

Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 26 Feb 2020 08:41

Hi to all, I am new here and this is my first time posting. I am married with a child and struggle primarily with masturbation. I struggled with shemiras einayim since high school (who didn't) and had an unfiltered phone for a period of time. I spent a lot of my time on YouTube watching stripteases, Swimsuit videos and the like. I have seen porn but it's not something I struggle with on a regular basis.

I masturbated for the first time when I was already in my twenties and have been struggling with it since then. Over the course of the years I tried numerous things some helped a little, some a lot, but none of them worked. At a certain point, I had enough and I took both of my unfiltered phones and broke them in half and to this day I have a kosher phone. Obviously this wasn't the only issue (granted a huge issue but not the only one) because even after this I still struggled.

This is when I realized I have a more serious issue.

I am a serious avreich learning full time, I learn mussar regularly and constantly strengthen myself with various incentives. I can then usually keep myself clean for 2-3 weeks, then this or that and I am back to square one. I will then go through a phase of a few days with no control depression feeling awful about myself and what I did. I get so upset at myself because of how hard I am trying and how important this is to me that I go through a stage of complete disconnect, guilt and depression. Usually after a few days of this I tell myself that Hashem doesn't want be to feel guilty (at least not this way) because the guilt/depression is causing you to act out (and Hashem obviously doesnt want that...).

I found this to be particularly helpful, knowing that even though i was doing something terrible and maybe there would be a time to feel guilty, now isn't that time. Now is the time for a fresh start and a fresh start means no guilt, rather, a new day and a new opportunity.

This helps me get out of the rut, however, I can't seem to stay clean for more then 2-3 weeks. It can be anything from a hard day to seeing something etc. it's like something happens that makes me think "it's just not worth the fight this time" or "just do it and don't think".

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?

Posted by EvedHashem1836 - 09 Mar 2021 16:41

Mazal Tov on the big 90!

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?

Posted by Ish MiGrodno - 10 Mar 2021 06:31

[starting wrote on 17 Feb 2021 20:38:](#)

..... Like the Poconos are really beautiful and the Alps are even more stunning but that doesn't make the Poconos any less beautiful.

...I am saying the oppositeYou're wife has to feel she is the alps in your eyes.....And having access to the alps does not take away from wanting to see the poconos.....So she is number 1 in every way and has to know it....Then it's easier to accept that there are other pleasures....

Sorry guys, but I am mamash not chapping what you are talking about. What we must constantly say to our wives (and eventually feel as well) is that she is the ONLY one.

I have a joke with my wife where I ask her what the 4 faces on "my Mount Rushmore" are. And of course the answer is...

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Works until you get busted...

She doesn't get it, if she is the only one in the world, why the heck do I need GYE, If I need GYE, how can I possibly love her...

There is no good answer, but don't bother trying to explain it either, she just won't get it and it will cause her much unnecessary pain.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by willdoit - 10 Mar 2021 21:46

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 10 Mar 2021 12:07:](#)

[Ish MiGrodno wrote on 10 Mar 2021 06:31:](#)

[starting wrote on 17 Feb 2021 20:38:](#)

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How did your response to her, answer the question you mentioned about needing GYE?

?And it seems to me that you were trying to convey to her that she is the prettiest to you, which is, apparently what @Ish MiGrodno actually answered.

""Okay, thank you guys for all the responses, some were better than others.

Thank G-d she got over it. I was not posting this for advice rather to bring out what women actually think about our behavior.

Here is what I told her in order to explain why she actually is the prettiest in the world.

1. She *is* the pretties of those that are available. Even if she is not as pretty as some underwear model (I didn't actually say that), they are not available.
2. My world is the world that I live in, the people that I see and the people that live around me. In my world, she *is* actually the prettiest and its irrelevant whether there are prettier woman in existence because they aren't in my world. She is the prettiest in my world.
3. It is a proven fact that when you love someone and you grow in a relationship with them, their appearance actually changes and becomes more pleasant (beauty is in the eyes of the beholder). You have a significant advantage over everyone else because I love you so much and you do so much for me. Even if they were prettier, you've far surpassed them because of how much I love you and no one else in the world has this opportunity.""

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 11 Mar 2021 06:14

[willdoit wrote on 10 Mar 2021 21:46:](#)

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 10 Mar 2021 12:07:](#)

[Ish MiGrodno wrote on 10 Mar 2021 06:31:](#)

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Yes you are right, that is exactly what I was trying to convey.

