

My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 03 Nov 2023 11:59

Hi all,

I have been lurking in the shadows of GYE for a number of years and just in the last month or so, came into the light and started posting. I see that my posts are all over the place and decided to start a new Topic about me and my struggles and not hijack other peoples threads.

My story is simple and unfortunately common. I am in my 50's and happily married with two amazing kids and I am addicted to P and M. Have been for decades and I see it getting worse. My sex life with my wife is almost non-existent at this point as my focus is on P and M. It is easily available, never says no, never judges my performance, and gives me the variety that a 30+ year marriage doesn't. I am also going down a slippery slope in regards to the types of porn I am watching, they are getting darker and darker and things that in the past would have disgusted me are now things that I seek out. That scares me!

I come from a non-orthodox home and do not live in an observant neighborhood. I live in a town that if I had to say is mostly Reform and Conservative Jews. I hate putting labels on Jews, because a Jew is a Jew and their level of observance does not mean they are Less-Jewish than anyone else. I just say this for context so you know where I am at.

I am hesitant to call myself a Baal Teshuva, but I have greatly increased my observance in the last 8 years after my first trip to Israel. I still have a long way to go (like everyone) but HaShem has blessed me in so many ways and if this struggle was taken away, I think that I could climb so much higher. Maybe this is the final Nisayon that is holding me back? I don't know... only HaShem knows.

I am working through the F2F program and chatting with a few of you guys online. I am still not ready to speak on the phone about it. Hashem Help Me as graciously sent me his number and told me to call him anytime. He will be my first call when I get the courage.

I want to limit the technology in my life and try to give myself a little advantage in this fight. I work in IT so I am surrounded by Smartphones and unfiltered computers all day. I am trying to get rid of my personal smartphone and use a dumb phone. I want to do it for a few reasons.

One, it is the first choice that I go to when I want to act out. Second, every time that I pull it out of my pocket it will be a reminder of the battle that I am in. I know that it is far from the only problem I am facing, but I think that both logistically and symbolically it will greatly enhance my chances.

At this point 7 days is my best, with normally 2 to 3 days seems to be the norm.

That is my story and would appreciate any thoughts, ideas, prayers, well wishes or any kind of inspiration you guys could give. This website seems to be full of amazing people and would like to get to know as many of you as possible.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chaimoigen - 18 Apr 2024 12:56

Things are going very well in some aspects and not so well in others. I am doing well in this department, but other issues are keeping me so occupied that I have not even given P&M a thought for the last few weeks. I don't feel that I should burden all of you with my problems.. You guys are incredible and so thoughtful. I want you to concentrate on your own battles and not to worry about mine... Just keep your anonymous buddy Adam in your prayers....

It will all work out for the best... Searching for that "hidden good" that it inside of everything that HaShem does.

GYE is a community, and I think it thrives on everyone helping each other out. Sometimes we take, sometimes we give, and many times we need both.

Feel free to share your burdens, we are all here for you!

True words!

Hang on. 'Tis the month of miracles, and we here have experienced many...

When one lives in a higher way, he taps into a higher plane of existence. When one experiences Hashem in his life, many things are possible.... May the doors and fountains of blessing open to you, friend Adam.

Chaim Oigen

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 03 May 2024 11:34

Hi Guys,

I just wanted to check in and say Hello. I hope everyone had a great Pesach! Life is changing a lot for me, mostly for the better. My battle remains, but I am succeeding much more than I am failing. I have decided to stop counting the days and trying to acquire streaks or consecutive days.

Instead, I am solely focusing on the current day and making the most of it. I am taking that approach to davening, my personal relationships, exercise, and, of course, the battle that brought me to GYE in the first place.

Every day is a gift from Hashem, and I want to enjoy that day to its fullest. I am waking up each morning like it is a special holiday and I am not going to ruin that gift by engaging in activities that would not please HaShem. I am praying with more joy and conviction, I am exercising without worrying about the time and distance and how many steps I am taking. I am enjoying cooking a meal for my wife and sitting in the yard with a good cup of coffee. My work/life balance is better. I do my work to the best of my abilities and then leave and go home and enjoy the rest of this "special day".

I have always tracked everything in my life. I am a numbers guy! I worked out four times this week, have a 10-day streak of staying clean, and spent a certain amount of money this month. Did I pray three times today? Did I eat only Kosher food this week? Everything was tracked and calculated and it made life so uninspired and mundane.

Now, I will take a walk around the block in the middle of the day without tracking my steps. I will make sure that my next meal is Kosher, I will pray for maybe 45 minutes in the morning or maybe just 10, I am not going to hold myself to these arbitrary metrics. Maybe I will pray Mincha for an hour if I am feeling it, no more, rushing through the words, just so I can say that I did it. I am going to avoid P and M today... because I should.. That is not so hard! And tomorrow, I will say it again... I no longer know how many days clean I am. I was clean yesterday and plan on being clean again today. I will deal with tomorrow, tomorrow!

