

New member: 'Yesodi'

Posted by Yesodi - 15 Nov 2015 01:36

Shalom friends, and Shavua Tov to all!

I'm a 50-year-old male, living in Israel and married for the past 25 years.

Back then, as an unmarried teenager whose life was plagued by the typical and virtually-inevitable Aveirot, I so very much looked forward to one day getting married. And B"H, that day finally arrived.

For the first 18 or so years, I would say that I was overall quite RELATIVELY SUCCESSFUL in keeping myself "clean." For the first few of those years, I did not even have a computer, and even afterwards -- although I did "allow myself" to occasionally look at unclean things (supposedly "LeShem Shamayim," with the hope of maybe "fixing" some of my "performance problems") -- except for a few "accidents" here-and-there, overall I felt that things were under control.

However, over the past 7 years, problems with the marriage became increasingly serious. My wife has felt, from the beginning, that our marriage was a "mistake," and has constantly asked to end it. On the other hand, I -- the pathologically-stubborn optimist -- refuse to give up, because I feel that we have never yet even STARTED to collectively make a TRUE effort to address the issues.

Tachlis, the past 4 years have been almost free of intimate relations, and the past 2 years have been TOTALLY free of them. Feeling -- as I did during my unmarried, teenage, days, that I don't really have much of a choice -- I have relapsed back to my old, unclean, habits.

This probably would have kept on going, until I came across a TED talk presenting a secular, "scientific," presentation of the physiological damage caused by repeated exposure to unclean Internet content. As a result, I decided to join the "NoFap" website, mostly out of curiosity, and without any real thought that I am about to change any of my behavior.

Mostly on a whim, I decided to commit to a "clean month of October" (and, since this was mid-Tishrei, and I happened to be clean since a little before Rosh HaShana, I was already 3-weeks clean at the time). Much to my amazement, I discovered that this simple act of making a "public" commitment had an immense positive effect on my, and I somehow made it through some VERY HARD DAYS only "BiZchut" that silly commitment that I had made without even really thinking about if I was really "serious" about this issue yet! B"H, so far, 65 days have passed, and my thinking has totally changed. I suddenly feel that -- despite any problems that my marriage is facing -- I need to put a STOP to this problem!

And so, I've been a happy member of NoFap.com for almost two months now, and -- while I do not at all regret joining this "secular" site -- I suddenly began thinking: why shouldn't I join with other fellow Jews, in a Torah atmosphere, as well? After all, this is the REAL reason that I am pursuing this journey, and not just (with Kol HaKavod) "science."

So this, in a nutshell, is how I came to this wonderful site. Wishing much Bracha veHatzlacha to

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Re: New member:

Posted by serenity - 15 Nov 2015 01:44

Welcome and thanks for that awesome 1st post!

A big part of the solution for many of us is honesty and while you we should be careful to protect our anonymity on a public site, the use of our 1st name doesn't reveal anything, especially In a country full of Yidden like Israel.

Sincerely, Yakov

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all the fellow members. "BeEzrat HaShem Na'aseh veNatzliach!"

Re: New member:

Posted by Bigmoish - 15 Nov 2015 01:46

Welcome.

Much continued Hatzlocha.

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Re: New member:

Posted by markz - 15 Nov 2015 01:47

Welcome!

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Re: New member:

Posted by Yesodi - 15 Nov 2015 03:09

"Yesodi" is a pseudonym. :-)

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Re: New member:

Posted by Yesodi - 15 Nov 2015 03:10

[serenity wrote:](#)

Welcome and thanks for that awesome 1st post!

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Sincerely, Yakov

"Yesodi" is a pseudonym. :-)

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Re: New member:

Posted by ColinColin - 16 Nov 2015 18:36

Welcome Yesodi.

I do not know if you have had much marriage counselling but it might be worth a try?