There were two ideas going on how exactly to put together a convincing argument. one is to say that she is the prettiest, which my wife would call the lying and flattery argument, and the other was to dig a little deeper and try to figure out why is it that I feel so close to her in spite of the fact that there are prettier people on this earth.

In my humble opinion, telling my wife that she is prettier than (insert name here) is stupid and pointless, she isn't stupid, she knows that the whole world runs after these models and celebrities. I therefore need to be real and honest as to why I actually love her and why I love her and why that matters more. This is not about the mirror on the wall deciding who is the prettiest of them all. It's about two people who are married to each other and love each other. There should be more to it than just being the prettiest in the world.

When we discuss beauty, I try to include *yofi* from *Sarah Imeinu* (I wrote about this a while back) that the inner beauty shines through the external, and I try to make my world smaller.

If my wife was oblivious, she would buy the "you're the prettiest in the world" story. She isn't. She challenges me. She knows who I used to follow and who I (used to?) have a crush on. She

has seen things in my history, she knows that I am better but that it's not over. She is also very supportive and is a life changer in this fight. She also stopped reading my posts (I hope) when I told her that I cannot get the help I need if she does that. She knows I love her and I tell it to her 30 times a day. But she also knows that if I was in it just for looks, self gratification, sexual pleasures, and to replay sex scenes with her, I would be completely dissatisfied with her. And here is where the work needs to be done, I need to make sure my end is right, that this isn't what I am looking for with her, then we can talk about convincing her. Ultimately, she needs to understand as well that our marriage is about something a little deeper than that.

To sum it up, she is all four faces on my Mt, Rushmore, but Mt. Rushmore isn't just about looks, it's about great people, great wives, great mothers, and great women.

My discussion with @Starting was about how she can be the prettiest, if there are other possibly prettier people. Is she the prettiest but I am still attracted to less pretty women because they are still pretty, or do we admit that there are prettier people, but they are not part of the equation. I thought the latter was more honest and therefore more convincing.

@IshMiGrodno from what I understood was simply saying to make her the only woman in the world. Easier said than done and I think we were discussing how exactly to accomplish that when our wives know that this is not true at face value.

I still think that my approach is a good one, lets face it we all search for prettier woman, why else are we here. If your wife is clueless, great (although I don't buy that, she can tell good and well), but if she isn't, you have to figure out for your sake and for hers how to change yourself. By all means, to the four faces on Mt. Rushmore, but I need to prepare for that backfiring as "NO, IT'S HER, HER, HER AND HER". So yes, first you have to put her on your mountain, as all four faces, and then you can work on making her feel that way.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 26 Apr 2021 19:56

Hi Guys, it's been a while. Just checking in and B"H all is well. I had an extremely busy and productive beginning of the zman, not much time to breathe. Not a bad thing.

I was wondering why sometimes when we are really involved in learning or other *avodas Hashem* we tend to get more triggered, meaning, sometimes during a particular spiritual high, I find myself really urging and craving various fixes. It's quite strange because one would think it would be the opposite, when one is full, he should crave less right?

Here is what I came up with. We turn to lust or other forms of pleasure in order to numb the pain of feeling empty. Eventually, we are so numb that we don't really feel the pain as strongly. Yes we are still hurting but we kind of build up calluses. When we go through a spiritual high, we remind ourselves what living and feeling full really feels like. We feel alive for once, we can dance to the heavens! Then the emptiness starts to creep back for one reason or another. Oo the pain that we feel. It's like the soft skin of a baby against a gravel path. We tasted what it means to live, but now we are empty again. Even though we are not quite as empty as we used to be, that feeling of having it all and losing it, even if only a little of it makes us start to crave. What we are really craving is to fill that hole and we are hypersensitive to it.

I think this is why I can get really strong urges while I am doing really well in my *avodas Hashem*. What happens is that I have a slight dip, and then I get these crazy urges. What I really need however, is to get back on track and keep my spiritual stomach satiated.

Either way, I hope and pray that I can continue to fill myself up with good things. I would like to fill myself up until there is no room for anything else. I think that is the goal for now.

All the best,

Wilnevergiveup

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 19 May 2021 06:13

Just took care of another loophole. It's amazing what we are capable of when we really try hard, I should learn from myself for spiritual pursuits...

It's interesting that this Shavuot was particularly difficult for me in the lust area. Not exactly sure why, I think it may just be the lack of structure going from Friday to Shabbos then another erev

Yom Tov and two days of basically eating and sleeping. Yeah I learned all night and even many hours on erev Yom Tov, but I guess the whole picture just leaves a hole in my heart. I hate when things don't follow a normal schedule and therefore the whole Shavuot program is hard for me.

