

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 Birshusi - 17 Aug 2016 21:17

I fell on the internet for the first time in five months. Not sure what to make of it being that I'm trying a new mindset of just letting things slide.

I'm over it and made a kabbalah not to go on Youtube today, and iy"H I'll do the same tomorrow.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by gibbor120 - 18 Aug 2016 21:37

Sorry to hear that. Learn from your mistakes and KOT!

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by proudchabadnick - 19 Aug 2016 01:14

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.

I'm sorry for going back to a post from almost two weeks ago, but I really can relate to what you wrote, and find it very inspirational.

When I see an attractive woman I automatically create a balloon of sex and desire, and the second I can pop that balloon and come back to reality is when I'm able to get back to my normal, struggling self. In the story when she passed gas suddenly the whole fantasy you

created of her burst, and all you were left with was a female human being which happens to be attractive. I can deal with attractive people. I can't deal with this huge Empire State Building (i.e. huge) fantasy.

I remember that I was once watching pornography and I looked out of the window and it was getting light outside, I looked back at the screen (and without getting too graphic) I saw the sex act and it was just going on and on and on. Again and again and again. And I thought to myself, "enough already"! "This is not exciting; this is really disgusting self centered"! It was a real "aha moment" for me. Suddenly the thing that I desired so much collapsed and reverted back to it's natural state. And like Chazal say " ??? ???? ????".

I think this is a very important point. Sometimes I think that I can't deal with my desires and it seems that whenever I see an woman I'm toast., but I have remember that this is only the distortion and fantasy. The reality is not the case.

I hope I've made some sense here, and if if anyone has any further thoughts please comment.

Keep it up. Life is like the stock market: if you invest in the right stock and you keep you money in for a length of time you **will** (at least there is a high chance! even with today's economy) get a high return on your investment.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 22 Aug 2016 18:30

After falling hard again last night, I am renewing my commitment to GYE and to getting back into control of my struggle. I had stepped away for about a week and a half after discussing my struggle with my Rebbi, but I now know without a doubt that the only way I have a chance of staying clean, even just for today, is by being on top of my struggle constantly.

I don't want to obsess over my struggles, and I still believe that my Rebbi's directive is accurate; after all, he told me that if GYE is working for me, I should continue to be involved. So now my job is to figure out that balance, to be on top of my struggles constantly, but to also be relaxed about it and to not label myself as a sick man.

The journey continues...

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by gibbor120 - 22 Aug 2016 21:12

I think of it as "letting go of my struggle" not "controlling my struggle". To control it I have to hold

It sounds cute, but there really is a difference. At least there is to me.

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Birshusi - 22 Aug 2016 21:20

[gibbor120 wrote on 22 Aug 2016 21:12:](#)
on to it. To let go, I just drop it off the roof

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It sounds cute, but there really is a difference. At least there is to me.

I think I understand you somewhat, but can you explain a bit more? I tried to let go of my struggle, to not pay it any real attention, and it ended up costing me big time. How do I let go while still keeping it under control?

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 22 Aug 2016 22:11

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by thanks613 - 23 Aug 2016 15:55

Hey Birshusi - Glad to hear you're stepping forward by talking with your Rebbi and giving serious thought to the way forward. Much encouragement on keeping at it!

I don't have enough experience or knowledge about you to comment fairly about why you "happened" to fall just after talking with your Rebbi about giving up GYE. I wanted to ask though what tools/strategies/plans you would (or did) use against lust obsessions to replace GYE.

Whether GYE is necessary for you or not, it seems that you found it for a reason- something was clearly bothering you. I would guess that giving up GYE without seeking new supports - a therapist, regular contact with your Rebbi or other close friends/family about your struggles, or something like that -it would be really challenging. Talking with a Rebbi and revealing your secret can lift a HUGE weight off your heart, but if it's followed by a long silence between the two of you then it may not be the path towards a solution. I'm not assuming or predicting how things have been/will be for you. Just food for thought, for you or whoever else may be in a similar situation (i.e. yours truly).

Hatzlacha

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by gibbor120 - 23 Aug 2016 17:46

I didn't say ignore. I said "let go".

Are you familiar with the chinese finger trap? The harder you pull, the more your finger is trapped. If you just squeeze it together and pull gently, your finger comes right out. Sometimes, we are so busy struggling, it just makes it worse.

For example. I'm standing in line at the store and the magazine rack is staring at me. I can struggle with looking or not. Or I can just let go. It's not for me. It's over. Struggling and agonizing over it, will often lead to falling. Letting go = accepting that I can't have it. Accepting rather than agonizing.

It's somewhat of a mindset. Yes, I still do agonize sometimes, but it is toxic. I can't afford it. I pay for it. The mindset of letting go is that I can accept that I don't need it AND MOVE ON. The longer I agonize, the longer I am exposed to it's toxic effects.

I'm not sure if I'm being clear, because like I said, it is a mindset/attitude, but it does make a big difference.

The idea of "winning" or "beating" also puts me in the drivers seat. Me against X. Call it the Y"H. Call it Taiva. Either way, "I" must beat "IT". A much healthier way for me to look at it is surrender. I humbly surrender my will to G-ds will.

Subtle differences make all the difference to me.

I hope this made some sense.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 23 Aug 2016 18:25

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Hatzlacha

My Rebbi didn't tell me to give up GYE. He said that he knows that I tend to obsess about things, especially about my personal shortcomings, and that because my lust issues are on a significantly lower level than pretty much every other poster on the forums, that I should consider myself a regular normal male with taivos, not a guy with problems, not a guy who's living a "double life."

He said that if GYE is helping me to stay clean and I feel that without it I wouldn't be able to withstand nisyonos, then I should absolutely continue with GYE. The thing is, I was intrigued by the possibility that I created this monster because I thought I had a problem, and if I just stopped making it into my primary focus, I'd be fine.

Now I know that it's not true. Now I know that if it's not at the forefront of my mind, I won't be able to stay clean.

It still doesn't mean that I'm an addict and that I'm in trouble. What I'm trying to figure out now is how to be on to keep my mind in the right place to keep the struggle at bay, without having it be the only thing on my mind.

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Re: I'm Finally Here

Posted by Birshusi - 23 Aug 2016 18:29

[gibbor120 wrote on 23 Aug 2016 17:46:](#)

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I hope this made some sense.

I need to be misboinain over this post.

In the meantime, this very mindset of surrender is still involvement in the struggle. And I always

have to make sure that I'm in surrender mode. That's not the mindset of the average guy in shul, so I'm already making a big deal out of it.

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by gibbor120 - 23 Aug 2016 20:26

Have you checked out Dr. Sorotzkin? I have a link in my signature. He has good stuff on perfectionism that may be helpful.

You said that you tend to obsess. So do I. I need to "let go" of the things I obsess about. Really, to just live normally. Isn't obsessing just going around and around in circles with the same thought instead of letting it go?

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Bigmoish - 24 Aug 2016 17:55

[Birshusi wrote on 23 Aug 2016 18:25:](#)

It still doesn't mean that I'm an addict and that I'm in trouble.

I don't understand. Being an addict means you're in trouble? What kind of trouble?

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Re: I'm Finally Here
Posted by Shlomo24 - 25 Aug 2016 01:51

I relate very much to what has been said about surrendering or letting go. I haven't had to fight my lust for almost 2 years now. I give it up to God, explicitly, and ask him to take it away for me because I can't handle it on my own.

GYE - Guard Your Eyes

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