a proper outlook on this.

If anyone single or married has or had this dilemma please share your thoughts.

Do I need to share this? How bad am I? I'm usually good but I need to be honest and cannot say I am fully past these terrible behaviors that I got enmeshed in as a stupid teenager?

I am writing a few days after that bad fall and am looking for some thoughts.

Don't be afraid to be harsh.

Thank you.

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by concernedjew21 - 18 Nov 2021 03:03

I know this isn't a cut and dry answer, but in my opinion it depends on whether you are an "addict".

If you are an addict, than just as with any addiction getting married would be a very unwise thing to do, unless you're ready to fully disclose the addiction to your potential partner and they're fully ready to accept it and work with it, and even then it's not pashut.

If you're not an addict and this is just an area where you have a hard time, it doesn't define you, and you are perfectly marriageable. You also don't need to disclose anything, just like no one discloses to their wife every time they're nichshal and are mistakel at someone on the street or are mevatel Torah for 15 minutes in the coffee room. Your spouse doesn't have to know all your chesronos.

Full Disclosure: I am an addict, got married as an addict, and suffer the consequences greatly in my marriage. I am not married to someone appropriate for me, and have a very unfulfilling marriage, and it's all due to living a double life and attempting to date and get married in that type of situation.

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by Zedj - 18 Nov 2021 05:04

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im 22 turning 23 and in a similar *predicament*.

ive touched on this subject before with a fellow GYE member but im definitely going to discuss it again hopefully get a clearer picture of how to proceed.

the only thing i can think of that may help is if you discuss this with a close trusted rebbe or mentor.

i dont think im being very helpful but at least you know i too am unsure of what is the right step forward in this regard

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?
Posted by polar bear - 18 Nov 2021 05:18

concernedjew21 makes a lot of sense.

I had problems (more just acting out roughly on a weekly basis, less/no internet stuff) and one of the reasons I got married was because I assumed marriage was going to solve this issue.

?I was wrong, it didn't solve the issue. But this behavior never affected my marriage, and I never mentioned it to my wife.

The lesson I'm learning out of this is that there are no short cuts? I still have to try as hard as I did before I got married to overcome this. But then again I don't regret getting married. If anything my wife saves me a nice fraction of the time.

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?
Posted by fightingHard - 18 Nov 2021 18:47

wow! ur story sounds exactly like mine, except that im 22...

i totally feel the same fear...

i have however gone, and am going through a lot of therapy...

the reason i feel (semi) comfortable dating now is because through therapy i realized my root cause. its not a stam addiction, it is 1) a stress escape and 2) my way of looking for emotional help. BH i am not in a terrible place, and my rebbeim and therapist have felt that im ready to go. and since because the 2nd reason i gave (emotional comfort and help) was the main, they feel that this should get faaar better after marrige...

so it may be kdai to figure out (you may need help for that...) what your root cause is, and if its an addiction or a tendency...

hatzlacha rabbah for us all!

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?
Posted by Shmuel - 18 Nov 2021 18:52

[onthewayup wrote on 18 Nov 2021 01:06:](#)

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Thank you.

I can tell you that my wife would say to absolutely not date yet, or to at least disclose it before engagement.

(My wife is married to a recovering addict, so may not be the same for "normal" guys...)

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 18 Nov 2021 20:13

For G-d's sake, don't tell a girl that you are a sex addict until you have opened up with at the very least a Rav/Rebbe and they instructed you to do so. And I better hope they send you to therapy and/or SA/SMART before instructing you to tell a girl because, unless you are flat out hopeless, you don't share this kind of thing, you figure yourself out first.

If you are just the average guy who struggles, you may also want to speak it over with a Rav but don't tell a girl that you want to marry that you struggle with watching other women having sex on a screen (unless you want to enjoy the theatrics and pay for her taxi home).

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by onthewayup - 23 Nov 2021 02:28

Hey everyone,

Thank you for all your replies.

It seems a rule I can take out of it; if your an addict don't date or be very very careful.

Now the question is; what's an addict. I have gone a year clean before but a week ago I felt like a slave to myself. I am normal, for the most part. My mind is not always on it. I have urges and after a fall the urges are greater than when I was clean for 80+ days. I become depressed when I think about all my sins but on the surface I try not to show it. Not that I want to fool anyone its just that they cannot help me and its not their business. Nor do they need a sad face. So I am just going on and ranting but the question is what's an addiction. I have not been able to fully stop but I have it fettered and under control and when it does get out it is very ugly and I am not the same for a few days.

Anyone, your thoughts?

Thanks,

onthewayup

A week clean

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by DavidT - 23 Nov 2021 02:41

Medical and psychological professionals generally identify addictions and compulsions to repeat a pleasurable activity based on the following three criteria:

1. Preoccupation to the point of obsession with the substance or behavior of choice.
2. Loss of control over use of the substance or behavior, typically evidenced by failed attempts to quit or cut back.
3. Directly related negative consequences—relationship problems, trouble at work or in school, declining physical health, depression, anxiety, shame, isolation, financial issues, legal trouble, etc.

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Re: Can I plan to get married while still struggling?

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 23 Nov 2021 12:29

Great first post. You expressed yourself very well.

Please understand that nobody can take the responsibility to answer your question with accuracy being that we are all anonymous here and are basing ourselves on what you decided to share (which may be the complete truth, or maybe you left out details that you consider insignificant, but are really game changers). Everything all our GYE buddies wrote above is true, but you will notice that none of them wrote to "go for it", because how can they? What you do see in a few of the posts is that you better watch out. Chas v'shalom to get into a marriage where a wife will rach"I be hurt. There are too many couples struggling immensely due to these issues not being resolved in advance. Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying you are not ready for marriage. I am just saying you should reach out to real people - rebbi/mentor/GYE advisor - to make a responsible decision. Hatzlacha buddy. May Hashem help you be that chosson that walks down to the chupa with menuchas hanefesh and a brain that is at peace with sexuality/intimacy, and will be a great husband and father.

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