

Summer: The Ultimate Battle

Posted by FighterWithFire - 31 Jul 2022 03:54

Hey, back after a long time without posting.

Some of you know my story, but most don't, so I'll recap it. I'm a Yeshiva Bochur from an incredible, loving home (somewhere in the Tri-State area). I have the best parents in the world (when I was young and naive, I used to think everybody thinks that about their parents-reality has taught me how lucky I am)-supportive, loving yet firm, they're amazing, and I have terrific siblings as well.

From the time I turned Bar Mitzvah, I always had a Ta'avah for women. I used to peek through the shutters of our windows late at night to try to catch a glimpse of the single woman who lived next door undressed (B"H, never saw anything). At 17, I was left alone for the final 2 weeks of the summer with what turned out to be an unfiltered laptop. I still remember the night(s) I first watched pornography-for hours at a time. I felt so low afterwards I stayed up all night crying, and vowed I'd never make such a mistake again. And then I fell again 12 hours later.

I was too scared to tell my parents of my struggle-I'd always been a top bochur, I was in a well-known Yeshiva with a terrific reputation. I was (and still am, they still don't know) afraid that they'd be crushed/devastated that me of all people had fallen so low. But I discovered GYE, and began to keep a diary of my fight. At the same time, I convinced my parents (without giving anything away) to filter the laptop. (BTW, masturbation has never been a challenge for me in any way-I just don't have the urge, it's only for women and actual sex. I don't know why, but I'm not complaining.)

It still took a LONG time for anything to change. I soon discovered how to get around the filter (I got the password). For the next two years, it got so bad that I was literally going to the public library near Yeshiva in between Sedorim to watch porn (as far as I'm aware-I was very careful about not doing it right out in the open and using a computer in the corner or something like that-nobody ever saw/noticed what I was doing). During this time, I was separately diagnosed with anxiety, which made the porn struggles even worse.

Then came COVID. I was stuck at home with complete access to the shmutz that was destroying my life. I still remember how bad those days were, nightmarish beyond explanation. But it was during those days that I hit rock bottom, and began to swim back to the surface. The Elul Zman after the COVID summer went quite well. But the rest of the year was very rough, as I

struggled mightily with my anxiety issues. Thus, when summer of '21 rolled around, I wasn't nearly as confident as I had been earlier in the year, and wound up falling multiple times that month.

But my godsend (literally) came in the form of an amazing, wonderful therapist whom I started seeing due to my anxiety around that time. I knew right off the bat that he had to know about the pornography struggles (since they compounded the anxiety problem). He has turned out to be a literal godsend—a miracle worker, a bedrock of support, encouragement and strategy. Every person in therapy should be Zoche to have such a guide. With him at my side, I began to slay some of my demons, and to my delighted surprise, Elul 5782/Yomim Noraim 5783 were incredible. When the English calendar flipped to 2022, I didn't fall until mid-February (and for only 10 minutes!), then had another streak until late March. I went into Pesach feeling higher than I'd ever been.

But being at home for a long stretch of the time (despite having a long Chavrusa shaft in the morning and running in the park daily) reignited the lust, and I fell 4 times over Bein Hazmanim. After falling twice in 18 hours, I decided to do something I'd never done before.

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I ended the year on an incredible high, the best I'd ever been—both in terms of the anxiety (thanks to my therapist) and in terms of being clean from the porn (thanks to both my therapist and of course HHM). But I was well aware that coming home for the summer would be a challenge.

And it has been.

This computer has an unfiltered user (my mother's). I've tried several times to get my parents to filter it as well, but while they have agreed to do so, due to the fact that they don't realize I have access (and of course, they don't know the real problem), they don't have any urgency in getting it done-and every day that they don't do it (I can only be so pushy without making them suspicious) is another day of fighting for me.

B"H, most of the day is covered-I made sure to get several Chavrusas throughout the day, and I've been running every single day of Bein Hazmanim so far save for Shabbosos (which helps BTW, it definitely decreases the urge at least temporarily). But at night, the Yetzer Hara sees the opportunity, and throws waves of lust at me, hoping I'll drown. I've already fallen twice so far after going into Bein Hazmanim on a 5 week clean streak.

Eventually, this device will be filtered, which means problem solved. But in the meantime, it's not. I've tried TaPHSiC, I've tried setting up a K'nas just for using the device, I've tried going to bed early-all no good. And daytime this summer has actually been really good, due to my consistent, fixed, productive schedule (again, thank you Hashem and therapist and HHM). But nights are a real challenge.

Any tips on what to do until this user is filtered would be enormously appreciated.

The Ribono Shel Olam should give us all Hatzlacha in our war-not just this month, but for our entire lives.

FighterWithFire

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by frank.lee - 31 Jul 2022 08:35

Amazing!!!!

I think with some more work, you can diminish the taava and excitement that the yh portrays awaits you if you give in.

Keep fighting!

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle

Posted by Vehkam - 31 Jul 2022 13:33

[FighterWithFire wrote on 31 Jul 2022 03:54:](#)

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You are so inspiring. Thank you for posting. With regard to your question about the nights, I have a few thoughts... in case you are not already doing these ...

Try to follow a routine as much as possible.

Use headphones and listen to music constantly (even during nine days - you can check with a rav) so that your mind doesn't wander.

