

Dms1234's story

Posted by dms1234 - 23 Feb 2013 03:31

I am a recent Baal Tshuvah and college student and this is my story:

I grew up in a small Jewish Community but I was lucky that I had a traditional family, which definitely helped me come back to Torah. As I am a Baal Teshuva I grew up in a society where lusting is normal. In fact it is encouraged.

I was about 9 or 10 when an older friend introduced me to provocative material like porn. However I didn't start acting out till a few years later. As I went through puberty and a little later started acting out, I became quite socially awkward. My world was a fantasy. Because the secular world's goal, my goal throughout high school, is to receive as much pleasure from girls as possible, and I wasn't able to "get" (lack of a better word) girls, I had to pleasure myself. I was a lost kid with barely any friends and with this troubling addiction.

When I started becoming a religious, a couple of years ago, I really liked the Torah idea of treating woman. My eyes were opened of how society and I objectify women and the Torah moves past this superficiality. This concept definitely pushed me more towards Torah.

Last year, I tried stopping and my longest streak was about three weeks! However I had no resources so I kept acting out. I finally found this website last spring and I was so happy. I was thrilled. However I only subscribed to the chizuk emails, partly laziness but also I was headed to Israel for the summer. I went to Yeshiva (my first real Yeshiva experience) and loved it. I soaked it up and I left Israel I had was clean for about 60 days.

However i didn't fix the problem. I didn't truly break free. I just went to Israel! So the spirituality of course helped me. So after being home for a while and being clean for close to 5 months I had these weird occurrences. I would wake up in the middle of the night and almost fall. Then after a few of these I started falling. I called them subconsciously falling (has any one ever had this happen to them?). Then I started falling consciously regularly. So for the past while, about 4 months i have been falling quite regularly.

Its very hard being a college student as I am constantly around attractive young women. Guarding my eyes is very difficult. Also as I am in a small Jewish community and being one of

the only Frum college students in town, I am involved in Kiruv for college and also high school. This is tough as I can't just hide from women. (not making fun of anyone, rather jealous of people that can do this) So, If anyone has any tips that would definitely be appreciated.

I also I would like to briefly talk about how widespread this problem is. Many of my secular Jewish friends are deeply engrained in this problem. Very deep. Some of them have a hard time believing that people can actually refrain from masturbating. It is just out of their scope as they are in too deep. So GYE keep doing good work and God willing even Secular Jews will resort to this site very soon.

Even though I a member and have subscribed to chizuk emails. I haven't really used much of the other resources. So lately, I started reading stories and decided to start reading the Big Book for alcoholics. I have not participated in phone conferences or have a sponsor yet. And actually this is my first time posting on the Forum. So I think its about time to start using these incredible resources.

Through my journey I have learned a few strategies. These are some of them:

Get a filter and tie up all loose ends. I don't usually look at porn but when I'm desperate I do. I put a filter on my computer and my phone. However I didn't turn off Safari on my phone. Finally I got my Rabbi to restrict it for me. Also I deleted my password for my computer filter. I wouldn't suggest this but it was the easiest solution to get rid of the problem

Find out where you are lax and try to prevent it by "adding something". For example I fall at nights when I am in bed. I have started listening to shiurim when I go to bed (I'm single of course) Disclaimer: you may still fall. This is just an added fence/preventative measure to help you.

Lastly and most importantly, I have been working on the first step (powerlessness) and have had trouble figuring out exactly what I am supposed to do. I think developing an awareness of Hashem like talking to him in your own words has helped. Even saying thank you God that its sunny out or thank you God for this snow. If you keep trying to do this you will develop an awareness of Hashem. Then you are literally bringing him into your life and hopefully the Torah that you learn will seep through your veins.

May HaKadosh Baruch Hu help us in our journeys!

Dms1234

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by Dr.Watson - 30 Sep 2014 23:48

May I suggest that next time, start the conversation like this:

"I really want to lust"

"You do?"

