

Just joined

Posted by Imainanili - 08 May 2011 12:14

Hi everyone!

I just joined, hope I'm posting this properly, in the right place, etc.

I'm in my fifties (am I the oldest person here?) but STILL struggle with it.

Boy, do I ever wish you were around when I was 12.

Shmiras Habris is something that is never talked about openly. At least I have never heard about it, unless I include the off-color jokes you hear some people make with a smirk. But seriously, nobody ever told me about the issur. I had to find out on my own, and by then years had passed. It was a major shock to me. I did make sure I told all my sons about it at the relevant time, but I wish I could offer them something more practical as to how to actually control their urges. It's a difficult area for many fathers to talk about, and for sons to listen to their parents about. Maybe you at GYU can be makdim refuah lemakah and offer some means how to educate our children before things get serious?

Anyhow, I think this site and all the tools it offers is a great idea! Brilliant! Even though I just saw a notice about it in shul on Thursday night, the little time I have had to browse the site and read material has already had a positive impact in practical terms, without any of the filters, 12 steps or sponsor (doesn't mean I won't take them up, just haven't had the time yet).

So, my struggle: Puberty hit me at a young age, when I was sick with physical and emotional disorders. Dysfunctional family, horrendous sibling bullying (including sexual), hopeless teachers and rebbeim, followed by an even more hopeless mesivta and yeshiva gedola. Grim picture. Acted out throughout that period, starting at around 12-13, in an effort to relieve tension as much as because of lust. Married at 22, I tried to get clean beforehand, but that lasted about as long as from Taanis Esther to Purim.

Marriage was a disaster. Still is, but I'm still married to the same person. How come? I guess

it's Ratzon Hashem, she's my basherte and vice versa. Our married life settled into a tumultuous routine, me acting out behind her back, while we were fighting tooth and nail all the time. Things reached a low point about a decade after our marriage when I refused to talk to her for several months. Unbeknown to me, her mother took her to see a mekubal (we were living in the Holy Land at the time). This Yid gave her some segulos, which worked like a charm (well, he DID give her a charm, I mean a kameyah).

Fast forward 3 months, when the bombshell dropped: my wife found out what was going on behind her back. After recriminations etc., she told me about the visit to the mekubal, who had told her to come back to him with me in 3 months! We duly went to him, he gave me a brocha and - you won't believe this, but it's true - I became clean overnight. I mean, sure, I had thoughts, I had taavos, etc etc, but as far as shmiras habris is concerned I was pure as the driven snow. What a mechayeh it was. It was like a dream come true. I didn't know how good I had it. I even went to see my Rebbe a year later and he told me he sees I need to make a big Tikkun. He instructed me how to do it and to return after I had done it, whereupon he declared it had worked. He had never told me anything about it previously, for obvious reasons.

Then the internet came into my life. I was able to view "unsuitable material" (I hate this euphemism, I'd rather just call a spade a spade) anytime, free of charge, and I didn't need to hide it. Interestingly, for years I did this, without any change to my shmiras habris status.

I stayed clean for a dozen years. Then I slipped, but just once. Months later I slipped again. Then I was clean again for a year or two. Then slipped again, etc. Until it all unravelled about a year ago. I don't know why, I can't exactly explain why I was clean until then, and why I couldn't resist any more. Like the typical addict, I persuaded myself I could stop any time. But of course, I didn't, and I couldn't and - I am now prepared to admit - I can't. I guess I may have hit rock bottom.

I kept telling myself my situation is due to a change I made in my minhag: I started drinking chalav stam, because I'm a coffee addict and I love to be able to have a cofffee at any Starbucks etc. Next I was having a chocolate or candy bar made of chalav stam with that coffee. It's known that chalav akum is metattem as halev, so I put it down to that. But by then I'm addicted to coffee as well!

A friend told me about a segulah that helps with everything, especially "inyanei kedusha" (the Kav Hayashar's ring) and I pounced on it. So what did I do? I put the ring in the closet whenever I wanted to act out! (felt less guilty, I guess).

So, where am I now? About to take some steps - with Hashem's help and yours - to rid myself of this thing.

