

It's Time To Step Up...Here's My StoryPosted by Avraham613 - 20 Jun 2012 03:39

I have been on and off this site for around 3 years now. I have utilized many of the tools here but never really got involved in the forum. Over the last few weeks, I have posted for the first time asking for some help. I received some great feedback and was encouraged to come clean and introduce myself as honestly as possible. So here goes...

Unfortunately, my story sounds similar to many of those I have read on the forum. I am currently 25 years old and married with one child B"H. I have always considered myself to be a very sexual type of person. As far back as 11 or 12 years old, I remember myself being attracted to inappropriate pictures. The environment that I grew up in, never really emphasized any importance to "look away" so I enjoyed what I had available to me. My parents (both amazing people), never thought twice about giving me my own laptop when I was around 14 or 15 so I, like any other innocent teenager gladly accepted. At times I tried to blame my parents for allowing me this accessibility when my struggles increased but I know now that Hashem wanted me to grow up a certain way.

I quickly began to use my laptop for very easy access to p***. If I remember correctly, I looked forward to getting into bed at night knowing that I had my favorite part of the day awaiting me. There were no filters, no one watching and no one even using that computer except for me. I would look at pictures and videos for hours on a nightly basis which always ended with being Mz"l throughout those highly impressionable years of 14-18. The environment I grew up in and the Yeshiva I went to never really spoke much about the dangers of the internet at that point.

Along with these nightly "adventures" came a total disregard for Shomer Negiah. Again, where I was in school (yes, a Yeshiva day school), the amount of girls one touched was an honor, not something to be ashamed of. I truly believe that these two factors, the internet and the constant physical contact with other girls were the main source of my future struggles.

Baruch Hashem I had a sincere desire to go to Eretz Yisroel for a year (or more) and become more serious about my Yiddishkeit. I went to Yeshiva in Israel for 2 years and almost completely cut out any form of inappropriate material. I loved (and still love) learning a lot, got very serious and made very drastic changes in my life over those years. I became Shomer Negiah from the day I stepped off the plane in Israel even though I had a girl friend at the time. She gladly agreed to my plan (although this was a major change for us both) and B"H neither of us ever slipped from that day onward.

I became known as a very serious learner and a real shtark kid. My parents had their reservations because this was not how I grew up but warmly accepted all of my changes. When I returned home from Israel (with the same girl friend), I placed myself in a great environment in order to succeed in my learning. As I got back to America, I continued learning very seriously. The problem was that when I went back home (for weekends etc.) I began to get that same feeling that I knew all too well. I remember the first time I slipped after all my work and changes. It was devastating and I promised myself it would never happen again. Unfortunately, that one slip turned into weekly slips. Every weekend it became routine to come home and go straight to my computer that I had not used all week in Yeshiva. It would kill me that I would spend my

weeks learning every spare second I had and just give it all up on the weekends. I felt this growing contradiction within me but could do nothing about it. The addiction began to grow even more than it was pre-Israel in some ways. Now, I had an image to maintain. Suddenly, I found myself searching desperately to form online discreet relationships with random girls just to relieve the inner stress I was feeling. On one hand, I longed for my previous High School lifestyle, but on the other, I loved being frum. More importantly, I loved the way others perceived me and was not willing to give that up. A secret life was the only solution. I tried what I could to avoid those weekly occurrences but to no avail. I continued learning shtark but was constantly nichshol.

I cried many time to Hkb"h to help me get over this issue so I could be completely engrossed in my learning and Avodas Hashem but I kept slipping. This continued for a few years until I was around 21. That girl friend I had since High School and I never split up. We continued to grow and learn together. She made the same types of changes I did. She was always supportive of my learning and growth while she continued to grow on her own. We decided to get married early (being shomer negiah with a girl friend can only last so long) and I was ecstatic to finally resolve this issue once and for all through marriage. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think the issue would continue once I was married.