"Yea, I really want to lust"

"Why?"

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by cordnoy - 01 Oct 2014 02:55

I asked that to a fellow today; he replied, "cuz it feels good."

I would have answered the same.

I even did many a times.

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by dms1234 - 01 Oct 2014 03:20

It does but not for very long. And that few moments of pleasure just isn't enough for me. And even if I act out all day, I know there are limitations to this pleasure.

Plus it was ruining my life, crippling my potential, crumbling my relationships. I wasn't happy when I was lusting. I felt disgusting.

This is my experience but something tells me that everybody on this sit have had similar experiences even if it makes them feel good (for 2 minutes!!!!!!)

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by lavi - 01 Oct 2014 10:08

what worked sometimes for me,

when i told myself," it feels GOOD".

"you will be a better person if you don't act out"

(and this is something I really want)

or

"this is below your standard"

(and it is)

or

"you will have to restart your streak"

(ouch for my ego)

but in the end you need S.D. because without it.....

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by shomer bro - 01 Oct 2014 20:54

Whenever i said that it feels good, i'd respond that the feelings afterwards of being gross and a menuval just don't make it worthwhile. It doesnt always work, but it's a logical approach .

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by dms1234 - 01 Oct 2014 21:01

Thanks guys! I think having a conversation with ourselves is great and helps delay the inevitable but i think we must speak/surrender to Hashem and reach out to others as Dov always says that living in our own warped head will always lead to problems!

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by reallygettingthere - 01 Oct 2014 22:54

[shomer bro wrote:](#)

Whenever i said that it feels good, i'd respond that the feelings afterwards of being gross and a menuval just don't make it worthwhile. It doesnt always work, but it's a logical approach .

Logical approach? If the logical approach worked I don't think any of us would be here.

Just sayin'

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by Dr.Watson - 01 Oct 2014 23:35

Very often there is a reason 'why'. If the question is asked it could prompt us to think about possible reasons why we are lusting. Fear, resentment, guilt and other emotions we know so well.

That's why the 12 step program isn't about stopping the acting out but how to deal with life in a constructive way.

In the midst of the craziness I never once encountered a problem that made me think "lusting won't help me with *this* one, it won't make me feel better, I'd better find something else."

So in all these years I've never learnt what dealing with a problem in a constructive way means. That's exactly why I need to turn my life over to the care of G-d, because my life is unmanageable without Him. It's not the **lust** that's unmanageable, it's **life**.

See, if my problem was simply that whenever I lusted I couldn't control myself then I would have a problem, but only a fairly small one with a simple solution - don't lust. Simple! I would just just not look at any more porn or women in the street, not fantasise, not masturbate, etc. Simple.

The problem is not when I'm lusting. **The problem is dealing with life when I'm not lusting.** Any effort to stop myself acting out is ultimately useless. I am powerless. What I need is to get a handle on the things that push me to acting out. Now, I can't do that either. But Hashem can, and will, if I seek Him.

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by dms1234 - 02 Oct 2014 00:00

Thanks Doc! Just what the patients need!

I think that's what I was trying to say. We can't do it alone. We need to get out of our heads and work with someone.

For me my mentor helped in so many ways. He was and still is an invaluable resource. He helped me wash away all the unwanted attitudes in my brain ("I suck," "easier said than done," "I will never ever be clean") and helped me find my weakness in my life so I could start improving them.

There have been times where I reach out to guys whnw I am in trouble and they screw my head back on. Once I saw a untznious girl in one of my textbook and got really uptight and nervous. (This is why I say take a nice long deep breath, relives some of this tension.) I called up him and he guided me.

Thanks Doc for the part about Hashem. I really to spend to him much at all. It something I need to work on. I have realized this over the past few days.

Can I start now: "Hi Hashem!"

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by dms1234 - 02 Oct 2014 00:24

I think our fine doctor would diagnose us with BOTH!

