

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 iwannalivereal - 22 Nov 2023 15:03

Hey Adam although I don't think we've ever communicated before, you should just know that I read every post of yours and get tons of chizzuk and inspiration from reading your stuff. Reading through your struggles and hearing how hard your fighting is really amazing!

Reading your post about how when your wife leaves gives you "the opportunity of a lifetime" really resonates with me as I totally feel the same. I clearly remember how if I would know that my wife had a wedding to go to and would be gone for 4 5 hours, I'd look forward to that day for a least a week before. The excitement of having so many hours was literally amazing and would certainly lead to a fun night. I remember as well a time when she was gone and I decided I'm not going to do anything, and when she came home I had such a feeling of disappointment in myself at the wasted opportunity. I just had 4 hours alone and didn't do anything. This didn't make me feel good at all, rather it was like a waste of an amazing chance at doing what I really love.

What changed my life was by changing internally. Now when my wife leaves for a while, instead of it being an opportunity to have fun, it's just the opposite. That opportunity itself means that there is tremendous opportunity to feel great about myself by not giving in. I now look at it as an amazing opportunity to be home alone for 4 hours and not do anything that I really want to do. I have learnt to be able to feel great about myself by overcoming desire. Check out the battle of the generation book by hillel s where he really pumps up this mindset. Totally changed my life and the lives of many!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 23 Nov 2023 10:47

That is very encouraging. I would love to get to that point, where time alone is a positive! I plan on getting that book, but since my wife doesn't know anything about my problem, I don't want to have her find the book. I hate being sneaky, it is literally the only thing that we don't talk about. It is my only secret from her.

This coming Monday, I will be alone most of the day and probably the night as well. I am nervous about it now. As I sit here this morning, I feel no urge to act out, but I know the minute she pulls out of the driveway that could change...

Thank you for the kind words!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 23 Nov 2023 11:05

Another update, Two day streak heading into Thursday and have a busy day today, so I think that I am going to be fine. I had a possible breakthrough on Tuesday. I learn with my Rabbi every Tuesday and for some reason, the learning this week turned personal and we got very deep and personal. We talked about life, marriage, our growing kids. We always talk about our families, but this week was different, it was not the superficial small talk before we dive into the learning. I hope that makes sense...

I have known him for about 15 years and we go to our kids Simchas and I am over his house all the time, we are friends.. I had him out on my boat last summer, It was funny watching him try to keep his Kippah on as we smashed through the waves... sorry, got off topic for a moment... (but it was really funny).

I was close to bringing up my problem. I didn't, but I do think that we created the environment of trust that I could bring that up in the future. We touched on things that we never did before. Was it HaShem setting the stage for me talking to him about this??? I think so.

Today, I am optimistic about the future.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by Vehkam - 23 Nov 2023 11:23

Adam, there is nothing incriminating in the book. It is a helpful read for people on all level's including those who have never been exposed to pornography. I have seen people people read it whose wives are proud that they are working on self growth.

that said, you know your own situation best. If having such a book around can be problematic you can download it and read it on your phone.

best wishes for continued success

vehkam

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 23 Nov 2023 13:16

I didn't know that... I am a big reader and have a library in my house. I was thinking that it was mostly porn focused. I will get it today!!

Thank you!!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 23 Nov 2023 13:22

Just got the book on Kindle... I am starting to read it right now!!! Thank you again!!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 25 Nov 2023 10:46

HaShem to the rescue.... Another day, another near miss. I was having a good day and my wife and daughter were going to the store and I was going to go with them. My wife told me that they were going shopping for clothing and it would be boring for me and said "Why don't you stay home and relax"... The minute she said that the YH kicked in... I said "sure, Ok, I'll stay home, I have a few things to do anyway".... Knowing that the minute she leaves, I am heading for a fall.. Less than 3 minutes after pulling out of the driveway, my other daughter texts me and says she is in the neighborhood and is going to stop by. My first reaction is to tell her that I am a little busy, can she stop by in an hour, (The YH is a quick thinker), then my training kicked in and I immediately asked HaShem for me to tell her to come over right away... and that is what I did. She spent the afternoon with me, my wife and other daughter came home.. I cooked and chatted and prepared for Shabbos and we had a wonderful shabbos meal together. We relaxed and I didn't have a bad thought the rest of the night and the Shabbos candles never burned so bright... Day 4 in the books... Onto Day 5!!

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by bright - 26 Nov 2023 19:20

[adam2014 wrote on 25 Nov 2023 10:46:](#)

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Great job! Its really tough in the thick of things to say NO. Do you have a plan for next time when your daughter may not decide to stop by?

