

Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)

Posted by ATESHUVA1 - 22 Aug 2011 07:41

Shalom Aleichem everyone,

This is really tough for me to do, just cause i never thought I would actually have to express my thoughts or feelings about this to anyone or anything and the process would always stay between me and The Aibishter, but I see through my own struggle that chizuk is an absolute must for any growth in this process.

My story starts about 8 years ago when a simple misspelling of a website by my own innocent child self led me to the first of the genre of sites that would grab my life and steer it in the total opposite direction. Who woulda thought an innocent elementary school boy whose soul desire was to bring yiddishe nachas to all those who loved him could be abducted so abruptly to be placed slowly but surely on the path towards utter rishus r"l.

Ever since that first exposure, which in retrospect seems to have been completely out of my control and so obviously controlled by the Yad Hashem, I continued to look for other things in my surroundings that could feed my unrelenting curiosity and subsequently give justification toward the satisfaction of anything my heart would desire. With every year that passed the urges got stronger and the venues with which to fulfill these urges seemed to never end.

Where were my parents during all this? They were doing everything they knew possible to stop my obvious acting out. Putting up restriction after restriction taking away computers from my immediate availability, watching my cell phone usage, monitoring who my friends were etc..(how I think the problem could have, and still can be **successfully** fixed among youth is for a different discussion) But no matter how they tried the desires never could be filled except through the obvious choice of evil with which I i think everyone within these discussion boards is familiar with. As I was finishing highschool, my rishus took a turn for the worst, I decided I wanted a way to be more and more like the animals I was so carefully observing, and chose for myself a mate to perpetrate my evil with. Having lived an extended amount of time committing heinous acts that simply put were the absolute opposite of anything a yiddishe relationship should be, there came a point in time where **BARUCH HASHEM** I had reached such a low that the only place to go was up. Not a day goes by where i am not thankful to The Aibishter for allowing me to hear the Bas Kol that went out that fateful day and said "its time to do teshuva."

It has been a few years since this momentous time in my life, and recovering has been a

looonnnnggg difficult struggle. In my journey to get closer and closer to Hashem and know Him in all my journeys, I have been given the bracha to see small peiros of my efforts. I have been able to feel a part of the very serious yeshiva I attend and excell in the things most important to me in my Avodas Hashem. However, one of the hardest things throughout my growth process has been to find a successful manner to completley curb my acting out and control these desires in an effective manner. Walking in the streets is as scary as walking into the mouth of a lion and having parents who insist that I have my own laptop with unrestricted internet access doesnt exactly help either. Ive had long stints were I really feel as though ive found the guaranteed way to control myself and put the whole struggle out of mind, and for that time I feel like nothing could possibly get in my way of becoming the type of talmid chochom and oived Hashem that I truly desire to be. But somehow, someway, the most cunning creature on the planet, the yetzer harah, has been able to flex his devious muscles and throw me back into my desire seeking ways.

And this is where all you gevaldige yidden come in, I have a computer which has to remain unrestricted for a multitude of reasons, which in it of itself is a difficult nissaion to which i have been able to be minatzeich, B"H, for long periods of time (longer than the 90 days). My real problem lies in the dormant yetzer that seems to wait for my feeling of tranquility from this sin and just then convince me its not so bad to surf around, and the next thing you know....

In short, what is the mindset for the recovered who experiences devastating relapses after what seems to be a real success?

I thank you all for your openness and willingness to share which has motivated me to share as well. While it may take me a lifetime to understand why The Ribbono Shel Oilam wanted this from me, after all i was so young and barely understood the concept of responsibility, but B"H i understand that this is why He created emunah. So that every beriah, no matter how incomprehensible the situation, will always have Him to rely on, that He always does everything

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by mechazek - 22 Aug 2011 12:01

welcome and listening to your story fills me with happiness.I to was a yeshivah bochur compeletely immersed in porn and master.. and when I here someone in the yeshivah world dealing with this issue head on it makes me excited.Hatzlochah Rabah

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by kidushashem - 22 Aug 2011 12:27

[ATESHUVA1 wrote on 22 Aug 2011 07:41:](#)

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Ateshuva1,

your story reminds me very much of my own in many ways. I also got started with this stuff in an innocent way. I also went those periods where I felt I was "there" and nothing could stop me from letting go of the Tumah forever. But then I would fall and fall hard. Just like your story.

