

I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 20 Apr 2016 05:43

This post is over a decade in the making. A decade of struggling, falling, disappointing myself, and a whole lot of tumah.

The first time I watched porn was completely by mistake; actually it was more like mis'aseik. Someone in my house had been watching before me, and it was in the relatively early days of the internet when many websites used the Windows Media Player on the computer's desktop as their video platform. I, an innocent eight or nine year old, opened WMP stam, and up popped a video that, although not immediately apparent what it was, was clearly going somewhere. So I watched. And what I saw then remains to be the most explicit, obscene sight I have ever seen. An entire world had been revealed to me, one that I couldn't believe actually existed, but one that was just as intriguing as it was disgusting. I spent the rest of that Friday afternoon in my family's closed-door computer room, googling for more of what I had just viewed. What I ended up finding was eight year old stuff, but pritzus at its worst just the same.

I don't remember specific incidents after that affair; there must have been something. But a few years later, the iPod Touch came out, and I desperately wanted one, because it was cool new tech and I was a curious kid. My generous parents bought it for me, and of course made sure to remove the Youtube app and Safari. Shkoyach. A couple of sports apps later, and I had easy access to whatever I wanted to see, whenever I wanted to see it. Every night, I'd come home from school, and drown myself in whatever my imagination dreamed up. This went on for over a year, with me feeling worse and worse about myself as time went on, with numerous honest attempts to stop all ending in depressing failure.

[Agav, I always knew that I wouldn't cross certain lines. For some reason which maybe I'd be able to explore with the oilam here, I only allowed myself to see basic porn, but not the worst of the worst, if you chap what I'm saying...]

One night I had enough of myself. I went downstairs to my father who was in the kitchen preparing to go to sleep, and I said to him, "Can we talk?" He chapped right away. We sat down on the couch, and I told him how I'd been using my iPod ever since he bought it for me. Long story short, he was incredibly understanding and supportive, and I felt renewed. He took my iPod at my request, and that was that.

For the iPod, anyway.

We still had computers without filters, which meant that any time I was home when nobody else was in the house, I'd find myself in the same chair, finding more garbage to enjoy, and to suffer from. (I also found books in my house that contained everything I wanted to see, just in writing.) I still remember my Rebbi asking me once how my off-Shabbos was, and how difficult it was for me to just smile and say "Great, boruch Hashem." What a shahkrin.

But that issue would sort of fade, because my parents got a good filter, and I started to become more of a masmid and more attached to my learning in general, which I realize now is a tremendous neis considering all that my eyes have seen and my brain has absorbed.

But it was always there, a problem whenever I was home and alone, the draw to the computer magnetic and suffocating. Slowly it has become more of a constant mindset than a periodic struggle. Whenever I'm home, it's not a shailah of if I'll end up on the computer, but when, for how long, and how bad it will be.

My mind is now dominated by the desire to see an attractive woman, and when one does come close, I feel basically powerless to look away. It is so bad that driving is sometimes dangerous for me, because when you're in a frum neighborhood and there's a minivan coming your way, you can bet that the driver is wearing a sheitel and makeup, and I want to see. And even worse than that, this thirst for lust leads me to violate people's privacy, which besides for being extremely selfish, could land me in jail if I'm caught.

I've thought about all this for a while, and have finally admitted that this cannot be chalked up to normal male behavior, but rather, I have a lust problem, and I guess it could be an addiction. I can't go on living like this, because it messes with my basic functioning, menuchas hanefesh and my ability to shteig. I had planned to join GYE at the beginning of Bein Hazmanim, but I was so busy that I barely had time to sit at the computer. I naively thought that I might be okay. But first yesterday and then today, I caved (fell?), and it's clear that if I don't act now, I might never get this yetzer hora under control.

If you are still reading until this point, I can't thank you enough for getting to know me. I need the oilam here to help me become like you - focused and determined to remain pure in a world of shmutz. I really hope that I'll be here often, feeling the support of other Yidden that are fighting the same battle I am. Because I really want --and need-- to get myself under control.

Yedidcha,

Birshusi

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Workingguy - 29 Jul 2016 22:35

[Birshusi wrote on 29 Jul 2016 21:19:](#)

I had to go all the way to page three of the to find my thread. I've been away for too long, and boy do I feel it.

I've been slipping a lot over the last two weeks, to the point where I've been checking out pretty much every woman I see.

And twice this week, I camped out by a semi-open bathroom window of a house nearby. Last night, I turned off the lights of the room I was in, and watched to see who was in the bathroom. It turned out to be a man, and I think he saw me. I was petrified that I got busted, but so far, no cops have showed up to arrest me.

I haven't felt this bad since joining GYE. Much of that probably has to do with my lack of posting on the forums, but it's difficult to be part of the conversation and camaraderie when I'm only home once a week. Ironically, things should get better once bein hazmanim starts.