I hope and pray that everyone reading this finds a way to make every day as special as mine. Even when I have a bad day, it is just that—a day. Tomorrow, I begin again with hope and motivation to make this day the best day ever!!

Cheers to another great day!!!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by frank.lee - 03 May 2024 11:56

@Adam2014, that was beautiful!! I love the celebrating reach day!

Create an awesome day!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 16 May 2024 10:21

The Power and the Hope....

I wanted to give everyone an update on my journey away from P and M. I don't know if I ever will be able to say that the problem is "solved", but at least for the few months or so, it is almost non existent. The cycle has been broken, it was a cycle that started when I was younger than 12 and existed until recently. I am old and when I was growing up, there was no internet. I thank HaShem for that, I can only imagine the trouble that would have caused for me, if it was available then.

The cycle was very consistent. I would find "new" porn anywhere that I could. Back then it was a dirty magazine if I was lucky or even a catalogue that had women's bras in it would do the trick. Then it became "real" girls. I got with every one of them that I could find and do as much to them as I possibly could get away with.

Living in a poor area, many of these girls didn't have much and giving up their bodies was one of the only things that they had to give. It was not difficult getting a girl to "fool around" with. As the years went by the depravity got deeper and as the girls got older and wiser, it was not so easy, so. I turned to professionals and I don't need to elaborate on the problems that caused.

Finally I met my wife and all of that depravity ended. I have never been with another woman in over 30 years, but as we all know, that is only part of the problem. Porn became much more available and as life became busier and children entered the picture, porn became the easier outlet than being with my wife....

Fast Forward to 2021 or 2022, I got "fed-up" with the sin and found GYE, I lurked in the background for a long time before posting. I have told this story before, so I won't go into the details. I am only writing this morning to say to those still in the early stages of recovery, that there is immense power in this website.

GYE is the reason for my success. I give thanks to HaShem for everything, but I also thank HaShem for putting GYE into my life. The lessons, the books and most importantly (In my opinion) is the love and help for the contributors to this forum. I was skeptical in the beginning and it took taking that first big step and posting that fueled my recovery.

So please!! If you are like I was, and just reading these forums, take the big step and post something and let the power of the people in here carry you forward. They will not judge you or look down on you, actually, the opposite, they will pick you up in their collective arms and carry you levels you never thought possible.

There is both Power and Hope in these pages and that power and hope is available to everyone that asks for it.

I pray that one person who reads this, comes out of the shadows and takes that leap of faith and says hello to the incredible people in this forum and unleashes that power.

Have an amazing day!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chancy - 16 May 2024 19:17

Wow Adam,

That post was electrifying!

You posted everything you needed to make your point.

I am happy for you. I wish you success in the future as well.

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by AlwaysHappyAlwaysHopeful - 19 May 2024 13:03

I am super happy for you and for the others who will gain inspiration from your post.

I am 6 months whistle clean, not even hirhurim and over 2 1/2 years of not acting out by looking for some real action. It is a miracle from Above. I take one day at a time. Do a lot of praying, calls, meetings, reading SA and Big Book literature and have some very sober friends in recovery. My life is very challenging and I escaped into Tivas nashim to give me a feeling of relief from my emotional pain and suffering. But it didn't solve my problems. It just got me addicted. May Hashem give me and all of you another day of sobriety and freedom from lust.

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 06 Jun 2024 10:24

I am back from my self-imposed sabbatical and doing well. The war still rages, but I win most of the daily battles. I am still not counting the days. Each day is its standalone fight, and I celebrate the win or mourn the loss every day. I left my comfort zone the other day. I was in Crown Heights with my soon-to-be son-in-law. He had never been to Crown Heights, and I wanted to show him around and have him wrap tefillin in 770. We stopped at the Ohel earlier in the day, and it was a wonderful experience for him.

As we walked Kingston Avenue and saw all the people walking and shopping, he turned to me and said, "These people are so lucky; they have such a bond and sense of community." I couldn't agree more, but I also knew that some of the people around me were struggling with P and M and were part of another beautiful community—the GYE community.

I don't know how many (if any) of you guys are around Crown Heights, and I couldn't stop thinking about all of you and what you are going through. I wanted to hug every person on the street (I understand how weird that would be) hoping that one of the people were one of you guys here on GYE.

That brought me back here today. I miss you guys!!!

Codesh Tov and I will be around a lot more going forward!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by eyes - 06 Jun 2024 11:09

Hi Adam,

I am blown away by your posts. such genuinity (I know thats not a real word).

May Hashem keep on protecting you.

Working in IT is now small feat, as you can probably know every loophole there is out there.

May HAsheM give you the strength.

