

Anyone tried this and succeeded?

Posted by imagibbor - 18 Aug 2024 16:35

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I've new to gye, and like everyone here I'm trying to break free from porn addiction. I've been battling for over 10 years without seeing much success.

Ive been trying something new for the past few weeks (which started off inadvertently) and am wondering if anyone else has tried it and seen lasting success.

Im counting my streak of "not watching porn" on gye, and I'm taking those words very literally. Right now I'm at 20, and it's true that I "haven't watched porn" in 20 days. But when I have an urge that I can't fight (which happens around once a week at this stage) I will look at porn **images** instead. As many of you may know, looking at images is an entirely different experience. It requires more work on your part to get where you want. Watching porn allows everything to come to you without you "working on" where you want to get. For this reason, watching porn is much more pleasurable (for me) than images are.

i feel like this is a step in the right direction for me since even in my moments of weakness, I am still controlling myself somewhat. If I just try to quit cold turkey (as I've been trying all these years), I end up falling hard when I have a moment of weakness. This new way, though, the challenge doesn't seem insurmountable since I still have access to some content. Of course, this is not the end of the battle. It's just the start. But it's a unique step that I've taken to cut porn out of my life.

I've tried a similar mehalach with quitting nicotine which worked for me. First I quit smoking and only vaped. Then I cut down on the level of nicotine- a little bit each year. Then I went to vaping 0 nicotine. Now I can proudly say I've completely beaten my nicotine addiction!

obviously each person is different and needs to create a path that works according to their nature, but Has anyone tried this and seen lasting success?

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?

Posted by chosemyshem - 18 Aug 2024 18:22

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Interesting move.

I think the general answer would be that indulging in lust just makes it's *harder* to get clean.

You don't have to answer this if it's too personal, but are you masturbating to the pictures still?

(Good rayah from nicotine, and I don't really have an explanation why this would be different though.)

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by imagibbor - 18 Aug 2024 18:55

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Yes I am, but like I said before- it's a much different experience. It's less enjoyable because I don't have everything coming to me on a silver platter

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by BenHashemBH - 18 Aug 2024 20:49

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I think your overall method of replacement could work, but the specifics might need a closer cheshbon between you, Hashem, and a mentor.

Can an alcoholic quit drinking by drinking only alcohols that he doesn't like the taste? Even if enjoying it less, he still gets drunk.

Someone with more experience could probably give a better response. Have you reached out to HHM? [michelgelner@gmail.com](mailto:michelgelner@gmail.com)

Hatzlacha

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?

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Posted by ezraw - 18 Aug 2024 20:58

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Hey, just wanted to share from my experience....

When I was younger, my parents severely limited my internet access. That drove me to resort to fantasy more. even though it was harder then just watching, it very quickly became easier and became my main outlet.

Not only that, but because I was still actively feeding my lust, my problem only continued to grow, and whenever I was able to access porn, it was much more enjoyable then before because it had been restricted and grown and not dealt with.

I'm not saying that the way you suggested isn't a good start, but from what I experienced, it didn't work and ended up making it worse. (this was long term, short term might not have the same effect, but I feel like it probably would at least to a degree)

Have you tried the ODAAT method yet? I personally found it very helpful in my journey towards freedom.

I hope this helps you,

wishing you much hatzlacha,

all the best,

Ezra W

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?

Posted by jewizard21 - 18 Aug 2024 23:02

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No, I don't think it works that way. I too would look at images or things that weren't actually porn. It isn't a replacement but actually just the same thing in another form.

The only way I broke free was with a filter that to this day I don't test, basic shmiras einayim (basics are hard), and reaching out to a rav and telling him about me.

After that it was utilizing the tool of ODAAT which is One Day At A Time as opposed to trying to quit "forever" take each day as a new challenge. Just for today I will stay clean and tomorrow I have no clue what will happen but I know that today I am staying clean.

So in the end I am sorry bc I wish it worked that way but it doesn't. Lust is something that you must distance yourself from totally.

Yes there is a significance of not "watching" porn but looking at porn is still porn.

Much Hatzlacha!

Try to get a filter. You may think that it will hinder your access to non-pornographic related things but I believe that is a misconception. You don't need the strongest filter in the world but you definitely need a filter.

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by BenHashemBH - 18 Aug 2024 23:21

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I have a filter (I'm not really sure what level) but whatever "hindrance" it causes I know I'm not missing out on anything and even more so, I feel I get extra schar when it blocks regular stuff. Because it's the right thing.

