

hello my friends....

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 19 Jul 2011 04:33

I've been lurking here for a couple of months, and now it's time to introduce myself and share my story. I first would like to express my Hakoras Hatov to Hashem for giving me a second chance, and for leading me to GYE when I needed it most. Also my thanks to all of you here, who through your stories and struggles have inspired me to hang on when times are tough, and to strive to become the person that Hashem really wants me to be.

i apologize if this is a bit long-winded but I am not such a good writer and I have a lot to get off my chest. I also apologize to the mods if i get too graphic and you have to edit. So here goes....

I am in my 40's, what you would call a "working yeshivishe ben torah", grew up in a small frum community, went to the "best" yeshivas, and I am B"H married with a bunch of kids K"AH. That's what everyone sees and thinks..... they don't know about my dark, secret life.

I have been struggling with SSA since my teens. Actually "struggling" is the wrong word, because until recently I was just wallowing in it. B"H I never went as far as doing it with another person, though not from lack of wanting. My natural shyness saved me many times from following through when situations presented themselves. But the looking, the fantasies, the WANTING, and the acting out with myself totally consumed my life and made me miserable even as i was enjoying the momentary pleasures.

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I had always "played with myself" even at a very young age. I had no idea what it meant or that it was wrong, just that it felt good. I guess i began using it to soothe myself more and more. At the same time, as my body matured, I found myself fascinated more and more with looking at the other boysn how they were developing. I had barely any idea what sex was at that point, and surely did not even know that there was such a thing as homosexuality. I attributed my fascination to "scientific curiosity".

At some point around the age of 15, I did MZ"L for the first time, also out of "curiosity". I cannot even begin to describe the way it was immediately addicting, probably like a first hit of cocaine (I have never done drugs). I am sure all of us here know what I am talking about. before i knew it I was doing it every chance I got, even 2-3 times a day. As I got older I realized that I was fantasizing about the other boys while I did it, and I began to realize that i had a "problem". But I couldn't stop, and there was nobody i felt close enough to talk to. So I went through life walking the walk and talking the talk, while in secret i wallowed in my sick fantasies. I learned, davened and did mitzvos, and most of the time I even believed in it, even as I knew deep inside that it was all a show and I couldn't tell anyone about what was eating me up. I would cry on Yom Kippur, promising to be good, while knowing full well that the Yetzer Hora was waiting right outside the Bais Medrash door and i probably wouldn't make it 12 hours before i did it again.

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At that moment I felt a calmness and resolve rest upon me. i knew that I must do whatever it takes to bring the two halves of my life together. I realized that i have to do something so shocking to me, that i would be forced to completely change my life. i resolved to "come out" to my wife and tell her everything, and take the consequences as they came. At that point I wasn't even thinking about doing teshuva, just to stop living in secret and to take whichever path presented itself. i was prepared for the ultimate rejection. I don't know where i would have gone or what i would have done if that happened, but i couldnt survive anymore with what had been bottled up inside me for so long.

So that firs Motzoei Shabbos after Pesach, i sat down with my wonderful wife and said "I have something to tell you about myself that i have been hiding from you all these years.....I'm gay.....". Her reaction stunned me; "That's not so bad, we will work on fixing it together". In that instant i knew it would be OK. I shared everything with her, all the desperation, all the filth, all the loneliness, all the hopeless yearning for things that cannot and will not be.

We resolved together to work on making it right. The very first thing we did was to install K9 on every computer in the house. From that moment on I have not MZ"L, I have not mast**** (except one slip recently), and I have not looked at porn (with one exception). I promised that any slips i would tell her immediately, and that I would see a therapist. I began from then on to daven with kavana and with tears, begging Hashem to give me the strength to hold on and continue, and to fight the Yetzer Hora for me because I cannot do it alone.

The first weeks were sheer hell. Just like starting was like a drug, stopping was like a physical withdrawal. i walked around in a daze, shaking from tension. i committed to making an effort not

to look and not to fantasize, but it's not that easy. My triggers are EVERYWHERE, in the street, in the store, in shul, at work (don't even mention the mikva). i don't even have a mechitza to hide behind. I constantly have to force myself to look away. i was literally whimpering with the desire for another look, another trigger to release that good feeling in my head. It's a little easier now, but still a constant struggle.