EYES

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by chancy - 06 Jun 2024 18:23

Welcome back Adam, I missed you!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 07 Jun 2024 10:03

I wanted to say something a little off topic. In my visit last Sunday, I branched out and went up to Williamsburg to go to a restaurant called Gottliebs. I don't know if you guys know of it, but before going I did a little research on the Jews of Williamsburg and how most of them are followers of the Satmar Sect. I am not going to judge how and why they live the way they do, but in my studies I saw that they are much more strict than Chabad in regards to smartphones and that very few people use them. I saw on a YouTube video about how they have a vending machine that you can buy a Kosher cellphone. I tried to find that machine, I thought that I would buy one of them and that would be a major step in my recovery. I know that I can just buy one online, but that would be different. Do any of you guys live or know about Williamsburg and where that machine might be?

I am a big believer in symbolism and surrounding myself in things that have value far above what the actual item is. I thought that owning a phone from such a special place would be something that I would cherish.

BTW.. The food at Gottliebs was amazing!!

I spoke to a Chabad friend who learns in 770 and asked him if he had a smartphone, he seemed a little uncomfortable talking about it, but he said "Yes, I have an iPhone, but it is filtered and if God made it, there must be good in it" .. I would have loved to talk to him more about it, but he seemed uneasy with the subject and I didn't want to push it.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by SisonYishecha - 07 Jun 2024 13:23

but he said "Yes, I have an iPhone, but it is filtered and if God made it, there must be good in it" .. I would have loved to talk to him more about it, but he seemed uneasy with the subject and I didn't want to push it.

I always get inspired from your posts.

I just want to respond to your Chabad friend, God made pork also, and its probably pretty damn good. But the reason that God created it is not for me to enjoy it, rather to get immeasurable

reward by abstaining from eating it.

Just some food for thought regarding his line of reason, without going into the smartphone discussion.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 19 Jun 2024 10:29

I felt the Yetzer Hara in the air the last week or so. I was cruising right along, basking in the glow of better relations at home; my personal health was on the upswing, and my children were healthy and happy. Life was easy for the moment, but I still felt the YH lurking in the background. At first, I thought that it was something else, just a quick glance at an improperly dressed woman; no big deal happens to all of us. Then, I started looking at YouTube again. Then I had the brilliant idea of activating Instagram and just filling it with Kosher pages. I had pages and pages of good, wholesome content. I was learning how to cook new Kosher dishes and saw a bunch of places to go in Israel on my next trip. It was great! I had the internet and Social Media under control!! I was one of the lucky few who could handle the onslaught that inevitably comes from it.

The YH had me in his sights; he had me all queued up for an attack, and I was leading him to my own slaughter...

Then it happened... I was alone in my office, nobody was around, and I was looking at my phone, and BAMN! Out of nowhere, it hit me like a tsunami. I was washed away in a sea of filth in a matter of seconds. One image led to a porn site; one porn site had me back to the chat rooms; the next 72 hours or so were a blur, and I dove completely head-first into the sewer.

I never felt so disgusted in my life, one fall after another, sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss. The porn got deep and dark, and the chat rooms were full of vermin waiting to take a piece of my soul.

I stopped davening, I stopped wrapping, I stopped anything that was pleasing to HaShem. I ate non-kosher food... I was in freefall and found nothing to grasp onto. Was this the final descent?

Was this where I was destined to be? Were the last few months just a calm before the storm? Is this the true me?

I thought about getting some cocaine, the drug of choice, to get women to do what I wanted them to do. That would be the final nail in my coffin. I tried calling the dealer that I used to use; thankfully, he was nowhere to be found. I hung up the phone, and a wave of sadness swept over me; I sat there and cried for what seemed like hours. I cried about how I disappointed HaShem, my wife, my kids, and myself. Is this how my life would end? Is this my legacy?

I said I have to give myself another shot. This is not how my story will end. What can I do? Then it came to me. GYE is where I need to be. Just stay clean for one day and then worry about tomorrow, tomorrow. So here I am, full of shame and disgust, beaten and battered, but still here, hoping for another miracle...

Today is DAY ONE

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by upanddown - 19 Jun 2024 10:57

Ouch.. these intense falls hurt! I feel your pain, I've been there as well.

you're amazing for getting back up! Just be patient with yourself..

Just like someone who's on a hike up to the peak of a mountain, there are parts where it goes steeply downhill.. it doesn't mean you're back to square one, it's part of the way to the peak!!

Looking forward to hearing from you! Keep strong!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by retrych - 19 Jun 2024 10:59

battered sure, but beaten? It tossed everything at you, the brink of despair, and you fought

back. you may have fallen initially, but the big test of what happens next, you passed. You're still here, you held on to what you cared about and youre still fighting.

(...You meant the other kind of beaten, didnt you)

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