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by Dr.Watson - 02 Oct 2014 00:37

[9494 wrote:](#)

Dr Watson

See, if my problem was simply that whenever I lusted I couldn't control myself then I would have a problem, but only a fairly small one with a simple solution - don't lust. Simple! I would just just not look at any more porn or women in the street, not fantasise, not masturbate, etc. Simpl

I do not understand this paragraph. Because if purely lust was the problem, we would still be powerless over lust and therefore unable to stop looking and acting out, and there would be no simple solution to simply stop.

So what is it is, are we powerless over lusting or over dealing with life?

Take alcohol as an example. If the problem was simply that an alcoholic can't drink then the problem has a simple solution - don't drink. They would be like people with nut allergies. It's a problem but it has a very simple solution - don't eat nuts. They don't need to get together in groups and talk about the things that make them feel they want to eat nuts, they just don't.

Same thing here. If lusting was the problem, then the solution would be simple - don't lust. But as we all know, the solution is not that simple.

The White Book opens with a short essay entitled 'the problem', and here's how it starts:

"Many of us felt inadequate, unworthy, alone and afraid. Our insides never matched what we saw on the outsides of others."

It doesn't start "Many of us acted out too much and couldn't stop".

That's the reason we all came to GYE, that was the problem as we perceived it. I and so many others I've met have tried everything we could think of to sort out this perceived problem, and we have been unsuccessful. But the solution is attainable once we've fully understood what the problem really is.

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Re: Dms1234's story
Posted by skeptical - 02 Oct 2014 01:47

9494

There are some tzaddikim and gedolim who were addicted to smoking, and I doubt they were using it as an escape.

Were they addicted to cigarettes, or did they enjoy smoking? There is a difference.

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Re: Dms1234's story
Posted by Dr.Watson - 02 Oct 2014 02:03

[9494 wrote:](#)

Firstly nuts is no comparison, he is allergic, not addicted to nuts.

From the Big Book:

"We believe, and so suggested a few years ago, that the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy....These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form....."

In any case, that was exactly the point, there is a difference between a nut allergy and an addiction, and it's that difference that makes the program of action necessary to overcome them completely different in nature. Ho gufa.

[9494 wrote:](#)

Go up to an addict on a day that he is doing well, life is going his way, and offer him the most beautiful women in the world, no one will know about it - he will likely take it, with or without life going badly.

Speaking for myself, when I feel connected to Hashem and I have some serenity I have no interest in acting out, even though the opportunities have come up. I have even experienced having the thoughts to act out, and actually going to act out, and when I got there I just shrugged and said "I don't need this." That is the power of a G-d who can do for me what I cannot do for myself.

Conversely, when my spiritual condition is poor I don't even need opportunities to present themselves, I create them for myself.

[9494 wrote:](#)

Cause maybe the lust started as a method of self medication for life problems, BUT it has even outgrown that, and remains an obsession that exists by itself - with or without lifes stresses.

From the white Book:

"We saw that our problem was threefold: physical, emotional, and spiritual. Healing had to come about in all three."

[9494 wrote:](#)

There are some tzaddikim and gedolim who were addicted to smoking, and I doubt they were using it as an escape.

I don't know about them, or about you. I only know about me.

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Re: Dms1234's story

Posted by Dr.Watson - 02 Oct 2014 02:47

I need to leave the discussion as it's getting late here. I would urge you to take a step back from the theoretical debate and examine your own experience, because at the end of the day that's the only thing that's really relevant for you.

And I think you are very aware of the way that life's day-to-day stresses can cause one to seek lust as a crutch. After all, you wrote an excellent summary of the anatomy of a relapse just a few days ago:

[9494 wrote:](#)

Firstly I fell last night. It started off with wanting to escape, boredom, feeling jumpy. For a few hours innocent browsing, but later on in the night I impulsively went lust seeking.

What if there was a different way to deal with boredom and feeling jumpy? Wouldn't you prefer to choose that over lust next time?

I wish you a wonderful and sober night.

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