But for now, I'm a legit mess, and I seriously thought about falling before I managed to log on to the forums.

Just be careful; you certainly don't want to et in trouble with the law or anything like that. It's certainly a lot better to go on line than it is to do something that can get you in legal trouble.

Is there anyone you can talk to about this?

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 02 Aug 2016 00:23

Working on a conversation with my rebbi. He's very busy...

I've got a lot going on this week, so I hope to be okay. My handbook finally came in the mail, and that's a huge relief for me, to know that it's here in print for me to read, digest, and implement. Once bein hazmanim starts, I'll be reading it consistently.

It's so quiet around here lately. Where is everyone?

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Markz - 02 Aug 2016 01:21

Yeah it's very quiet.

Bir shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh si

If somethings important it precedes busy busy. You can tell your Rebbi you have something urgent to discuss

Keep us posted and KEEP ON TRUCKING!!!

And hey I'm hoping to tackle the handbook too over the weekend

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Birshusi - 07 Aug 2016 05:34

Here's an interesting story from this past Shabbos:

There was a kiddush in my shul, and for whatever reasons, the men's kiddush area is right in front of the women's bathroom. While usually the women don't come in, today there was one who did: A *very* attractive, single girl, probably a couple of years older than me. I was standing right by the bathroom door shmoozing with someone, and I dutifully turned away.

As she walked by and opened the door, it started to smell. Bad. The guy I was shmoozing with

said matter-of-factly, "Wow, the bathroom smells." But I don't think it was the bathroom; I think it was her. She passed gas and it smelled awful. And suddenly she wasn't so attractive anymore.

This really got me thinking, because one of the things we talk about in recovery/healing is the need to change our attitude towards women. They are not there for my pleasure. They are not lust-satisfying toys. They are complex, deep, and maybe even boring. They have bodily functions that aren't limited to sex. They are *people*. I wish I could get that through my head.

The next time I see a woman I want to indulge in, I hope this story pops into my mind, so that I remember that she who I gaze at for my selfish pleasure, is no less deserving of proper human respect than I am. Hopefully it'll help me control myself.

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Fb2016fbt - 08 Aug 2016 00:06

I guess the key is to find whatever works for you, and if that works, than terrific:)

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Birshusi - 08 Aug 2016 01:23

[Fb2016fbt wrote on 08 Aug 2016 00:06:](#)

I guess the key is to find whatever works for you, and if that works, than terrific:)

I didn't think it would be the solution, but that maybe it would help me to have a better perspective in general.

But if today is any indicator, it's not gonna change anything. Not that it was a bad day, but I did slip a few times, and the thoughts expressed in that post were nowhere to be found.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 08 Aug 2016 20:36

With the encouragement of one_day_at_a_time, I have joined the 90 day chart. I didn't do it initially because I thought I'd only be around for bein hazmanim and wouldn't be able to update my progress. Turns out that wasn't the case, so oh well.

I actually hit 90 days since joining GYE, but fell last week one I tried to spy on someone's window. But I got back up and I'm trying again, with Hashem's help, and with GYE as the shliach.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 10 Aug 2016 13:29

Anyone have any suggestions/pointers/chizuk for me before I tell all to my Rebbi this afternoon?

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Markz - 10 Aug 2016 13:54

Take it easy. It will be fine.

If you're really brave, read the handbook tool 12, ask him if you can implement it in yeshiva ;-)

And I quote:

If you are a Bochur learning in Yeshiva, you could start a revolution (discreetly, of course) and earn unfathomable reward in the next world if you can find the inner strength to overcome your natural feelings of shame, and try to begin a discreet group of serious Bochurim who would meet at set intervals, as discussed above. To make it easier to sell to your close friends, you

might just call it a “Shmiras Ainayim Chizuk group”. The group can start with even two boys, and gradually it would grow as word would spread from ear to ear (no posting 'signs' of course). Imagine the merit you would have for such an undertaking! Not only would this help you tremendously in your own struggle, but it would help countless others, especially if the idea continues even after your time in the Yeshiva is over, for perhaps many years to come! And who knows? Maybe in your merit, this idea would even spread to other Yeshivos as well! What an unbelievable opportunity this could be to do something great for yourself, for Klal Yisrael and for Hakadosh Baruch Hu!

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 10 Aug 2016 14:13

[Markz wrote on 10 Aug 2016 13:54:](#)

Take it easy. It will be fine.