I was right..... in the beginning. I had no desire to look or doing anything I shouldn't and was completely submerged in doing what I knew I was supposed to. Unfortunately, those initial feelings began to slowly go away while those old, unwanted desires crept back in. Now that I was not learning night seder in Yeshiva, I had plenty of time at home with my computer. I hated myself for "cheating" on my wife in that way. I felt so guilty for looking at other women but felt completely powerless. The thrill of meeting other women discreetly over the internet (even just to schmooze) was too powerful for me to stop on my own. All my wife ever did was smile and be that perfect Kallah any guy could ever ask for. I couldn't continue hurting her like this....even if she didn't know.

My wife and I always had very open lines of communication and I felt that I could truly tell her anything, so I did. I told her about my struggles, what I used to do every night in High School (some of this stuff she already knew from previous conversations but not to this extent). I never told her that I tried to form dumb online relationships with random women because I felt it would hurt her too much. She was completely understanding, never judgmental and wanted to do anything she could to help me. Randomly, she would ask me if I looked at other girls because I didn't get enough satisfaction from her. I would cry deep down for giving her those insecurities after convincing her that it was just my "addiction" and had nothing to do with a Chisaron in her. I thank Hashem for giving me such an amazing wife.

Over those years, I decided I wanted to become a Rebbe. I wanted to devote my life to guiding kids growing up in a similar situation that I did, trying to prevent them from making certain choices that I might have made. My wife was all for it and we have been in this together for a few years now. Only because of GYE have I made the progress that I have. It brings tears to my eyes that I can count the number of times I was Mz"l this year on one hand. For me, this was unheard of. Recently, I saw a post on the forum about someone that struggled with going to inappropriate masseuses. I am not going to lie, I have been feeling those taivas lately myself. But when I saw the cycle he suddenly found himself in (and b"h is getting out of) I decided I cannot let myself fall into that world....who knows if I will be able to get out like him? I do go

through swings of taiva and am trying very hard to work on avoiding those vicious cycles. I have strict filters and accountability on all computers that surround me. I have acted out on occasion this year and felt horrible about it, especially when I am preaching to kids the opposite. But, I have come to realize that my clean streaks never go to waste and I just need to get back up and keep going. Any slip I ever had always ended in disgust and despair. If I can focus on the result without having to go through that torturous process, I know I can prevent many falls iy"h. I thank GYE and everyone here for all your help and support and look forward to many more years of Kedusha and Tahara.

All the best,
Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 09 Jul 2012 03:41

Just a thought I had today.

The gigantic and powerful army of Bavel was surrounding the walls of Yerushalayim for about 3 1/2 years prior to the Churban. During that time, Hashem did not allow the army to penetrate the city, allowing for the Jews the opportunity to do Teshuva. Bavel starved the jews by not allowing any food or water into the city. Jews were dying right and left as the corpses piled up in the city. On the 9th of Tamuz, they broke down the first gates and entered the city. The Jews had 8 days left to do Teshuva before the walls would be broken down, leaving Yerushalayim unguarded and conquerable. Even at this point, when it was so clear that the end was near and Yerushalayim would be destroyed, Hashem was willing to save everything and not destroy the Beis HaMikdash if the Jews would have turned to Teshuva. All Hashem wanted was that the Yidden admit that their pain and suffering was a direct result of their sins and it was time to bring Hashem back into the picture. He wanted them to stop trying to rely on their own strength and bravery and submit themselves to Him. Had they done this, even at the last moments, Hashem might have spared the Jews of that time.

In essence, Hashem wanted them to stop trying to do it on their own and allow Him to come and do it for them. All Hashem was asking for was an invitation to come and fight the battle and He would have done so gladly. It pained Him, so to speak, to see us trying to do it all alone.

Chevra, the message is clear. We need to put up our walls, strong walls....but make sure Hashem is the One standing at the front line fighting for us. Let's not make the same mistake twice.

All the best,

Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by Newbi - 09 Jul 2012 18:03

Shalom Reb Avraham613.

I just wanted to say to you that you post/story was very inspiring as I can relate to many different things you mentioned. So thank you very much, it is because of you that I decided to join the forum. May Hashem give you continued help and blessing that all go well with the new addition that Hashem has granted you and your wife(the pregnancy) as well as with your other children.

Hatzlacha,

Newbi

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by StrugglingGuy - 09 Jul 2012 19:06

That line in the first post when your wife questioned whether she was satisfying enough for you- actually resonates with my situation.

