

Addicted to Masturbation only

Posted by fdtdg8 - 03 Apr 2023 00:13

Does anyone have to experience of being addicted to masturbation, without the addiction to pornography?

For me this is the case, and when the urges are strong, they are very strong. In a sense it is more scary because I feel that if one is addicted to pornography, they can take steps to limit their supply/access being that pornography is something that is outside one self.

When I have urges to masturbate, and strong sexual visuals (fantasies, memories, etc.) I feel there is no escape, there is no filter I can install on my thoughts, and many of the specific visuals come back, again and again.

I am curious if anyone has had similar experience specifically if they were able to overcome it.

Just a bit of a background I grew up secular, and came into orthodox Judaism about a year ago it has been a gradual but overall drastic process; I went from a completely secular lifestyle not even knowing that Jews have prayer services every day, to putting teffilin everyday, and davening with a minnyan virtually every day, eating kosher, shomer shabbos, and trying to do more every day.

To be frank I did watch pornography in my secular days, however when I came to being observant it was a easy thing to give up, I don't even remember much of a struggle. It seemed like a basic next step, not consuming this unholy material

However my issue with masturbation remains strong after all this time (part of it is now I recognize it as a very serious problem whereas before I didn't see it as a real issue). I know I have slowly gotten better (by recognizing the issue, struggling through it, and working to end this behavior) however this is very far from enough. If anything I feel my urges are stronger

than before; at worst I feel paralyzed by them. I am scared to go home because when I know the yetzer hara is there waiting for me, I feel there is no escape, and I know there is NO EXCUSE for my actions.

Most of them are memories of things that sexual aroused me, specific interactions with women in real life (and fantasies about these women) and to a lesser extent memories of pornography I watched before, even memories of past times I masturbated and how it felt.

I had a 10 day clean streak which was a long one for me (I just joined the site, so I never kept close track) I started to feel like the urges were subsiding, but the yetzar hara came back with a serious vengeance, the fall felt worse than before, and it has been hard getting up. I know it will get better with time Bezrat HaShem! But right the yetzer hara is working really hard trying to pull me down.

I am asking if anyone has had a similar experience and what help them be sucessful

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Re: Addicted to Masturbation only

Posted by maxzh - 03 Apr 2023 02:04

Yes, many people have experienced addiction to masturbation without pornography. It's important to seek help from a therapist or counselor to deal with the underlying emotional triggers that may be causing these urges. A support group may also be helpful because sharing experiences with others who have similar struggles can provide motivation and strength. Finding new hobbies, activities, and routines can help to distract the mind when feeling strong urges. Practicing mindfulness, meditation, and prayer can also provide tools to stay focused and reduce the intensity of these urges. Finally, it's essential to remember that breaking any habit is a process, and setbacks are to be expected. By being patient, persistent, and focusing on making progress, recovery from addiction is possible.

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Re: Addicted to Masturbation only

Posted by fdtdg8 - 03 Apr 2023 03:18

Everything you said about mindfulness, meditation, getting new hobbies, prayer, and accepting that breaking bad habits is a process makes immediate sense and is easy for me to accept.

What you say about getting a therapist, i.e professional support, is tough for me to accept (Even though intellectually I acknowledge it's likely good advice) I have had therapists during my childhood, and they violated my trust. Additionally I've worked in a industry that works closely with mental health, and in my case working on the inside further decreased my trust in the mental health industry. I apologize if me "venting" about that wastes time from productive solutions, it's strong feelings I have that I may need to expose, in order to resolve.

Is anyone reading this aware of good resources to help find G~d fearing therapists, and counselors? I think having G~d fearing, jew who is trained in the science of mental health would be substantially better than the alternative (a mental health professional who is wicked, and lives a life absent of Torah).

I will say that in general, I believe (in most cases) the things that are hardest/ most uncomfortable to accept, are the most important. So specifically, with that in mind I do feel your advice about seeking professional help to treat this addiction is probably important for me, and others who would at first avoid it at all costs.

Suffice to say thank you for your time, and (good) advice!

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Re: Addicted to Masturbation only
Posted by Horizon - 03 Apr 2023 05:57

hello and welcome!

first of all, i commend you on so much you've done, coming from a secular home to being strongly invested in an orthodox way of life is a big deal, and an inspiration for us all.

regarding your question there's a lot to unpack regarding your question, and i'll make a couple

points:

1. where you find your struggle to be a disadvantage (you can't filter yourself), you can also see it as an advantage. cuz when you target down the struggle that specific, you can better understand the root cause and help solve it. (whereas someone struggling w porn as well, might have it harder understanding what they're lacking that brings them to p/m)

2. advise you'll see around alot: exercise. get your heart running. scientifically, masturbation releases anxiety and relaxes the body. exercising is a good substitute to that, and can reduce the urges.

3. you're right on target about what kind of therapist to look for. unfortunatly we hear too many stories of therapists who did more damage then good.

there are some great organizations that help you find the kind of therapists you described, you can find they're info on the home page of this site (i think).

hope you find some of this helpful, looking forward to growing together

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Re: Addicted to Masturbation only
Posted by doingtshuva - 03 Apr 2023 21:02

guardyoureyes.com/support

www.reliefhelp.org/

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Re: Addicted to Masturbation only
Posted by fdtdg8 - 31 May 2023 01:55

Small update, things are getting better it would seem; having longer, and more clean streaks,

and less falls overall.

I talked with my Rabbi about my issue with masturbation and his main advice was "Don't think about it" So far this advice has helped me allot, and is the right fit for my situation (keeping in mind this made not be the case for others in the struggle)

Part of not thinking about it for me is going on to this site less, and just not really giving much attention to the issue in terms of finding out more information, or even putting in explicit time or effort to try to fix it.

To be honest there was times I felt going on here, or looking up information about wasting seed (even information on how to stop) was a trigger. To be clear, that is not always the case.

The other advice I got was "Feel like a hypocrite when doing the sin, not when doing the mitzvahs" That is to say the real me, (and most of us on here) want to learn Torah, Daven, put on Tefillin, etc.

We are actually bad at pretending to be sinners, it's just not who we are.

While I don't think this should be taken literally to be naive, and say G~d forbid we can think of "Pretending to do sins" lightly, it seems to be part of the healthy process of shaping our identity into someone who fears HaShem at all times, and seeks only to serve him.

I hope this helps someone else gain more clarity, into who they really are, despite the struggles they face with the Yetzer Hara.

Thank you again to all who gave their time, and shared advice!

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