Something happened to you recently that caused you to realize that you can't do this on your own. You need the chizuk from other people.

I don't know if you know what the 12 steps are but they are the cornerstone of recovery and I suggest you start learning them as soon as you can (you can find them on the website).

What you discovered is the first of the 12 steps: recognizing that you're an addict and that you really can't manage completely on your own.

Everyone on this site, including me, believed at some point that they could deal with the struggle on their own and that they didn't need help. Some of us, like you, even had long periods of time where we were clean and felt like we had made it. We were "out".

But then, something very scary happened; We person fell hard and within very little time from the new fall, we were back to doing the same things that we had stopped doing months before. And it was very scary because after all the hard work, it felt like we were back to square 1.

Sound familiar? Virtually everyone here had this experience.

No one wants to admit they are an addict. It takes many falls and Siyyata Dishmaya to reach that conclusion. My feeling though, is that you are still not fully willing to admit that you are addicted.

This contradiction is evident throughout your post.

I quote: "In short, what is the mindset for the recovered who experiences devastating relapses after what seems to be a real success?"

Ateshuva, someone who keeps falling again and again is an addict. They are not "recovered". In fact, they might never be "recovered" from the addiction. Addicts usually stay addicts for life. That's why when you fall, you fall right back into where you last were.

The only thing we can do is avoid the triggers and things that cause us to fall.

You want a mindset? "I am an addict who is in constant danger of falling".

If you can't get a filter, get accountability software like webchaver.

Get into that mindset that you are in DANGER. Do you have any idea how many people on this website were clean for a year or two and then fell, all because they thought they were out of danger and could relax? Many, many people. I fell recently after almost 6 months because I thought I could live dangerously. Guess what? I'm not willing to make that costly mistake again.

The sooner you internalize what I'm saying, the better. It's not a question of if; Everyone learns this at some point. I just want you to learn it as soon as possible.

Please listen to all the people on here who have lots of experience.

Love,

KH

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 22 Aug 2011 12:36

Welcome aboard, I hope you will find here the tools and chizuk you can use to break free for good.

One thing I don't understand, you say that when you were younger your parents did everything they could to restrict your access to computers and other things that would be problems for you, but now they insist that you have unfiltered internet? I just don't get it.

Anyway Hatzlacha Raba and Keep On Trucking™!! (if you don't know what that means yet you will find out soon enough)

Gevura!

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)

Posted by gibbor120 - 22 Aug 2011 13:36

WELCOME!

I see that you haven't received your welcome package yet. It can be overwhelming at first, but read through the material. All the tools and support that you need are here.

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.

We're all in the same boat here. *Tzuras Rabim Chatzi Nechama*

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 from 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: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by gibbor120 - 22 Aug 2011 13:38

Gedarim are EXTREMELY important. Filters etc are the first step. You say that you need unfiltered access? Why? Can you get accountability software installed?

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by tehillimzuger - 22 Aug 2011 13:43

i also fell into this through a misspelling i just want to share a short vort with you. we are accustomed to use the word "chizuk" as "encouragement". but that's not true at all. chizuk means strengthening oneself "strengthening" can only be accomplished with "strength", and when it comes to certain matters "brute force", so stick around here, get encouragement, but also use your own strength, and you will with siyatta dishmaya meruba, climb out of this bottomless pit, getting webchaver is your first opportunity to utilize this strength, i want a post here [whenever, tomorrow, in two weeks, two months] saying that you installed webchaver.

are you jewish? keep on rocking then.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by the.guard - 22 Aug 2011 17:59

[ATESHUYA1 wrote on 22 Aug 2011 07:41:](#)

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recovering has been a *looonnnnggg* difficult struggle. In my journey to get closer and closer to Hashem and know Him in all my journeys, I have been given the bracha to see small peiros of my efforts. I have been able to feel a part of the very serious yeshiva I attend and excell in the things most important to me in my Avodas Hashem....

