

My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 03 Nov 2023 11:59

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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 frank.lee - 30 Dec 2023 22:04

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Adam2014, great news! I fully agree that changing the setup in the office can have an impact. Hopefully you will be ready and utilize the opportunity.

About bringing the device, I heard from the Magid of Dubno, a big Torah Scholar from around 300 years ago, that there is a strength and benefit in facing down challenges instead of running away. Making yourself stronger in the face of great challenges ...

As you read the BotG, I think he speaks alot about this victory mentality vs. Victim mentality. But there is also a halacha about not putting yourself into a place of spiritual challenges.

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by bright - 31 Dec 2023 00:28

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[adam2014 wrote on 30 Dec 2023 12:07:](#)

First off, Thank you so much for the thoughtful replies... They all make 100%... I never thought about testing yourself is not the best thing and that staying clean for that weekend is reward enough, let alone with an unfiltered computer nearby. I will rethink that part...

I have stayed clean for 3 days in a row many times and my thought is that I wanted this weekend to be a HUGE boost and not just another 3 day streak...I may be setting myself for a big disappointment by doing this and it fails. Also the Gemara is clear on avoiding dangerous situations when possible is a better choice....

As far as the office renovation, I did this in my corporate office about 10 years ago. I was going through a difficult period and my stress was off the charts and my office became a jail cell that I was sentenced to for 8 hours a day. I got new furniture and decorated the walls differently, moved my desk to the other side of the office and I instantly changed the flow and vibe and things got better exponentially over the next short period. I am hoping for the same in my home office.

This is why I come to you guys for advice... You guys are amazing... I will keep you posted.

Your attitude is amazing!

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by zzz613 - 31 Dec 2023 03:07

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wow your really amazing!

keep us updated

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by adam2014 - 31 Dec 2023 10:54

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I know that succeeding in this challenge would be fulfilling, but I am wondering what are the odds of actually winning this challenge? I seem to be going back and forth on whether or not it is a good idea to try it. I am a big "Life Experiment " guy. I will do 30 day challenges all the time, some silly, some meaningful. I recently did a "No Buy" month... I did not spend a penny on anything other than the absolute necessities of life, basically food.. It told a lot about me and I have changed my spending patterns significantly.

I would LOVE to do a 30 day "clean" experiment... and I am trying to get there, but nowhere near that yet... but I will get there!

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by adam2014 - 04 Jan 2024 11:59

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I am getting ready for my "Shabbat Challenge." I still have not decided whether or not I will take the Laptop; I am still leaning towards bringing it. In my life, I have done better under added pressure. I need that surge of excitement that comes with beating that challenge. The weather seems like it is going to cooperate. Cold and clear! I have my bags packed and itching to get out there.

The one thing that has occurred this week is my Davening and motivation to learn has taken a hit. I am not feeling the desire to pray and learn, and the books that I am taking with me are NOT religious sefers. I am not sure why that is. Is the YH setting me up for an attack, or could it just be that I am focusing all my energy on this weekend? It has been a burden to even wrap tefillin in the morning, my Chavrusa yesterday told me that I was "not all there". Wednesday is a big learning day for me. I have my main chavrusa from Israel in the morning for two hours and then an hour with my Chabbaf Rabbi in the afternoon. Maybe it is just the ebb and flow of life.

I have spoken to the people at the farm, and they said that I could come anytime on Friday. They also invited me to feed the animals on Friday afternoon and help with the chores around the farm. This is going to be a 180-degree reversal of my life. It will be the reset that I need. I am currently three days clean and feeling good.

I will shut down all electronic devices tonight and keep them off until Monday morning, and the first thing that I will do is check in with you guys!

Whether it turns out that the weekend is a huge success or a total failure, I am so thankful that you guys will be there for me regardless.

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by Vehkam - 04 Jan 2024 18:39

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[adam2014 wrote on 04 Jan 2024 11:59:](#)

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wishing you much hatzlocha. enjoy the change of pace!

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by adam2014 - 08 Jan 2024 11:49

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Back From the Farm!!

