

The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 02 Oct 2024 19:59

Hi everyone. I raise my voice now for the first time here, but I've been listening to all yours for some time now. I've decided to muster the energy to get a significant post out now that it's Rosh HaShana. Perhaps this post and attempt to become clean will be my defending angel in Shamayim.

I'm going to start off with my story. Then I'll explain what kind of help I think I need. Please feel free to comment anything you think will help me!

Here goes.

So, I've had sexual tendencies for a really long time.

My first pull toward such content was literally at 5 years old. There was a day that I was so curious to see what a female breast looked like, that the second I got my hands on a free computer away from my parents, I looked up an image of bare breasts. To this day I remember that image. I got very freaked out at the sight and quickly plugged out the computer, shutting it off.

It's not normal. My hormones shouldn't have been that active at just 5 years old. I still can't explain it. But that experience was just the start.

Like many of you, I grew up with parents oblivious to the challenges of technology and growing men. By 6th grade I was handed a smartphone to do anything and everything I wanted, filter free. I don't even think my parents knew at the time that you could filter a phone. It wasn't a thought in their mind. Not even a possibility that their child would experiment with such things.

Well, I got instantly hooked. I was consuming tons of porn all throughout 6th - 8th grade. The funny part is that I didn't know how to masturbate at the time. Like for some reason I didn't put together how to do it. So I would just watch for hours until I had something else urgent to do. I couldn't "finish" a session because I didn't know how to release. In 9th grade I figured it out and I just went on a deeper spiral then. It didn't help that I was in a modern orthodox school with promiscuous girls, dirty minded classmates, etc. I was just surrounded by filth but didn't even realize it was filth. I didn't think much of it. I knew it was like a little bad but I knew everyone was involved with it so I just stayed careless.

After high school, I went to yeshiva in Israel. I finally woke up to what Judaism was about. I become frum, “flipped out”, whatever you wanna call it. And I started the battle. And I fought. And fought. And fought. I was overall successful in Israel. But I didn’t manage to cage the beast. Once I was back home, with unfiltered devices again, it was tougher than ever.

I had better days and better weeks. I had worse days and even worse months. But I never stopped fighting. I tried so many things. Nothing really worked. I was in a yeshiva college, so I still had regular Sedarim and all, so I wasn’t like disconnected from learning and Yidishkeit. But it just stayed tough. I was pretty up and down for the next 2.5 years (ages 19-21)

Then something interesting happened. In February this year, my parents brought up the subject of Shidduchim to me. I was 21 then (turned 22 this summer). They asked me if I was interested in starting. I didn’t say no, but I didn’t say yes. I kind of just left it as “we’ll see I guess if anything happens...”. Two months later my sister told me she has a great girl for me to go out with.

Although I was still struggling with P&M, I was managing to go clean easily for 4-5 days at a time back then, so I said yes to go out. Maybe it was against my better judgement. But let me point out something.

I went out with this girl for 3 months (before I broke it off as I realized we just aren’t the best match... story for a different time). Those 3 months, I had no urges. No desire for porn. I loved the girl and I just wanted to give and give and give to her. I didn’t fantasize about her. I didn’t view her sexually. I cared about her on an emotional level. And interestingly enough, I wasn’t like super attracted to her physically to start. But I gave it some time and grew to like her personality and character traits a lot. That’s kind of what built our relationship. It was like a gap in me got filled and I just wasn’t interested in P&M anymore.

But as I began to realize that we just aren’t a match and decided I was going to end the relationship, my urges began to resurface, after 3 months in hiatus. And right after we ended, there I was again with the unfiltered devices at home. My sessions were pretty frequent for a couple weeks from June - July, but I managed to slow it down by August time.

And here I am. At the start of October. I have not dated a girl since. Not because of any reason in particular - I just haven't gotten a Shayach suggestion yet. And it's just been up and down all throughout September. I stay clean pretty easily for 4-5 days more or less, then I fall, and the whole cycle repeats. But I need a long term solution. I can't expect my future wife to fix this problem. I need an internal change.

So I ask of you guys-

What do you think of my situation?

I want to know- is my issue habitual or lust? If it's lust, how do I learn to control my lust? Lust is what will kill a marriage. I need it under control.