Rabos Machashavos bilev ish, va'atzas Hashem Hi Sakum! :D

Hashem gave you this struggle because that is how true greatness can be reached. As the Zohar says, it is only through darkness that the light can shine forth.

You're in the right place!

P.S. You wrote:

"(how I think the problem could have, and still can be successfully fixed among youth is for a different discussion)"

I'd be curious to hear your thoughts on this, since we try and help people with prevention issues as well.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)

Posted by ATESHUVA1 - 22 Aug 2011 20:30

Shalom again,

Thank you all for your swift responses!

[kidushashem wrote on 22 Aug 2011 12:27:](#)

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Sound familiar? Virtually everyone here had this experience.

No one wants to admit they are an addict. It takes many falls and Siyyata Dishmaya to reach that conclusion. My feeling though, is that you are still not fully willing to admit that you are addicted.

This contradiction is evident throughout your post.

I quote: "In short, what is the mindset for the recovered who experiences devastating relapses after what seems to be a real success?"

As i'm sure everyone who goes through these experiences does i'm sure my next few comments will seem like I am desperately avoiding being called an addict. And while I do see the logic in the conclusions you came to, I feel like they may have been a result of an ambiguity on my part in the original message.

Allow me to explain:

Having gone through a major transition from close to absolute nothing in ruchnius, to a B"H slow and healthy transition to what some might call a "ben alyiah" I was able to leave all my other nasty habits (drugs, alchahol, movies..the list goes on) totally and completely behind. For over two years, B"H i never had any temptation to go back to any of these things even though they were so totally and completely a part of my life. Included in those two years of abstinence was abstinence from inappropriate material. If somebody would have asked me in that stage if i would have any desire to go near these things my answer would be a blatant no.

So even though I have fallen a few times in the past year, immediatley i have been able to come to an understanding that these nefillas are not really who I am and not who I want to be. I have been able to set personal boundaries that keep me off my computer or off anything remotely dangerous to the point that these nefillas are really just small black spots in months of positive growth. I do not feel like they are the "hard falls" that I keep reading about from other posters like me. I really feel like I have no desire, and am completley disgusted by anything having to do with pornography.

However I feel as though my problem lies in that even though i have B"H made significant changes in my attitude towards inappropriate material and acting out, there are times when the attitude alone cannot keep me away from the animalistic lustings that seem to utterly take over my ability to stay within my logical process and make the proper decisions.

[Gevura ShebYesod wrote on 22 Aug 2011 12:36:](#)

One thing I don't understand, you say that when you were younger your parents did everything

they could to restrict your access to computers and other things that would be problems for you, but now they insist that you have unfiltered internet? I just don't get it.

Now to answer the question everyone is asking, (and the steirah so beautifully out by Gevurashebyesod), why dont I have a filter?In the past, my parents installed filters on previous computers that we had owned solely because they saw that I was falling deeply into the pit of filth. As I have grown in the past few years and clearly left behind all my old ways (as discussed at the top of this post) my parents firmly believe that I am very responsible and need absolutely no monitoring. In addition, my parents are responsible for updating my computer every once in a while so if they saw such software on my computer questions would arise that would make answering very difficult.

Thanks again for all your help

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by gibbor120 - 22 Aug 2011 21:01

[ATESHUVA1 wrote on 22 Aug 2011 20:30:](#)

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Still, since they know you *had* a problem, I would think it would be easier to explain that you still have difficulty, or at least that you don't want to be tempted. Some people here struggle with explaining that they have a problem in the 1st place. I would think that you would have an easier time explaining it. Maybe, I am missing something.