If you're really brave, read the handbook tool 12, ask him if you can implement it in yeshiva ;-)

And I quote:

If you are a Bochor learning in Yeshiva, you could start a revolution (discreetly, of course) and earn unfathomable reward in the next world if you can find the inner strength to overcome your natural feelings of shame, and try to begin a discreet group of serious Bochorim who would meet at set intervals, as discussed above. To make it easier to sell to your close friends, you might just call it a “Shmiras Ainayim Chizuk group”. The group can start with even two boys, and gradually it would grow as word would spread from ear to ear (no posting 'signs' of course). Imagine the merit you would have for such an undertaking! Not only would this help you tremendously in your own struggle, but it would help countless others, especially if the idea continues even after your time in the Yeshiva is over, for perhaps many years to come! And who knows? Maybe in your merit, this idea would even spread to other Yeshivos as well! What an unbelievable opportunity this could be to do something great for yourself, for Klal Yisrael and for Hakadosh Baruch Hu!

You won't believe this, but literally three minutes before I read your post, I read Tool #12, which was where I was up to in the handbook, and I was thinking that it was hashgacha that I read this on the very day that I'm going to open up to my Rebbi and make real accountability a part of my recovery.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 11 Aug 2016 03:33

I spoke to my Rebbi. It was a tell all conversation, lasted about two hours, and it went really well.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 11 Aug 2016 21:48

My Rebbi had a similar position to my mother in regards to where I stand in all this. Basically, my Rebbi holds that I am, at the very most, a regular guy with a somewhat more powerful Yezter Hara, and at the very least, I may be just like everyone else. I have never allowed myself to view real porn. I do not masturbate. I would never come close to doing some of the things that many of my fellow GYEers have engaged in.

Plus, he pointed out that by nature, I am someone who tends to dissect and examine my inner world and feelings in every area of life, and it is quite reasonable to assume that while my lusting is not anything unusual, I have made it into this raging monster inside my own head only because I am so caught up in my feelings and in my desire to be an eved Hashem. My Rebbi believes that if I knew for an absolute fact that every other bochur and man in the world was struggling exactly as I am, that it wouldn't bother me nearly as much. I struggle with ridifas hakavod, with kinah, with bittul Torah, and with lust. They all need to be understood, worked on and controlled. But my obsession with my lust problems may be the very source of my struggle. If I could just let things slide, without making myself do anything drastic or life-changing, I should be fine. Of course there's tons to gain from 12-step and the like, but *for me* it may be better to just take a chill pill and deal with this struggle in the same way that I deal with the other shortcomings Hashem has challenged me with.

Another ha'arah that both my LCSW mother and TCYS* Rebbi both came up with individually, is that my enthusiasm in regards to my involvement in GYE and recovery is itself a manifestation of my need to experience my lust -- *a totally healthy behavior*. However, constant reading and posting on the forums may not be an absolute necessity for me in order to maintain my kedusha.

The fact is that the only reason why I've been clean from internet shmutz for 154 days now is GYE. I've learned many incredible tools and lessons from being active on the forums and from reading the handbook and other GYE material. It would be foolish to think that I should just forget it all. But I think I do need to lessen my participation in some of these topics and discussions.

I am considering making an appointment with a certain Rav who has a lot of experience in helping bochurim navigate lust issues, to see if he agrees with this opinion. However, at this point I believe that I should follow the advice and hadracha given to me by the two people in my life that know me the best --my Rebbi and my mother-- and allow myself to relax a bit in my obsession with defeating a perceived lust addiction.

Let me reiterate that the only reason I have gotten to this point in understanding myself and the nature of my struggle, is because of the incredible people of GYE. The oilam on the forums was an inspiration to me long before I joined, and will continue to be a chizuk for me for my entire life.

I'll still be around, certainly over the rest of bein hazmanim, when boredom and loneliness are common and often create very challenging nisyonos. But I do need to follow the advice of my mentors and take a step back from the deep level of involvement and participation that I've become accustomed to ever since I joined GYE. Again, this move is part of my journey to *success that began with GYE*, not a revolt against it.

May all of you choshuve, heileger, special Yidden continue to grow and to find what works for you in winning the battle against this most difficult struggle, and may Hashem bentch all of you with bracha, hatzlacha, and recovery.

*Talmud Chacham Yerei Shamayim

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 11 Aug 2016 22:06

...my enthusiasm in regards to my involvement in GYE and recovery is itself a manifestation of my need to experience my lust...

Totally relate to that. And that is one of the reasons why I hardly post about my own struggles anymore. But the friends I've made here and the camaraderie and fellowship is what keeps me going.

Continued Hatzlacha and happy Trucking, wherever your road takes you.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Shlomo24 - 12 Aug 2016 14:00

Great post, Hatzlacha Rabah. In the frum community, we live with much higher expectations than the rest of the world. If someone watches porn occasionally and masturbates occasionally, it's not necessarily unhealthy or mean that he has issues that he needs to work on. It can be the famous diagnosis called "male." I think that your Rebbi is coming from a good place when he says that you should take a chill about this, I know that many times that is really what I need.

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