Even not in Nidda I still have to look at pics/read excerpts, etc. but I don't think it has anything to do with my wife- and I've told her this, but I don't think women understand that. They tend to think that when husbands have wives, that is all they need....

Continued Hatzlacha!

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by E-Tek - 09 Jul 2012 21:11

And Reb Avraham, I don't think I have the luxury of worrying what my motivations are for doing the right thing. One day Hashem sends disgust, another day He sends distraction, another day He sends shame... who cares why? He's the One doing the battle!

I can say the same thing about my learning, the chesed I do.. So I do it for the wrong reasons many times. That certainly isn't a reason NOT to do it, is it? Mitoch Shelo Lishma...

Hatzlacha! Call/text me.

Meir

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by Avraham613 - 10 Jul 2012 00:13

Newbi - welcome bro! It's great to have you join us....feels good to let it out no? I am still new at this also but for the short amount I have been part of this forum, I feel like I've gained (albeit through falls) tremendously. I am thrilled to hear my story helped you get here. If I can be of more help for you, please let me know. Feel free to PM me at any time. The more you post, the more effective it will be.

Struggling Guy- your point is a valid one. However, its US that are messed up not them and we can't forget that. So whatever they may be feeling, they need to be validated and reassured. If we decide to come out and talk to them about these things, we have to understand that it doesn't automatically mean that we become these perfect husbands that have amazing communication skills. Granted, it is a big step for us to take, but an even harder one for them to absorb. Give her time, constant reassurance and show that she is always first on your list. It may take time but if you are sincere about what you are telling her, eventually she will feel it. If not, they can see right through our superficiality. I hope that helps....dont mean to send harsh.

E-Tek - Great ha'ara....I just dont want it to be a reoccurring cycle that I NEED the fall in order to be clean...you know?

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by E-Tek - 10 Jul 2012 13:22

[Avraham613 wrote on 10 Jul 2012 00:13:](#)

I just dont want it to be a reoccurring cycle that I NEED the fall in order to be clean...you know?

Omein to that! Of course I know- take each advantage as it comes, that's all! It would be a shame to waste it feeling sorry for yourself, just because of what happened to cause it.

Been there, done that. Hope not to today.

Have a pleasant, clean, and peaceful day!

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 11 Jul 2012 02:48

I tried getting into the chatrooms but it did not seem to have worked.

Any aytzas?

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Newbi - 11 Jul 2012 03:21

Regarding chat rooms, I think you need to call the hotline identify your name and password as well as what you want to join.... I tried calling the hotline but it seemed as though someone live picked up phone I panicked and hung up.

although I'm not sure.

Hope it works out well for You.

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Avraham613 - 18 Jul 2012 01:27

Hey Guys -

B"h I have been going strong for a while. The last few days I have been battling like crazy. I know my trigger, it is a certain way to chat that doesn't come up on WebChaver and is not really reported.

Anyways, I met a girl who wants nothing more than to have a "virtual" relationship with me. I am not gunna be able to hold back much longer.

Some chizuk/advice would be great ASAP.

Thanks,

Avraham

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 18 Jul 2012 14:18

Dear Avi,

Listen carefully (yes, say it out loud and listen carefully) to the words of the wise King Solomon (Mishlei 7).

He is speaking directly to you:

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Look before you leap! Is it worth it?

Hatzlacha

MT

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by alexeliezer - 18 Jul 2012 14:48

How do you know it's a girl.

Maybe it's a fat smelly hairy man with a beat-up old computer and a dial-up connection in a stinky wet basement who gets off chatting with young men?

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by obormottel - 18 Jul 2012 16:48

When did religious pestering ever stop us?

I mean, has it worked for you, MT? I know it hasn't worked for me.

Avi, I mean this sincerely:

If you expect us to run after you and hold you hands behind your back as you're struggling to unzip your pants and masturbate to a virtual sex session with a 400lb man pretending to be a 110lb girl, this ain't gonna happen.

I particularly am not very well suited to prevent people from doing aveirois. And when I do, I must prioritize. So I may help someone to put on tfilin, or encourage a woman to light Shabbos candles or go to mikva. But stop you from masturbating? Not that important as far as I'm concerned, since, unlike tfilin or shabbos licht, stopping just once has no meaningful impact on your connection to Hashem.