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by kidushashem - 22 Aug 2011 22:58

[ATESHUVA1 wrote on 22 Aug 2011 20:30:](#)

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very well explained. It sounds like you definitely are very strong and emotionally healthy. Nevertheless, it's so important to develop the correct attitude and be honest with yourself. It's not about recognizing that you have the title "addict". It's about developing an extremely clear knowledge of your weaknesses in an honest way so that you know how to efficiently stop yourself.

Now let's be honest; Are you holding at that place? No. You say that you still have falls sometimes. It doesn't matter that they are spaced and that you get up right away. You still have a problem.

The only way to deal with it is to acknowledge the fact that you have a weakness. I don't care if you call it addiction, low self-control or "Mama's cooking".

Once you know what the weakness is, you have to know how to defend yourself. In your case, it's absolutely necessary for you to get either a filter or accountability software.

Your refusal so far to do so, is a sign that you do not really acknowledge your weakness. You think that it's not a real issue, that you can manage without one and you just "need to work on myself".

Let me tell you, been there, done that. It aint happening.

So, are you gonna keep giving excuses and fight this never ending battle or are you going to take the advice of all the people with track records and make that first step? Listen to gibbor120. It's really not a big deal to tell your parents that you're worried about being tempted.

Sorry to be so tough but I love you.

Levi/KH

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)

Posted by gothika - 23 Aug 2011 08:16

If you are still concerned about what your parents think if you install a filter then just tell them that you heard that many gedolim say that there is an actual issur yichud with being alone with a computer. Surely your parents would have no problem hearing that although you have still completely changed you won't be in yichud with a woman. So just use that reason as why you demand a filter.

However as you can see from everyone here who has jumped on your every word to examine any contradictions I want you to realize that even though you are just a voice over the forum we all somehow feel a real connection with you since we have all struggled with this area like you, so you can be rest assured that I am saying this out of love for you, you really could find benefit in internalizing that you are an addict. Scientifically speaking, there have just been too many dopamine pathways created in your holy brain and they will always try and spring up at unexpected random moments for the rest of your life, just like me, and just like everyone here. Am I right everyone? Together we can admit that we are all addicts here and there is NOTHING shameful about that.

So how do we cure the dopamine pathways? Well barring any hardcore chemical methods shh will only block them the only way to at least treat the pathways is by admitting that you have an addiction. Either you are an addict who can act out once a decade, once a year once every few months, or even even every few days (right now I am at the days stage) but you could be in the years one, nevertheless any relapse of acting out even though you know so much that you don't want to is an indicator of how some level of addiction is clearly present.

You see that's the thing, in actual fact there really aren't any levels Within the sugya of being addicted, either there is an underlying problem or not so if you have ever done something that you knew you didn't want to you, then are an addict.

Everyone please support me with this, we need to show ATESHUVA1 that we honesty mean what we always say in the intro posting "we will pull you up and up!"; so here I go: I AM AN ADDICT, I AM ADDICTED TO THE DRUG OF M* and even though I remain clean for many years I will always be an addict, but you know what? Knowing that can only make me better spiritually, since I will always need my safeguards in place and every moment that I use them, and they stop me from acting out is another higher level of teshuva, since where a Baal Teshuva stands not even a Tzaddik can stand! There I said it, and now it's everyone else on the forum's turn, who's with me on this?

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by mechazek - 23 Aug 2011 08:28

I AM AN ADDICT-ADDICTED TO THE DRUG OF LUST and a teshuvah only admiration for your honesty and wanting to bring this out in the open. You have so much to hide behind and you could of said I dont have to deal with this not a real problem it will go away if I decide to be strong enough. I am otherwise ok, I have come such a long way enough bring in this area. So here you go and announce NO I GOT PROBLEM I can not do this on my own, AMAZING!!!

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by kidushashem - 23 Aug 2011 10:55

ateshuva, there are countless threads where you can see how many people have come to this place with the same attitude that you have. Here's one that I really recommend:

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=634.0;topicseen

This post was started by one of current Hero Members named Elya. Make sure to read the first page of the post.