If it's just habitual, obviously I will still keep pushing to end it, but perhaps marriage can help then? Perhaps that's why I was able to stay clean easily without urges while dating that girl?

Can you guys help me figure out the root of my problem here?

And so what's my next step? Unfortunately I can't filter those devices at home- they're not mine, they're my family's. And I don't want that to be the solution anyways. I'm tired of "running" from the problem. I want an internal change. I want to be able to feel it in my bones that this is not good for me, and to be able to act on that feeling. Is that a reasonable goal?

I've also been in touch with a user here I think some of you know - Muttel. He inspired me to get involved with the forums, so here it is.

Looking forward to meaningful conversations and sharing inspiring stories with you all. Shana Tova

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 15 Oct 2024 04:14

[Muttel wrote on 14 Oct 2024 08:40:](#)

[tzadikatheart wrote on 14 Oct 2024 03:48:](#)

Hi everyone.

It is with sadness that I admit that I fell today (right after Yom Kippur..)

To be honest, something pretty tragic happened to me over Yom Kippur (bh everything is OK but it stressed me a lot) and I got overwhelmed today and wanted to distract myself. Obviously I know porn and masturbation is not the answer, but I didn't feel strong enough and gave in.

But I am still happy I went a week clean with the help of you guys. I am looking forward to picking back up and fighting onwards!

Please, I can use a little Chizzuk...

definitely let's pick up and get on the truck!

why not reach out to some of your friends here, we'd love to help!

Looking forward to hearing from you....

With a ton of brotherly love,

Muttel

I got weak in the moment. When the Yetzer Hara hits, I don't feel like calling or reaching out. I know I should. But I just have a hard time bringing myself to do it. I'll try to be stronger next time

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 15 Oct 2024 04:16

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 14 Oct 2024 11:35:](#)

As has been written about before, Motzai Yom Kippur is a big "fall time" for many. Learning how to self regulate and "land" after all the emotion is a skill that needs training. You obviously went to your old pacifier. Ignore it and move on. You are doing great. A mountain climber who falls into a ditch does not have to roll down the hill. As he badages his scratches, he enjoys the view from the height he is at. B'ezras hashem you will climb to the top and shlep many others along with you.

Thank you for the works of encouragement HHM. I have yet to reach out to you. I think I will soon bzh... (I have your number already)

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 15 Oct 2024 19:28

[tzadikatheart wrote on 15 Oct 2024 04:13:](#)

[realclean wrote on 14 Oct 2024 04:00:](#)

Hey, I just read your story and it really resonated with me because all in all it's basically exactly the same story as me. I'm also 22 and in shidduchim and I also fell today right after Yom Kippur. Happens to be it was after a 45 day streak of no porn, which I think is the longest streak I've ever had in my life. But anyways, I don't have much chizzuk to say to you other than hey! I'm here in this too right along with you! We gotta make it out of this together!

Hey realclean, thanks so much for replying here.

You may not have any words of Chizzuk, but the fact that you're just like me is a lot of Chizzuk in and of itself!

I wanted to message you privately, but for some reason it's not working on my laptop...

I would love to get in contact with you and speak over the phone a bit. There's a chance we may

even know each other, so no need to reach out if you're concerned for that! But if it's OK with you, PM me with an email or phone number... would love to talk!

Hi realclean - I saw your private message in my email inbox, but for some reason I can't respond (the page doesn't load). I think it's because I didn't unlock private chat yet (6 more days). So I apologize for not responding...

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 21 Oct 2024 16:33

Hi everyone, hope you all are having a good Yom Tov.

Truth be told, I fell yesterday...

Although it's upsetting, I am doing better overall than before I joined GYE. I'm getting through around a week clean before falling, which is less frequent than before. The connections and support helps a lot.

Just sometimes in the moment, when I'm fighting the YH, I lose the strength to reach out to guys and get Chizzuk. I lose motivation. I need to somehow keep a little fire burning even when the YH attacks.

It's like, when I have an urge, I just pashut don't care anymore about being clean. Afterwards I'm full of regret, like usual.

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by avifl - 21 Oct 2024 17:34

It's like, when I have an urge, I just pashut don't care anymore about being clean. Afterwards I'm full of regret, like usual.

I really understand that. I had that all the time, doing a few days clean, then getting an urge and just not caring.