Not going to get into details but sometimes Hashem sends us challenges for us to overcome them, but sometimes they are just to remind us that the drama never really lives up in real life. Sometimes we try running away from whatever, and we run to the only (or easiest) place we know. We build this picture of what we want from ourselves, our marriages, our lives etc. based on life's challenges and how we think we want to escape from them.

I am learning that we don't escape from life, whether we like it or not, the only option is to live it. We can choose if we want to be happy or upset, have expectations or be grateful. We can choose if we want to overcome our challenges or if we want to "stick it out" do we want to become better people, or just live it out until we die (and hopefully someone will take care of us when we go senile...).

I tasted both lives and I could tell you which one is better. They both taste good one like cream pie and one like a good steak. One makes you nauseas after a few bites and one makes you feel full. The difference is that the cream pie comes ready made and the steak comes as a raw piece of meat. One comes easy and the other takes work. One helps you escape and the other helps you live.

I know which life I want, it's just hard sometimes in the moment to see things clearly. In those difficult moments we sometimes make mistakes and do things that we wished we wouldn't have but those moment's of weakness are not what define us.

I know which life I want, please Hashem don't let me ever forget.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 19 May 2021 12:13

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Great mashal!! So true.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 21 May 2021 08:21

I just heard a *shmues* about why *Klal Yisrael* got the *kesser Torah* when they said *na'aseh v'nishma* and not when they actually learned the *Torah*. He said that the *kesser Torah* comes with the *kabalah*. We can ask then that we find so many times we are *mekabel* and nothing comes of it? The answer is that *Klal Yisrael* when they were standing by *Har Sinai* saw Hashem so clearly, and saw the purpose of this world so clearly and the fact that would they not accept the *Torah* the world would cease to have any purpose (and therefore return to nothingness) that they accepted the *Torah* as if their life depends on it. When you take on something that you can clearly see that your life really depends on it, it's a different *kabalah*.

In this fight, I think it's the same thing. Many of us come here and try to break free. Many of us see success in various shapes and forms. The most successful ones are the ones who can really see clearly that their life depends on it.

I wrote this on Harav Ish MiGrodno's thread and I think it's very relevant.

Here is my take on life (for now). I think what the Ramcha"l wrote in *Mesilas Yescharim* so perfectly sums it up. We all know what we need to do, no *chiddushim*, but it gets murky over

time. I don't need anyone to tell me, all the things that I already know, I need to figure out how to make things clear again. Something like a refresher course, given by a veteran who not only broke free, but also went through the ups and downs that came further down the road, a road that not everyone has made it to yet. Sometimes, I just want to hear from someone who is going through something similar to me. I like to search through old threads to see if maybe someone here is like me.

Here is what I don't like. I don't like when people who don't really know give advice as if they do. I want to hear your stories, I want to hear what works for you and what doesn't, but I only want *mussar* from someone who can really relate.

Here is what I think, and it's something that is deep in my heart, we need to figure out, on our own, how to live. We need to be the ones who figure it all out. Yes we can get help, yes we can be guided on what is the next step, but when it comes to understanding the concepts, we just need to work on them until they click. When they do, we can still be quick to forget and we need to be the ones to remind ourselves.

When we figure this game out at some point, then go through a hard time, I really don't want, or need anyone to tell me what I already know. What I need is to figure out how to get to the clarity that I once had. Yes others can help me get there, but not by reiterating all the same old stuff that I already know.

So why all of this? No good reason, just on my mind for some reason.

Well actually, it's because I wanted to share something that I am going through. Lately, the clarity has been fading, the purpose of keeping my mind clean has become murky. I don't see the desperation in front of me anymore. I am not about to act out, that's not what this is about. This is about my losing the clarity of what life is about. It's about getting by instead of rising to the occasion.

Actually, I think that pretty much sums up what I am trying to say. Life has become one of "getting by" instead of one of "maximizing". I am getting by in my davening, getting by in my learning, getting by in my marriage and getting by in my not masturbating. The last one, "not masturbating" is one that I am a little confused about. I don't want to and I don't plan on any time soon but in no way is my conduct in shemiras einayim one that I am proud of. I feel like I have reached a dead end. I came here to deal with my masturbation problem and B"H I am very

grateful that it is better by leaps and bounds. Am I finished? is my work complete? What about the fact that I can spend many precious moments looking at women in underwear, is that really what a guy learning 10+ hours a day should be doing? What now? Is this not an issue? I have figured out how to live happily in this new life of mine, no masturbating etc. but what about fantasizing about every pretty woman that I see, my friends wives and wives friends? These things make me sick thinking about them, yet I still do them. Oooh, but I don't masturbate. Check. They say to cross your bridges when you get there, when do we get there?