Love,

KH

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Re: Shalom Aleichem! Plz read and be Mechazek :-)
Posted by ATESHUVA1 - 23 Aug 2011 20:28

Again thanks everyone for the chizuk, and real heartfelt eitzas. I've heard from a rebbe of mine that the way you can tell when something is real tochacha is when it hurts real down deep and you are trying with your every fiber to avoid it. That is what I feel in terms of this whole addiction

thing.

How have I been dealing with it? I think KH said it the best over here:

[kidushashem wrote on 22 Aug 2011 22:58:](#)

The only way to deal with it is to acknowledge the fact that you have a weakness. I don't care if you call it addiction, low self-control or "Mama's cooking".

Once you know what the weakness is, you have to know how to defend yourself.

This is what's most important to me. To acknowledge that the problem is deeper than the long road to recovery I have been (and B"H the success I have seen thus far) and to be able to use this knowledge moving forward in all my relationships. In short, thus far, I have realized that I have a chemical imbalance that leads me to lust in places I logically would never choose to do so. And it is this recognition that gives me the ability to focus what my bakasha min hashamyim is, that Hashem help me to overcome this lust in every situation it may manifest itself in and hopefully become a better Eved Hashem through being menatzeich through this nissaion.

[kidushashem wrote on 23 Aug 2011 10:55:](#)

ateshuva, there are countless threads where you can see how many people have come to this place with the same attitude that you have. Here's one that I really recommend:

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=634.0:topicseen

This post was started by one of current Hero Members named Elya. Make sure to read the first page of the post.

So in order to demonstrate my dedication to really completely recovering (if there is such a thing) from my addiction, id like to share that i took KH's advice and went through practically that entire thread to really see what this forum is all about and what other people's experiences are like. What I felt from reading that thread was even though this was a man much older than me, i felt like this was me two or three years ago when I was initially going through my transition to becoming a ben torah. And as a side note, i wonder how much easier the transition would have been having everyone on this forum there with me. Nevertheless I am overly thankful to the Ribbono Shel Olam for allowing me to make the transition virtually on my own. Why? Because it allowed me to build my own charechter and *really really grow up*. I have learnt to how to use my emotions in a healthy way, strive to take small steps to reach ultimate goals and many other things that are hard to put into words but anyone who has experienced growth knows there are valuable tools they possess that no money can buy. So all these things are traits and mindsets being shared nurtured and growing into throughout this thread, B"H to a degree i have a certain grasp on them. However what i did lack coming to this forum was the *le'emaisehdik* approach to the latent aspects of the addiction, which B"H you have all hit on key aspects of.

So what do I think the next step is? I think its a point that you all keep hitting on:

The Harchakos- i need to establish some concrete boundaries between me and my addiction to lust to the point that it wont be allowed to attack ever again. In order to alleviate some of the confusion everyone is experiencing in trying to understand my failure to this point in establishing filters i will elaborate a little more on my current situation dealing with the "?? known to all as the computer. When i came back to america from my growing experience in eretz yisroel i had to start college. B"H the nissaion hasnt been too overwhelming being that i have been given the bracha of being in a very serious torahdik environment and attending classes in kosherdik atmosphere. However, the biggest nissaion i have faced is the time wasted on the computer that has led me to letting my guard down. And to me, knowing the amount of time that is absolutley neccasary to spend on the computer (and more importantly knowing how much time would be considered wasting time) I think the best eitza would be an eitza aimed at moving toward removing myself from the computer completley, not allowing myself to remain on it just with additional filters. After all isnt wasting time one of the ways pa'aroh got the yidden to take their mind off of kedusha and fall to the 49th level of tumah?

Being that i have made the above observation, as crazy as this seems to me, I believe that my best step forward towards growth would actually be to stay away from this forum. As much as i have gained from reading these posts, I find myself coming back more and more to my computer wondering what the velt has to say about my addiction when I could just be away and thinking about all the helpful things you guys have already said and growing with them.

Anyways these are just my outlooks, but my "nogeih bedavar"ness might have an effect so let

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me know what you all think