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Re: New member:

Posted by `Chaim - 16 Nov 2015 18:54

Welcome Yesodi.. Seems like you made some breakthrough with this problem, but of course you'll gain more by joining other frum Yidden and inspiring them as well

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Re: New member:

Posted by gibbor120 - 16 Nov 2015 19:21

WELCOME! Great to have you with us. I'm curious why your wife thinks your marriage was/is a mistake. How do you think your marriage is? Is the discontent one sided - only from your wife?

Marriage problems can definitely be a HUGE trigger. What have you done in the last 25 years to adress the marraige issue? Having a happy marriage can definitely help, not because you will have intimacy again, but because you will be more content.

I wish you much hatzlacha. Curious where the Ted Talk is.

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Re: New member:

Posted by Yesodi - 19 Nov 2015 12:57

[ColinColin wrote:](#)

Welcome Yesodi.

I do not know if you have had much marriage counselling but it might be worth a try?

We had a small (in my opinion: way too small!) amount of counselling.

I do not want to portray myself as the "perfect" side in this marriage, because I know and readily admit to my wife my numerous and serious faults -- both in my personality, as well as in my Tachlis behavior. But one of our major problems -- and here, IMHO, the problem is mostly with her -- is an inability to rationally discuss any problem, with each side willing to perform an honest and critical self-inspection, perhaps leading to the conclusion that both of us share at least *some* of the responsibility. (I prefer to avoid using the word "blame.")

The one time that I succeeded in convincing my wife that we should receive professional counselling, over ten years ago, she was at first very happy at the opportunity to "bash" me in front of the counsellor. And I, as usual, had no problem in receiving her "lovely" words. But everything fizzled out once she realized that she too might finally have to honestly face her own, deep and long-time, "issues."

As I wrote before, especially in the 4 and 2 years, our situation has become increasingly terrible, with me having to endure what I think can objectively be considered premeditated abusive behavior. We have had no intimacy for the past 2 years. And just a few weeks ago, the longest-ever period of "silent-treatment" (almost 8 consecutive months, with very few exceptions!) B"H finally ended.

In the attempt to end this "silent-treatment," there were two interventions by others. The first by a respected member of our Kehilla -- which had very limited success, of very short duration. And the latest, by our Rav -- whom my wife invited into the picture, with her intention that he "help her" in ending our marriage. B"H, so far he has been able to end at least the "hot war" and even much of the "cold war." And he is now also beginning to see from up close that there are some very deep, personal, issues that need to be addressed.

So, as they used to say on Facebook, "it's complicated."

But, as one who recognizes that much of life is "Yerida LeTzorech Aliyah," I somehow still have trust that HaShem will soon let us see that our "downhill" era is ending and that our "uphill" era (in the positive sense) is finally about to begin.

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Re: New member:

Posted by Yesodi - 19 Nov 2015 13:32

[gibbor120 wrote:](#)

WELCOME! Great to have you with us. I'm curious why your wife thinks your marriage was/is a mistake. How do you think your marriage is? Is the discontent one sided - only from your wife?

Marriage problems can definitely be a HUGE trigger. What have you done in the last 25 years to address the marriage issue? Having a happy marriage can definitely help, not because you will have intimacy again, but because you will be more content.

I wish you much hatzlacha. Curious where the Ted Talk is.

I just answered some of your important questions in [this response](#) to [ColinColin](#).

In addition:

- My wife thinks that our marriage was a mistake because she and I are so different in many ways. I personally feel that this is normal, even desirable, and certainly not a problem -- just a source of some of the "technical details" behind some of the many challenges that couples need to face together in life.
- I recognize that our marriage has not been "tremendously successful" in many respects, but OTOH, I feel that this is the challenge that HaShem has prepared for me, and I willingly embrace it. I too have suffered greatly, but I try not to complain -- not to HaShem, and not even to my wife. I view these difficult issues as something that we simply need to finally start addressing, and B"H, HaShem has given me much patience.

You might not be aware of this, but lately there is a strong and ever-growing anti-pornography movement in **secular** society, which bases its opposition to pornography not only on its secular sense of morality (against the "objectifying of women") but on the physiological/neurological damage to each individual person who consumes pornography via high-speed Internet. In general, this movement is not necessarily opposed to masturbation, but only to pornography.