I am happy to report that the weekend was a total success. I ultimately took my laptop and left it in the car. I didn't have a single urge to get it. I was clean, I was content, I was tired (living on a farm is TOUGH). I had time alone with HaShem. I studied the Parsha like never before. I read

BOTG at length. The YH didn't find his way to the farm! He never made an appearance.

I know that living on a farm is not a reality, and I know the excitement of the experience will wear off quickly. While I am now on my longest streak EVER, today is the most dangerous day of all. I feel great, energized, full of optimism and hope. This is the time the YH could strike... I have to learn to feel good AND be prepared at all times. I am not going to let my guard down.

For you guys who have had these long streaks, it must be so rewarding, and I am sure that you never take them for granted. I am feeling a freedom like never before. I am getting a small taste of what life can be like without P and M. I am on Day 8, nothing earth-shattering, but for me, this is uncharted territory. I am looking forward to the day, the week, the month, and the year for the first time in a very long time.

I do not want to overstate the fact that the problem isn't solved and many dark days may lie ahead, but this weekend was a significant victory in this battle for my soul. I will enjoy it for a moment and then get ready to get back into the fight and continue my journey.

Thanks for giving me a vehicle to express my feelings, this makes this victory even sweeter.

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 08 Jan 2024 12:30

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Back on the farm, the horses are neighing, the cows are mooing, the sheep are baahing - total celebration for the Adam HaShalem! The farm has not had such simcha in years!

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Re: My personal war against the YH

Posted by adam2014 - 09 Jan 2024 11:22

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The first day back in reality went great. I spent the day in the "real" world at my office with all the problems we see daily on the street, and I handled it like a champion. I Had a productive day at

work, focused and alert. I know the YH is lurking around every corner, and hopefully, I will be ready, but as of today... I am GOOD!

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by chancy - 09 Jan 2024 16:23

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I know that its weird since we dont know each other, but, im proud of you!

This is the stuff we yiden are made of! Nobody can understand ho we are still around after thousands of years and so much suffering, this is how!

Hashem gives us supernatural powers that nobody but us can understand.

So Keep up the good work and make Hashem proud!

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by adam2014 - 10 Jan 2024 11:16

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Thank You so much.... I feel the same about all of you guys.... You are all "Brothers from different Mothers"! I mean that in the truest sense. When something good or bad happens to me, the first thing I think of is, "Go on GYE and tell everyone." I believe there is a collective gene or something in Yidem that has sustained us over the millennia.

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by adam2014 - 11 Jan 2024 11:15

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Reaching Day 10 for the first time. Uncharted territory for me. I can honestly say that the last time I went ten days without P and M was over 40 years ago. I am talking literally 40-plus years.... I have to say that I am feeling amazing in almost all ways except one. I am struggling religiously; my focus is on staying clean and not on Davening. I am not going to worry about it at this point. HaShem got me to this point; he understands what I am going through. I am sure



that the drastic change in me has altered my thinking.

While I am not Davening with much focus and attention, I am not looking at porn and at women on the streets with more vigor than ever before. I am spending less time on the internet and more with my wife. I am seeing the world through a different lens right now.

I have not missed a day of Tefillin in years; I have had the same routine for decades. Unfortunately, part of my daily routine was also P and M. I have a new office set-up, a 10-day streak going, and a clearer head. It will just take some time for the religious part of my life to catch up. I am wondering, Did anyone else have this struggle as they were getting clean?

I am still remaining 100% focused on my recovery. I know that I am anything but safe from the YH.... He must be pissed that I have gotten to this point!! LOL

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 11 Jan 2024 12:14

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Very normal and expected temporary side effect. Don't worry or obsess about it. Keep doing what you are doing tzaddik - and be proud.

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Re: My personal war against the YH  
Posted by ainshumyeiush - 11 Jan 2024 15:41

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I can very much relate to having other religious things "calm down" while fighting this fight. But considering that rewiring my brain takes a lot of time, energy, focus, and thought, i think its understandable that we could lack the energy to fight a second battle. If we were meant to be perfect, then hell would have a waiting list, and heaven would have only 7 people. But we are meant to grow where we can, slowly building ourselves up one challenge at a time, from where we are holding. As the gemora says "tofasta meruba lo tofasta" -he who grabs too much grabs nothing.

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