

Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by btz - 30 May 2011 05:18

Hello Friends,

I'm not new to the forums as I have been lurking around here for a while, but I thought I would introduce myself and share a piece of my story:

I'm a 32 year old Ba'al teshuva, and I'm a lust addict. I literally I had no idea that I was an addict (or that people could even be addicted to lust??) until I happened to come across gye about a year or so ago after following a link from an Aish article. It actually took me several days/weeks to even muster up the courage to explore the site and find out what it was all about, but since that time it has been a tremendous relief to know that there are others out there like me who go through this struggle and that there is hope for all of us.

I was exposed to p*rn/m***bation at a very young age - I don't know how old it was when I started, but if I had to take a guess I would say around the age of 10 or 11. It all started when I found a magazine at a relative's house. That led to trying to find more adult magazines, then adult movies, then when the internet started it was the constant search for more and more shmutz. I could never get enough.....I would spend hours and hours searching and downloading until my computer was full with so much of it that I could never possibly even view it all. And all that time I was sneaking around and lying just to waste time with the same process over and over again.

This whole process seemed "normal" to me for almost my whole life because I guess I didn't know any better. All of my friends growing up (and a majority of them now) were either non-jews, or secular jews. They all spoke (and still do speak) openly about p*rn/m****bation as a regular thing that every "healthy" guy does. I didn't start becoming religious until after college, and at that point I started to slowly come to the realization that there was something wrong with my secret lifestyle. I knew that eventually I had to stop, but just never felt like it. I loved my secret best friend, p*rn, way too much to give it up. How could I possibly live without all of those images and fantasies? Because I had been doing it for too long it just felt like it was too much a part of me.

I think the catalyst that finally set me down the path towards sobriety was marriage. I have been married for 2 1/2 years, and as soon as we got married I started to feel extremely guilty about lying to my wife and doing the things that I was doing. It was at that point I realized that

no matter how bad I felt about it...I couldn't stop it! I've always thought that I had "good self control", but I couldn't come close to controlling my lust. I realized that my life was starting to become unmanageable and I knew I had to do something - which is B'H what eventually led me here.

It has been a long winding road over the past year with a lot of ups, downs, sober days, slips, and falls. For the first 6 months I was killing myself to try to make it to the 90 day mark, but I just couldn't seem to do it.....took me a long time (and reading a lot of Dov posts) to realize that I was fighting the addiction, not turning the fight over to G-d and living in the solution. With that new perspective (and a lot of other new ones), I am very happy to say that I have almost reached 5 months of sobriety without any slips. G-d has blessed me with this tremendous miracle without the help of joining a 12-step program, but I have done a lot of reading (GYE handbooks, Chizuk emails, 12 step literature) and I really work on internalizing it and working hard on improving myself.

It certainly hasn't been easy, but it has been so worth it - I never imagined life could be this good! A big thank you to the founders of this site, Dov, and all of the other great people that give up their own time to give Chizuk to others. You have truly enhanced my life more than I could have possibly imagined and I can never thank you enough.

Hatzlacha to all!

btz

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by Kedusha - 30 May 2011 15:33

Beautiful! What Chizuk I got from reading your post.

Continued Hatzlacha!

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by Dov - 30 May 2011 15:43

Wow! You are so welcome!! Continued hatzlocha! And special thanks to guard for making this all possible by Hashem's tremednous immeasurable love.

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by heuni memass - 30 May 2011 16:23

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by Yesod Tzadik - 30 May 2011 16:40

Thank you for your beautiful post!

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by lamAdam - 30 May 2011 17:15

And now finally a official welcome

btz -- thank you for such a great post! As a newbie, it's always great to hear from guys who are really making it happen.

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by btz - 31 May 2011 03:01

BTW - That post was the first time I've ever admitted/discussed my addiction to anyone else. I had been holding that in for a very very long time, and it feels good to let it out. I'm hoping this

will be a catalyst for me to post more and keep all of this stuff on the outside

Thanks for the encouragement.

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by silentbattle - 31 May 2011 04:27

it is incredible, isn't it, how good it feels to let our deep, dark secrets into the light!?

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by alexeliezer - 31 May 2011 19:01

Thanks for sharing your story. It's good to hear your success. Life is so sweet!

Alex

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by Reb Yid - 02 Jun 2011 04:42

I too have been clean for a number of days now. I have been struggling of late, and your post really gave me Chizuk!!

Thanks for sharing!!

BTW: I would also like to thank Dov for his immeasurable help!!

Thank You Hashem for wonderful people who post their successes to inspire others!!

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by ontheedgeman - 02 Jun 2011 14:45

great post, great chizuk!

Remember, the real work is ongoing and the snake is in the grass. Don't get arrogant! a 12 step programme is nothing to be ashamed of and could help address other issues.

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by btz - 20 Jun 2011 07:02

so true. I'm having a really tough time right now....I'm certainly not feeling arrogant about anything

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Re: Long time lurker, first time poster
Posted by Dov - 21 Jun 2011 04:55

Not feeling arrogant? That's great! You can get encouragement from that, you know. You are very lucky, indeed. Now what to do with a little humility....hmmmm.....talk to Hashem a little more humbly, let go of the preoccupation with lust a little more humbly, be nice to the people a little more humbly.....just a little, seriously.

You are a cool dude, I think. Keep sharing and things will get lighter, not heavier. Make being decent much more important than fighting the schmutz. You are a very decent guy.

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