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The entire secular culture is obsessed right now with being "Born This Way" and that it can't be changed and you should just "be yourself" and "it gets better" etc. as much as we strive to separate ourselves from the Goyish attitudes it seeps in like a poison and in moments of self-doubt the Yetzer Hora tries to convince us that they are really right. My weapon is to turn the slogans against them and use it to my own advantage. Yes i was "Born This Way", a member of Hashem's Chosen People, tasked with the mission of spreading His light in a world bent on ignoring Him. we each have our own mission and our own fight, and I have been tasked with a special job. I have a special and unique Yetzer Hora to fight, and although I was held captive by the enemy for 30 years, i have now escaped and i am fighting back! With sweat and tears (lots of tears) I try every day to resist the temptations placed in front of my eyes and the fantasies that linger in my mind. Eventually "It Gets Better", when the desires will fade away with time and it will be easier to resist. i know that just like I will have to pay and burn for each time I don't look away fast enough, so too i will receive infinite reward for each time I resist the urge for a second look, and each time i suppress the fantasies that constantly try to creep into my head.

I mentioned before that there was one exception to stopping to look at porn, and that was the stories (i found a way around the filter for those). I just couldn't. I needed that fix of knowing what happens next. For few weeks I unsuccessfully tried to quit, I would manage a day or 2 then I fell in again. I wasn't even interested in the s*x parts, just the storyline and the emotional buildup. But i knew it had to stop. Then one day i told myself "Enough! if you are serious about this there are no halfways anymore!" i went to Maariv that night and it was the 37th day of the Omer. The sefira of Gevura ShebYesod. I realized "that's what we are all about, Gevura, Kovesh es Yitzro, in the midda of Yesod, of self-control". I resolved that that day would be my personal Yom Kippur of sorts. I davened like never before, and promised that I would never go there again. B"H so far I have been successful. Hence my screen name.

I stayed clean until last friday. Then in the shower i suddenly found myself mast*** I stopped before anything worse happened, but i feel like i was teetering on the edge of a cliff. Then on shabbos i had fantasy dreams which i had not had in a long time. When i have these dreams they are so real that i experience every sensation. many times I would wake up wet, this time B"H I did not. but I need to strengthen myself over again. The events of the past week have affected me terribly and have left me emotionally drained, and maybe that's what made me vulnerable and in need of "soothing".

So here I am, trying to stay clean and to clear the bad thoughts from my head. It has its ups and

Once again I would like to thank all of you here on GYE who have shared your stories and your struggles, especially those of you who share my particular "flavor" of addiction. The chizuk i get from seeing how everyone encourages each other to get up and start again really inspired me in my darkest moments. Thank You.

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 23 Aug 2021 18:53

IY"eh by you!

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by stillgoing - 25 Feb 2022 15:13

[DavidT wrote on 11 May 2021 16:25:](#)

If I may question this whole concept of counting days...

If we use it as a tool to change bad habits, that's great. But the count is in no way an indicator of the person.

You can be at day one and be much better off than someone that's on day 1000 ...

My humble opinion is to really rethink the way we use and view these counts...

Feel free to agree and disagree

"EvedHashem1836" post=368336

date=1620706409 catid=19

Maybe others will disagree w my eitzah but...don't worry about it. Keep on going from where you left off

Man! sorry I'm a year late to this party.(Told you to call me directly :-)).I really got to agree with EvedHashem and DavidT (and a whole bunch of others).

Our sobriety is not about a streak. It's not about how long you can hold our breath underwater until we finally drown or come up. It's about changing the way we do things to be free of our personal prison.When I'm lusting, even if I didn't technically 'fall' I don't consider myself free, but the flip side is when I'm working recovery and doing well - even if I had a bad day in the middle - I am far more free than I was when I had an impressive 'clean' day count.

Anyway, the proof is in the pudding.The fact that you picked yourself up afterwards and I'm writing this message almost a year later shows it to be what it is, an imperfect day (cuz who's perfect?) on our road to growth.

Btw, this next part is not addressed to Gevura, it's for people (like me) who will take the 'fell shmell keep on trucking' (FSKOT) idea to mean that I can act out all the time because I'm not perfect and I'll just keep on trucking' because streaks don't matter. All I can say is if you're honestly (honestly!) improving, then maybe there is something to that, but if you are staying the same (or getting worse), don't fool yourself in thinking you're on the road to recovery, it's a cul-de-sac that you keep on circling around and around and around....

Whoo! Now how's that for a welcome back speech. I think the forum members who don't know me are going to vote I disappear again....