Some prominent websites for this secular community include NoFap.com and YourBrainOnPorn.com.

And the TEDx talk that I mentioned is called "**The great porn experiment**"

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by [Gary Wilson](http://GaryWilson.com), one of the "gurus" claiming to represent the scientific data on this topic.

BTW: there is some [controversy](#) regarding how truly "scientific" are these claims of "addiction" (in the medical sense). But, either way, I find it quite fascinating how HaShem's Hashgacha Pratit has arranged for this "movement" to catch on and increasingly grow stronger!

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Re: New member:

Posted by Yesodi - 19 Nov 2015 13:48

[Yesodi wrote:](#)

And the TEDx talk that I mentioned is called "**The great porn experiment**",

by **Gary Wilson**, one of the "gurus" claiming to represent the scientific data on this topic.

I tried providing a link to that TEDx talk on YouTube, without success. Perhaps links to YouTube are blocked in this Forum?

If so, I hope that it will not be considered Chutzpah if I try to present the link to the same talk on **TedXTalks.ted.com**:

["TEDxGlasgow - Gary Wilson - The Great Porn Experiment"](#)

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Re: New member:

Posted by eslaasos - 19 Nov 2015 14:00

Yesodi, I just want to say that the amount of positivism you have is incredible. There are BH numerous inspiring posts and members here on GYE, but with all the forum browsing I've done, your thread stands out in my mind for this attribute.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: New member:

Posted by serenity - 19 Nov 2015 14:21

Yesodi, May Hahsem give you the strength, courage and wisdom to do His Will. I can relate to a lot of what you're going through. I think your marital problems are just a couple years advanced

beyond what mine were. I was fortunate enough to get recovery before things went further. You are obviously committed to making things work. For me, my life only works when I completely remove my will from the equation, only focus on my side of the street and accept and love my wife unconditionally exactly the way she is. After all that is what I ask Hashem to do for me every day.

Hatzlacha, Yakov

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Re: New member:

Posted by neshamaincharge - 19 Nov 2015 15:00

[Yesodi wrote:](#)

I do not want to portray myself as the "perfect" side in this marriage, because I know and readily admit to my wife my numerous and serious faults -- both in my personality, as well as in my Tachlis behavior. But one of our major problems -- and here, IMHO, the problem is mostly with her -- is an inability to rationally discuss any problem, with each side willing to perform an honest and critical self-inspection, perhaps leading to the conclusion that both of us share at least *some* of the responsibility. (I prefer to avoid using the word "blame.")

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Wow!

Its like reading my own diary! I can so relate, and reading your words makes me experience so many of the same feelings that I lived with for years.

From my own experiences, I'll share 2 things:

1. You're 100% right about her need to take responsibility for her own stuff.
2. Living and thinking this way, is a living hell for me. I can't be having this as my agenda for therapy (even if I'm truly willing to take responsibility for my stuff!) Or even thinking like a victim. It takes away all of my power and energy.

I'm not a mental health professional or a Rov. I'm just sharing my own experience. I've been married for almost as long as you have, and I've spent thousands and thousands of dollars and years of my life on various therapies- some better than others- with short-lived results.

It wasn't until I came here to GYE and:

1. Committed to sweeping my own side of the street, and staying clean no matter how I was being treated; &
2. Soaked up what I learned on the baalei batim section of the forum and decided to take actions -day by day- that focused on what I can do to be a sincere giver to her.

When resentful thoughts of "how can I be expected to... When she can't even take an ounce of responsibility..." Would come into my head, I would have to banish it as quick as I would have to banish a lustful thought.

With Hashem's daily kindness, we see tremendous improvement in our marriage.

I'm sorry for rambling, I just wanted you to know that -regardless of what it has done for our relationship- it is so freeing to finally leave victim-land. I visit there sometimes, but I try to get out of there as soon as I can.

This might have nothing at all to do with you or your situation, but it was helpful for me to write it out anyway. May you have much hatzlacha!

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