If you have too much time at night try to keep a list of productive things you can do with that time. Then refer to the list when you feel like you have empty time. The list can include anything productive that would give you a sense of accomplishment. This could be any of the the yomi shiurim (daf, halacha, mishna etc...) as well as learning a new skill (teach yourself guitar or typing or anything else that interests you.) There may also be chesed opportunities around or earning opportunities - are there any younger boys that could use tutoring? Is there a local basketball pickup game....

essentially, you want to make sure that you always have a list available of things that will fill your down time so that you just don't leave room for the yetzer hara.

best wishes for continued success and please keep inspiring us.

vehkam

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by FighterWithFire - 31 Jul 2022 14:39

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vehkam

Thanks so much for the kind words and suggestions. Indeed, I already listen to music often during Sefira and the 3 Weeks due to my anxiety issues, and it definitely helps to an extent. I also have Chavrusas at night until around 10/10:30-it's usually after that it gets worse, as at that point a lot of people are in bed, things start winding down and the lust kicks in. But I completely agree with your point that it's important to fill up the schedule as much as possible and not leave room for boredom to set in and derail an otherwise good day-will keep looking for options.

Thanks again!

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by Vehkam - 31 Jul 2022 16:15

If you are already covered until 10-1030 that is fantastic. Can you identify what time it is realistic for you to go to sleep? That be will narrow down the amount of time you need to account for.

When I was working on breaking my bad habits i had a routine at night which ended with reading a chapter in the battle of the generation. After that I put on music or a shiur until I fell asleep. I still do similar.

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Posted by FighterWithFire - 31 Jul 2022 16:56

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I'm a real night owl, which makes it much harder-don't wind up going to bed until 1 AM most of the time (I Daven at 8 in the morning). That leaves a 2-3 hour window open from when I'm done with the day until when I go to bed.

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by FighterWithFire - 02 Aug 2022 21:40

Update (August 2): Baruch Hashem, been clean since my last post (2 days), but lusting a bit now-went on my daily run in a different park than I usually do (more developed, with an actual clay track), and there were several very pretty girls running there as well (all dressed the way non-Jewish girls dress when they run, which is to say, not wearing much). B"H, the run went well (and toned the lust down a bit) but since I got home I've been replaying the images of said girls in my mind. But I haven't fallen, and will continue to stay strong. Hope everybody else is doing well.

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by ?????? ?????? - 03 Aug 2022 22:13

If you can gather up the strength, which you definitely can, to stop giving thought to those images/fantasizing about them when they come to mind, I would recommend you do so asap if these nisyonot still exist for you. There's someone on GYE who's signature states (more or less) that as long as you are fantasizing, you will not be able to stop this behavior and you will prevent yourself from doing so. Rambam states that it's worse to think about sins than to actually go and do them, and in this case those images/flashbacks themselves are the sins because they were not meant to be seen, and definitely not to be thought about/fantasized about. And speaking from prior experience, fantasizing leads to inevitable falls in the future, because for me it just made me more and more lustful until I would fall.

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Posted by FighterWithFire - 04 Aug 2022 02:25

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100% agreed, and it definitely is something I struggle with, especially when I build up a relatively long streak (then the dopamine starts screaming, and I fantasize constantly). Will continue to work on and fight it, especially during this time of year.

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle

Posted by FighterWithFire - 04 Aug 2022 02:38

Update (August 3): Unfortunately, I fell (pictures). Was stressed/anxious, saw a triggering image, and seeing as how this device isn't filtered yet, next thing I knew I was Googling images. Very frustrated with myself, but can't stay down, need to stay positive to build a new streak. Here goes.

Hatzlacha to everybody.

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by FighterWithFire - 10 Aug 2022 01:59

Update (August 9): B"H, I've been clean for the past 6 days. Feeling quite good, but here's where the real challenge begins. Tomorrow I go to Florida with my family for a week, IY"H. Need I say more?

Now, B"H, we're not going to any parks/theme worlds/outdoor public gatherings, etc. My parents (as I expected that they would) agreed with me that the Tzniyus (or more appropriately, lack thereof) outside is too much. But nonetheless, there's no doubt that I will face challenges while there (it's not as if we're going to be holed up in the house for the week), and I'm going to be around unfiltered devices as well. Need to buckle down, grit my teeth and get it done. Will try to give updates as often as possible, IY"H. Hope that by the time I come back next week, this streak will still be going.

Hatzlacha to everybody.

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by Face the challenge - 10 Aug 2022 02:54

Stay strong brother, we are all rooting for you!!

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by future paltiel - 10 Aug 2022 08:29

Be strong and remember to be confident.

you are a Gibbor!

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by FighterWithFire - 11 Aug 2022 17:15

Update (August 11): B"H, I've officially been clean for a week. In Florida, B"H it's been good so far, in a (mostly) Frum neighborhood where Tzniyus is definitely better than it would be in most places here. Very relaxing and enjoyable, hopefully that continues. I am around unfiltered devices (including TV's), so need to stay on guard.

Hatzlacha to everybody.

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Re: Summer: The Ultimate Battle
Posted by frank.lee - 11 Aug 2022 17:15

Maybe it will help if you look at it as an amazing opportunity. Imagine and visualize if every time you are near something inappropriate, and you look away, you get \$4,200 Cash! Ka'ching!

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