I do not feel at all like I missed or messed up anything important by getting a filter. DarcheHa Darchei Noam.

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by imagibbor - 18 Aug 2024 23:49

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One advantage of this mehalach that i failed to mention in the original post is about the deeper struggle im having with porn: identity. For the past 10 years, try as i may to not identify myself as a porn guy, it didn't work. It has always been a part of me. A hidden part of me that i don't show anyone, but a part of me.

This mehalach may possibly help wih this. To change my identity of myself from a "porn watcher" to a "non porn watcher" through this method. For now my identity may still be a "porn looker", but it wont be a "porn watcher". I think this yesod is a deep one that i may not be

writing out so clearly, but i think it is a main reason why i haven't been able to beat the addiction. Obviously it's not just that. But i believe it's a big factor

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by jewizard21 - 18 Aug 2024 23:54

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I'll be honest and a bit blunt, I think this is the yetzer harah and maybe you yourself trying to justify yourself. I think we've all been there to some extent.

Can you clarify your specific reasons for wanting to become clean?

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by imagibbor - 19 Aug 2024 00:05

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I had the same feeling as you- that it was just me trying to justify it and not really gaining anything from it- but I spoke it out with my therapist (who specializes in addictions) and I even presented it to him like "I feel like I'm just lying to myself and not really gaining from this mehalach", but he told me that what I'm doing can possibly be very beneficial since I'm- even in my weakest moments- exercising self control which takes me out of the "giving up and just doing whatever I want since I failed anyway" attitude.

it's to shift myself away from an attitude of giving up completely in order to teach myself (through action) that I really **do** have control over myself in any situation

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by jewizard21 - 19 Aug 2024 01:48

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Good luck!!

Just remember that just because you are now supplementing your desire for lust with pictures instead of pornography does not justify you looking at pictures. Remember your true goal to

become clean.

Yes you are "controlling" your situation more than before but your still not in an ideal situation.

Also whats the way your going about it? Is it that whenever you have an urge you go to pictures, or do you push it off until you can no longer bear it and give into the lust with pictures instead of videos?

This is risky business and definitely not recommended for most, but if your therapist is suggesting it for you specifically then I am outranked of course. Lol real life vs me on a forum.

I hope this ultimately works for you!

Hatzlacha Rabba

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by imagibbor - 19 Aug 2024 02:22

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Of course it's not the ideal situation. See my original post where I said it's not at all the end goal.

and of course the pictures is the last resort- meaning I try to push off the urge as much as I can, and often times I will succeed, but when I fall it's not as low of a fall this way

And again- I am not recommending this for anyone at all! I think this should not be your first road to take when you're trying to quit porn. It shouldn't even be your tenth road! But for me personally, after all the years and years of trying and not gaining any ground, this is something that I feel may enable me to gain real ground and see real progress. And when I feel ready, I will work on cutting out even more until iyh I will rid myself of lust completely

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by vehkam - 19 Aug 2024 03:14

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Would it work for you to set a timeframe of how long you will allow the pictures? I would be concerned about being able to maintain success in such a program if there are not additional concrete forward steps within a set period of time.

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by neshomo kedosha - 19 Aug 2024 09:21

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[BenHashemBH wrote on 18 Aug 2024 20:49:](#)

I think your overall method of replacement could work, but the specifics might need a closer cheshbon between you, Hashem, and a mentor.

Can an alcoholic quit drinking by drinking only alcohols that he doesn't like the taste? Even if enjoying it less, he still gets drunk.

I get this idea. If you make it less easy and enjoyable to access then it's a step in rewiring your brain to pulling away from it. You won't just do it as easily without thinking. It's different to alcohol because there your still getting drunk whereas here its gonna affect the experience and make it that much less attractive which helps to fight the urge.

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Re: Anyone tried this and succeeded?  
Posted by chosemyshem - 19 Aug 2024 13:48

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[imagibbor wrote on 18 Aug 2024 18:55:](#)

Yes I am, but like I said before- it's a much different experience. It's less enjoyable because I don't have everything coming to me on a silver platter

I see you wrote your therapist is condoning this process, so I'm definitely not going to argue with the pros. And I definitely hear the very real value in exercising small amounts of self control and recognizing the progress in that.

But masturbation is a deep and powerful lust whether there's content fueling it or not. Some would say the ikkar of any lust problem is masturbation ("sex with self"). If the frequency of masturbation isn't decreasing then you have to know whether or not you're actually doing anything.

Listen, the nice thing about not being dead is you get to try new things, and if they don't work out, you get to try something else.

Hatzlacha!

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