Just saying I get you

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by chosemyschem - 21 Oct 2024 20:02

[tzadikatheart wrote on 21 Oct 2024 16:33:](#)

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The old age problem. How can you fight when the urges attack your desire to fight?

In my limited, personal experience, just putting in the work over and over leads to being in those situations less often, and having almost habitual responses on hand for when you find yourself in those situations.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by realclean - 22 Oct 2024 05:34

Hey I fell today unfortunately as well.. still hoping to be in touch over email, please reach out!

Aliglurk67@yahoo.com

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by falafel - 22 Oct 2024 06:05

Hi just found this thread today, feel like I've had similar experience to yours (minus the modern orthodox background and the urges at age 6).

I've been battling this for around 10 years, since around 13, and am in shidduchim now. I really feel for you brother, and I was on the verge of tears as I read your post (and as I write this now).

I wish I had more chizuk to offer, but unfortunately I've only seen limited success. I did manage to keep clean during my 1st (7 month) stint in Israel, but then when I went home for Bein Hazmanim...but then stayed clean for my 2nd (5 month) stint, except for 1 day. The lack of devices and constantly "being in yeshiva" (a.k.a. just not being home) make a world of a difference.

I think for me it's more dopamine/habit

would love to help in any way I can. Hatzlacha

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by realclean - 22 Oct 2024 15:03

Hey Falafel! Your story is specifically relateble to me being that one of my main goals I wanted to achieve by going to Eretz Yisroel was to finally kick this issue especially right before shidduchim. In short it didn't work.... I'm home now and still trying and trying and trying every single day.

Im extremely glad (and terribly sad at the same time obviously) to see that there's more guys struggling while in shidduchim just like me.

How we getting out of this shmutz?!

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 22 Oct 2024 16:20

[avifl wrote on 21 Oct 2024 17:34:](#)

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I really understand that. I had that all the time, doing a few days clean, then getting an urge and just not caring.

Just saying I get you

Hey thank you for that. Honestly, it gives me a lot of Chizzuk to hear that others have the same problem as me. It helps me understand that I'm not some messed up case - I'm normal and have some issues like we all do and we're gonna solve it together.

I was speaking to Eerie a couple weeks ago and he told me the same thing - that we can't view our problems as if we're messed up. We're normal and we're great in many areas. We have one area we need to work on and it doesn't mean we're crazy.

Thank you for relating to me. Really!

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 22 Oct 2024 16:26

[chosemyschem wrote on 21 Oct 2024 20:02:](#)

[tzadikatheart wrote on 21 Oct 2024 16:33:](#)

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In my limited, personal experience, just putting in the work over and over leads to being in those situations less often, and having almost habitual responses on hand for when you find yourself in those situations.

Hatzlacha!

Hey chosemyschem, thank you for reaching out! Yes bzh with more time and work I hope to be able to avoid situations like this. My habitual response needs to change!

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by tzadikatheart - 22 Oct 2024 16:29

[falafel wrote on 22 Oct 2024 06:05:](#)

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I think for me it's more dopamine/habit

would love to help in any way I can. Hatzlacha

Well you did better than me in Israel...

yea it's really just a crazy habit we got stuck in when we were young and our brains are just pushing us to it all the time. We need to heal.

It comforts me to hear that you relate to my story. Let's fight this together

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by empoweredowl90 - 22 Oct 2024 17:09

Hi I just read your thread, gave me great Chizik. Keep on posting!! I can totally relate to what you have wrote. If you want a listening ear and a friend, I'm always available.

From a bochur.

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Re: The Start of My Freedom

Posted by avifl - 22 Oct 2024 18:12

[tzadikatheart wrote on 02 Oct 2024 19:59:](#)

I want to know- is my issue habitual or lust? If it's lust, how do I learn to control my lust? Lust is what will kill a marriage. I need it under control.

I really recommend checking out The Fight by R' Benzion Shafier, specifically "Part 3: The Function of a Successful Marriage" where he discusses this exact point. It is a shmuz on how to deal with Taavah. Highly recommend listening to the whole series if you have the time, (it really helped me grow in this area), but if not, at least part 3. I think you will like it.

Here is the link

theshmuz.com/series/the-fight/

Keep fighting, hashem loves you!! And we do too!!

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