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Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 23 Sep 2022 16:35

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The entire secular culture is obsessed right now with being "Born This Way" and that it can't be changed and you should just "be yourself" and "it gets better" etc. as much as we strive to separate ourselves from the Goyish attitudes it seeps in like a poison and in moments of self-doubt the Yetzer Hora tries to convince us that they are really right. My weapon is to turn the slogans against them and use it to my own advantage. Yes i was "Born This Way", a member of Hashem's Chosen People, tasked with the mission of spreading His light in a world bent on ignoring Him. we each have our own mission and our own fight, and I have been tasked with a special job. I have a special and unique Yetzer Hora to fight, and although I was held captive by the enemy for 30 years, i have now escaped and i am fighting back! With sweat and tears (lots

of tears) I try every day to resist the temptations placed in front of my eyes and the fantasies that linger in my mind. Eventually "It Gets Better", when the desires will fade away with time and it will be easier to resist. i know that just like I will have to pay and burn for each time I don't look away fast enough, so too i will receive infinite reward for each time I resist the urge for a second look, and each time i suppress the fantasies that constantly try to creep into my head.

I mentioned before that there was one exception to stopping to look at porn, and that was the stories (i found a way around the filter for those). I just couldn't. I needed that fix of knowing what happens next. For few weeks I unsuccessfully tried to quit, I would manage a day or 2 then I fell in again. I wasn't even interested in the s*x parts, just the storyline and the emotional buildup. But i knew it had to stop. Then one day i told myself "Enough! if you are serious about this there are no halfways anymore!" i went to Maariv that night and it was the 37th day of the Omer. The sefira of Gevura ShebYesod. I realized "that's what we are all about, Gevura, Kovesh es Yitzro, in the midda of Yesod, of self-control". I resolved that that day would be my personal Yom Kippur of sorts. I davened like never before, and promised that I would never go there again. B"H so far I have been successful. Hence my screen name.

I stayed clean until last friday. Then in the shower i suddenly found myself mast*** I stopped before anything worse happened, but i feel like i was teetering on the edge of a cliff. Then on shabbos i had fantasy dreams which i had not had in a long time. When i have these dreams they are so real that i experience every sensation. many times I would wake up wet, this time B"H I did not. but I need to strengthen myself over again. The events of the past week have affected me terribly and have left me emotionally drained, and maybe that's what made me vulnerable and in need of "soothing".

So here I am, trying to stay clean and to clear the bad thoughts from my head. It has its ups and

Once again I would like to thank all of you here on GYE who have shared your stories and your struggles, especially those of you who share my particular "flavor" of addiction. The chizuk i get from seeing how everyone encourages each other to get up and start again really inspired me in my darkest moments. Thank You.

This is a fascinating glimpse into a world I never imagined (or particularly desired) to know about from such a first hand perspective. What's interesting is that regardless of the pull - for example mine is more toward physical touch experiences or "altered state of mind" experiences, the feelings are essentially the same. It's almost like a chameleon type of yetzer hara who pulls

us to where we are weakest on a person-by-person basis in order to train us to be stronger.

For example, my chavruta sometimes drives me crazy when we learn because he knows exactly how to push all my buttons (and I, his) but I wouldn't dream of learning with anyone else because for every answer I give, he has at least two questions. I spend hours every day in the BM analyzing many areas of learning with him, and the only reason it works is because he pushes me slightly beyond my perceived abilities each time we learn, and that is how we grow. The yetzer challenges us the same way, we just need to recognize this truth and face the YH as he truly is - a coach, not a foe.

Stay strong! You can win this!

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by Trying to be the best I could be - 05 Dec 2022 13:16

A battle may have been lost but the war still remains to be won.

Keep it up your an inspiration!!!!

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 28 Dec 2022 05:47

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 11 May 2021 03:36:](#)

All good things must come to an end...

I'm so embarrassed but I have to do this...

don't have time for a detailed post. But it's been building up for a while. A confluence of stress

factors in my life, slacking off on being vigilant in these inyanim, and generally falling into feelings of loneliness and isolation again. Slowly circling the drain, risking more peeks, looking at "borderline" material. Not being careful about touching. Letting myself fantasize about people I see. A few days ago I had an intense wet dream, the first one in years. That should have been a warning sign that things were getting out of hand. And last night I just let go and M.

ok time to get back in the truck. Pump up the tires, check the brakes, clean the windows (maybe that's not such a good idea...)

hayom Yom echad...