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 27 Nov 2023 10:38

I think that I am fooling myself if I think I can do this with being surrounded by unfiltered devices. I don't know if I mentioned it, but I am in IT for my company and one of my jobs is to monitor and upkeep all the cellphones and tablets for the company. It is about 140 phones and 75 Tablets. Even if I filter my personal devices, I am still surrounded by unfiltered phones and tablets. But that is during the week, on the weekend, I am home and if I filtered my devices, that would help.. But to answer your question. the next time I am alone, I am going to go out of the house and take a drive or go for a walk or something outside the home.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by adam2014 - 27 Nov 2023 10:47

Sunday started bad and ended worse. After the family left after Shabbos (which was amazing). Sunday morning brought me to a place where I still struggle. Home alone... but this time my wife was still home and the YH took a swing at me. I was getting ready to go on a walk with my wife and just became overwhelmed with filthy thoughts. I was coming off a great Shabbos, I had a wholesome day planned ahead for me and it just took control and I fell. I fell hard with the most disgusting porn I could find. It was shocking the speed and the power that it came at me with. One minute I am totally fine and on a high of a great Shabbos and a 5 day streak and the next me.. it is all gone... I am trying to say that today is a new day and the 5 day streak was still good, but boy, that was a sneak attack and I was caught unprepared.

If I didn't have an unfiltered phone so readily available, maybe that would have bought me a few minutes and maybe I could have regained control? I don't know, but it could of helped...I am kidding myself thinking that I can do this with unfiltered devices...

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 27 Nov 2023 16:14

Adam, you write well. You express the frustration so many guys experience in an intelligent and clear manner. Most of all you are honest and are in touch with your turmoil regarding having unsafe devices.

In all honesty if i would have continuous easy access to unfiltered devices, my assumption is that i would fall. I lead a stressful life (most of it BH happy stress, but stress nonetheless) and what would begin as a search of "curiosity" to escape reality would spiral down very quickly. And i am ok with that reality. The same way the chachamim of "back then" instructed us to be careful with muktze - instead of telling us "Don't be a wimp, keep a hammer in your pocket and stay in control and don't knock in a nail", and the same way they instructed a nazir not to enter a vineyard - instead of telling him "Don't be a wimp, control yourself and don't eat any grapes", the chachamim of nowadays instruct us to avoid access as much as possible, and don't tell us "Don't be a wimp, use an unfiltered computer and control yourself and don't watch pornography." For many people, creating a safe environment with solid filters (often supplemented by Webchaver or Truple screen accountability), is the game changer. When that tough moment hits, they are forced to learn how to deal with the urge in a kosher healthy manner, and slowly extricate themselves from the automatic "go to pornography" as the one size fits all for all urges/stress/rejection/loneliness/boredom situations. There are countless fellows here that created safe work and home atmospheres and BH broke free from inappropriate behaviors. These guys also try to be one step ahead of the game and prepare how to deal with business trips and similar situations that create their own challenges with open accessibility. However we have to be realistic and recognize that there are some individuals who get so desperate for pornography that if they do not have easy access, they will drive to the nearest store where they can purchase a device and open service. Then after a few days of binging, they will smash that device. A few days or weeks later they once again drive to the store... Such chevra obviously need more than just creating safe zones. We daven that everyone be able to find himself with the least nisyonos possible - as per our tefila every morning "V'lo li'yedei nisayon".

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 28 Nov 2023 10:46

Thank you so much for the encouraging words. I 100% agree with everything that you said. I took a big step yesterday to position myself better for the next attack. I got rid of all "extra" tech in my home. I had multiple smartphones from work that I kept in my home office. That was just an excuse for having unfiltered devices within my grasp at any moment.

I had mentioned that I smashed my "porn phone" a few days ago. That was a "secret" phone that was FILLED with porn and filth. I didn't even need the Internet for that one. I had to have one "ready to go" in a moments notice. (That makes me sick even saying that now).

I have my iPad on sale on Ebay. I sat down and thought about how I actually use the iPad and it was 80% personal and 20% work. I can find a workaround for the 20%. That leaves my personal laptop, personal desktop and one iPhone to deal with. The desktop is in my home office which is right off the kitchen and not in a place that I could act out easily. I am going to look into filtering that today. The laptop is only something that I use, when on the road and could easily leave it in my office and get it before a trip. The iPhone is the one that I am most concerned with. I am ok with filtering it, I just need access to google, YouTube, Amazon and many other websites for work. Plus my wife grabs my phone often to do something and I am concerned that she finds it and sees a block or filter on it. I need the filter to be passive and not right in my face. I want her to grab my phone and use it whenever she wants. She is not checking up on me, if she needs a phone and mine is sitting there she grabs it and I do the same.

Just doing this has dramatically cut down my easy access points from about 10 to 3 and that is a big move!

?I am heading in the right direction and while the road is bumpy to say the least, I am moving forward and making progress.

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 28 Nov 2023 12:32

Mesiras nefesh mamash! Giving up so much is awesomely inspiring and impressive, but in addition i would dare say that in shamayim it is viewed comparatively as if you brought a korban. May Hashem shower you with bracha!

Rav Mendel Rimanover says that when one does an action against his nature, he can have the "chutzpah" to ask Hashem to go against "his nature" - example he gives is to daven for one that appears to be unable to have children to have a child. Pray buddy pray! What you have done is incredible.

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Re: My personal war against the YH
Posted by ainshumyeiush - 28 Nov 2023 13:59

Im blown away

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