But that's still putting this issue into religious context.

I say, if you're seriously toying with the idea of massage parlor or sex chat, go for it. If you're like me (as Dov likes to say), then you will find a justification to do it within the religious context. I know I always had. "Masturbating is OK if your wife is a nidda; if you already have children; if she is out of town; if you worry you may go to a prostitute".

"Going to a prostitute is OK because it says so in Gemoro Kidushin; because of Maase Tomor; because I really need it; because a man is allowed to have concubines mideOiraso".

And no one else's experience will teach any of us untill we're willing to learn from other people's mistakes.

But Avi, you keep coming up with creative ways to feed your sexual fantasies. So I say, go for it. Maybe you need to be arrested in a police bust of a massage parlor. Maybe you need to get an STD from a prostitute. Maybe your virtual relationship needs to escalate into a personal meeting

where you will get seriously hurt by a predator. I'm not wishing this for you, I'm just thinking out loud of what needs to happen for you to heed our warnings.

Or maybe twenty years down the road you will be sitting glued to the computer screen, masturbating yourself to porn time and time again, wishing you had stopped two decades earlier.

I don't know what it will take. But please don't expect me to put on my rescue vest and try to convince you of the destructiveness of these life-choices. I can't make up your mind, neither can Shloimo Hamelech, Satmar Rov, Rav Shach, or Machshovo Tova. Only you and you alone can realize that pursuing your sexual fantasies down the rabbit hole will eventually destroy your life. The only way out is to make up your mind that it's not about "holding back much longer". No Scripture quote will satisfactorily hold you back. Nothing I can say (or said until now) will hold you back. No chizuk/advice will hold you back.

So please, don't find yourself a girl to have a virtual relationship with and then do a token call for help so that you can blame me later: "Well I asked for help, and you guys were too slow to respond, so what was I supposed to do? I said I need help ASAP...so you failed to protect me from myself..."

Forgive me, but I don't give a d4mn. I don't care what you do. This is not a support group for people who feel bad after a really good sexual escapade. I can only offer you my experience in hopes it will prevent you from pursuing sexual fantasy and its execution. But once you're in the "heat"?! Once you've already invested time and energy to find a girl to fool around with?! I've never been successful in taking a bottle away from a drunken buddy. Only before we start drinking do we stand a chance of not getting drunk today. But once the shotglass is filled, no amount of persuasion or psukim or maamarei Chazal will have any impact, 'cause my mind is made up by then.

Call me if you want to discuss it in person. I promise I am not angry, or even irritated. I feel bad for you, my brother, but I am not gonna be enabling your acting out by giving you advice (or a verse) that you can later say didn't work.

So, what safeguards are YOU willing to put in place to protect yourself? That is the question. Posting here or calling someone **before** you get triggered would be of help, perhaps. Giving up your sense of entitlement to sexual play can have an effect on you.

But so long as acting out sexually is still a possibility in your mind, I'm not gonna be dragged into a debate of whether it's a good idea or not. I know it's death for me.

Only you can tell what it is for you.

Mottel

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 18 Jul 2012 17:09

[obormottel wrote on 18 Jul 2012 16:48:](#)

When did religious pestering ever stop us?

I mean, has it worked for you, MT? I know it hasn't worked for me.

Sorry if my (our?) religion is pestering to you. I find it very soothing, uplifting and helpful. B"H it works for me. I'm sorry it hasn't worked for you. Maybe like they say in SA, "It doesn't work if you don't work it." Or maybe, as some suggest, different types (or levels) of disease respond to different approaches. (I personally think that it depends on a person's background and shoresh neshamah.)

We each are in danger of drowning. We each need to do whatever works best for us. When we try to help others, we tend to suggest ideas that we found helpful. Each reader needs to decide whether the idea presented is applicable to him or not.

May Hashem lead us in the path that is good for us.

Bechavod,

MT

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Re: It's Time To Step Up...Here's My Story
Posted by alexeliezer - 18 Jul 2012 17:30

Mottel, that was absolutely precious. :-*
Yasher koach for spending so much of your time to help a fellow yid see the truth.
Avraham?

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