I know I'm just a newbie, but I still want to raise a point: you keep mentioning 90 days as a magic number. When I quit smoking last year, with a psychologist who specializes in it, he advised me not to count the number of days, weeks, etc since my last cigarette. He believes it just reinforces the smoking behavior and reinforces the fact that basically I am a smoker who happens not to have smoked for X number of days. Far better, he advised, to tell myself I am a non-smoker, and to take it one day at a time and resolve that "today I will not smoke". This approach worked very well for me, and B"H I managed to quit, after many failed attempts previously. Smoking is an addiction, just like the one this site deals with, so why is it different?

Before I finish, there is a brilliant book chapter I think everyone should read. It's by Dr Norman Doidge, a leading international expert on "neuroplasticity", i.e. the way the brain changes. Basically, he has done research which demonstrates that repeated exposure to "unsuitable material" actually changes the functioning of the brain! The chapter can be found on the internet, just Google it.

I welcome your responses and comments. No, that's not quite right. I am ASKING for your responses, comments, questions, criticism, anything. I am feeling a little isolated now and would love some company, even if it's only virtual.

Kol Tuv!

Imainaili Mili?

Ukesheani Leatzmi, Mah Ani?

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Re: Just joined

Posted by heuni memass - 08 May 2011 13:53

Imainanili welcome aboard.

No you are not the oldest here. we have all ages and stages. This Y"H doesn't discriminate - neither do we. Anyway - thanks for joining and taking this step to loosening the nose from around your neck. We are always used to " dont talk, dont feel" Here we talk, share and try to learn how to feel.

As you said this site is for of good advice. And the more you hang around here the exiting it gets.

Keep on posting - and let us know how things are going.

One thing to remember- I need to stay clean TODAY. i don't care about yesterday nor tomorrow.

Have a seat my friend.

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Re: Just joined

Posted by Reb Yid - 09 May 2011 06:14

Hey there!!

Reb Yid here!!

I'd like to welcome you to our community.

May you find the tools here to help you truly overcome this YH for the long term!!

And may this be a zechus for you to find true happiness and fulfillment in your marriage!!

Oh. And by the way.....

Welcome to our community, you have finally come home!

Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up with them!

[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#): (Right Click the link and press "Save Link/Target As" to save the PDF file to your computer).

'Guard Your Eyes' offers a unique approach to helping people by recognizing that there are many different levels in the struggle for "*Shmiras Ainayim*" and "*Shmiras Habris*". After studying the experience of hundreds of religious strugglers over the past few years, we put together the suggestions and recommendations that we feel are best for the various levels. We divided the tools, features and services that GYE offers into 8 different levels. This "[GYE Program in a Nutshell](#)" can help people quickly identify at what level of the struggle they are at, and which tools and features would help them most at their particular level.

Here are some quick things you can do to help you jump straight into recovery:

1) Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best – and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information... We also **highly advise** installing "Reporting Software" such as webchaver.org to give you some accountability, because filters alone are usually not sufficient and they can often be bypassed.

2) Join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day.

3) Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#).

4) Post away on this forum! You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you **get out of isolation!**

5) GuardYourEyes also offers many free anonymous phone conferences where you can join a group of other frum Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See www.guardyoureyes.org > Tools > Phone Conferences for many different options. Our conferences are taking place every day, morning, noon and night... Joining a phone group would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps – which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but the daily call will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

6) If you need more general guidance, write to our e-mail helpline at gye.help@gmail.com or call our hotline at 646-600-8100.

7) Download and read the "[Guard Your Eyes Handbook](#)". This handbook outlines the GYE approach in detail, and makes our network much more effective and helpful for people. **The handbook has two parts:**

A) The first part, "**Attitude & Perspective**", details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

The second part, "**The 18 Tools**", detail suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. No matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: Just joined

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 09 May 2011 06:43

Just to say "welcome"

You are definitely not alone anymore, pay attention to how many views your post gets its more indicative of how many of us are around and care and are rooting for you. Its just that not everyone posts to show support.

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Re: Just joined

Posted by alexeliezer - 13 May 2011 21:07

Welcome to this trailblazing, life-changing, world-changing community! Regarding your marriage, have you read Rav Arush's book, Garden of Peace? I have BH a wonderful marriage, but this hard-hitting book still helped tremendously.

Your brother Alex

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Re: Just joined

Posted by Imainanili - 15 May 2011 07:02

To all who replied to my post: thanks! It's great to hear from you

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