Pointing out here how this Gargantuan Monstrosity of a Tzadik fell after 7 years clean and got right back up.

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 28 Dec 2022 13:40

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 28 Dec 2022 05:47:](#)

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 11 May 2021 03:36:](#)

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 28 Dec 2022 14:15

[iLoveHashem247 wrote on 28 Dec 2022 13:40:](#)

[YeshivaGuy wrote on 28 Dec 2022 05:47:](#)

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 11 May 2021 03:36:](#)

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It's a great quote which we like to throw around, but this guy actually did it

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by EccentricComposer - 28 Apr 2023 14:56

I just saw this post and find it absolutely amazing and inspiring, thank you so much!

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by EccentricComposer - 28 Apr 2023 14:57

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 11 May 2021 03:36:](#)

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by cordnoy - 03 May 2023 17:40

[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 03 May 2012 19:22:](#)

Today's Chizuk email featured a translation of the crucial Ohr Hachaim in this week's parsha that discusses the extreme importance of guarding our eyes and our thoughts. I am quoting what I think is a very relevant section:

And if one should ask, "How can a natural person be in control of his desires which "force" him to act? After all, it does not make sense that Hashem would obligate all men equally to guard themselves in this area, only people who can stand up and have the will power to deny this desire! And these are people who never came into the tests of seeing improper sights and thinking lustful thoughts. Only for such people did the Torah command these Mitzvos. But for people who already fell into these things, it is naturally impossible for a man to control himself and hold back from this craving that forces him to act!"

To counter this claim, Hashem wrote in the Torah with pleasant words of life, and the Parsha of *Arayos* starts out with the words "*Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them, I am Hashem your G-d*". **For it is true that in the human race, besides for the Jewish people, they can claim this complaint and say that they did not find it in their strength to deny the power of this intense desire from themselves. However, with you, the Children of Israel, because I am Hashem your G-d - that is, you can achieve understanding and awareness of G-d - and through this G-dly strength, you will win over the natural physical drives.**

The mind can control the matter. So when a Jewish person accepts upon himself to be "one" with Hashem his G-d (*di'veikus*), he will be in control of his nature. As Chaza"l say, "*The hearts of the Tzadikim are given over in their hands, but the hearts of Resha'im control them*". The meaning of this is, that desire and lust are in the heart of a man, yet his "will power" is in his mind. And these are the two levels that the Master of the World has given man (to work with). And when a person sees something of a sexual nature, his heart will crave it, but this is not the end. The "will power" in his mind can deny himself the desire and he will not act upon it, even though he covets it... And that is the meaning of the words "*For I am Hashem your G-d*" (in the

Parsha of *Arayos*). This means to say, that since Hashem shines the light of his *Shechinah* into the soul of a man, through this, one has the strength to win over his desires with his 'will power'...

I believe that this thought, especially the part I highlighted, is particularly crucial for those of us with SSA. The world out there is bent on convincing us that it is our identity, our essence, we are "born this way" and cannot change. They claim that it is genetic and any attempt to change our "orientation" will only cause us harm, and insist that our only hope is to give in and embrace the "lifestyle".

They may be correct, for **them**, who only believe in the physical. But **we** are different. We have the power of "Ani Hashem Elokeichem", and we can overcome the Teva as it was created in us and rise above our desires, as strong as they are. That is the mission we have been given.

Gevura!

Written 11 years ago today, and still as true as ever.

It got me thinkin' - many of us believe that orientation cannot be changed, and at the same time, it is still our responsibility to overcome our desires - if they are faulty. My question is: Can a fetish be changed?

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by Foolie - 03 May 2023 17:57

In my experience speaking for myself I don't believe that a person can change their fetishes. How strongly a particular fetish impacts you can change over time it can ebb and wane but the basic fetish remains

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 03 May 2023 19:46

My understanding of this has become a little more nuanced. True, we probably can't change our orientation (or fetish or just crazy libido), and one could claim that Al Pi Derech Hateva it is impossible to resist acting on it. But Hashem gives us the power of self control on a super-natural level. Not necessarily to change our orientation, but to do the right thing anyways. The Middah of Gevura....

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by bluesky123 - 15 May 2023 00:47

Hello , I'm on 30 day lockdown before I can chat , how do I ask you a question?

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Re: hello my friends....

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 15 May 2023 01:01

Can you PM?

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