I have seen much success, but I still feel like a contradiction.

I just don't feel like my life depends on this. I feel that this part is manageable, just who I intend to go up to *shamayim* as.

I've got to make my life depend on this. Or do I? Does it just disappear? or does it grow and fester? I am putting in the work, I am very careful, I learn, daven, I beg Hashem to help me, I have practically no access to anything whatsoever and have been pretty successful at closing things up when there have been issues.

It's when I start looking that makes me crazy, why do I need to look for trouble, or when I am in the street and I stare at someone and my mind goes wild, why do I need to do these things, do I not have enough? Am I in my life? Is my life not awesome?

Hashem gives me so much, I am so lucky, I am so blessed. Why do I do these things?

Sometimes I really just stump myself.

Thanks for listening if you did. I needed to get that off my chest.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 26 May 2021 06:31

In the spirit of having clarity, I worked through some things that were on my mind and got some clarity on the matter.

Either way, here are the guidelines that I came up with for myself that I feel are within my *nekudas habechira*.

I can survive if I don't (and cannot live with myself if I do):

- The first thing I do is rate the sexual potential of every woman I find myself behind in line at the grocery (yeah, spelling that out is a little gross).
- Rate the quality of modeling for the above mentioned women as if I am a model scout.
- Search and search and search for loopholes in my filter (even if I don't find any).
- When images of women in underwear show up in my promotions mail (don't ask me why), it's obviously very important to study every detail before deleting it, because who knows when the opportunity will arise again.
- Fantasize about sex with every woman I know (and don't know). it's really gross when you think about it factually.

In short, I decided on the 3 second rule. No looking, gazing, studying (purely for academical purposes, of course...) etc. live women even when fully dressed, for 3 seconds or more. Obviously, gazing for any time at all is not in the plans but 3 seconds is what I feel is a reasonable amount of time to look away. The same 3 seconds apply to images of women who are not fully dressed that happen upon my screen or otherwise.

No seeking any inappropriately dressed images.

No dwelling on thoughts of sex with anyone, or images of inappropriately dressed women. Here too I decided on the 3 second rule.

This has nothing to do with what I consider a fall, just trying to make sure I don't lose my footing.

I would like to be able to manage this and be done with this site (at least on a permanent basis),

if not, it seems like I will be here for the long run.

All the best,

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?

Posted by chancy - 01 Jun 2021 15:55

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 26 May 2021 06:31:](#)

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My Shmires einiyem is a bit different, as i (almost) always look away right away. but my problem is that i started being more and more sensitive to attraction. I can see any half normal look girl or guy and get an increase in heart rate.... i still look away but its slowly driving me crazy. I was never so attracted to everyone i was very picky. now im attracted to everything and everyone. so my putting the strongest filters doesn't help much when everyone i see on the street or in shul is a trigger.

I hope someone understands what i mean and that someone here has the experience to help out another struggler....

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by Grant400 - 01 Jun 2021 16:50

[chancy wrote on 01 Jun 2021 15:55:](#)

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 26 May 2021 06:31:](#)

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Hi there! I don't have time for a long response, but there are 2 methods I know of that works...when you work it.

The first is frequently mentioned here. Training yourself to view them as people. Not (sex) objects. They are someone's sister, daughter or mother. They have feelings. Likes and dislikes. Problems and issues etc.

To illustrate this point. When I watch a TV show and it has an attractive woman in it, initially I am super attracted, but as I go through episodes and seasons and get to "know" them better, the intensity starts to diminish. I'm not saying it disappears, but knowing them as a person can influence an undiluted purely sexual view of the body. (Maybe that's one of the reasons why the excitement of a new partner fades...)

The second is something that when I heard about I laughed. It seemed ludicrous and outlandish. It sounded childish and amateur to believe this works, but- it helped alot. I heard it from R' Bentzion Shafier in his series "The Fight" on Theshmuz.com.

He explains how one can literally effect the way he views others by changing his view of their essence, so to speak. Stop viewing a woman as a woman who is off limits. View her like she isn't a woman. The only woman in the world is your wife, the rest are other things, pieces of wood, if you will. Just as there is no attraction to monkeys.

Training yourself to see them as completely non-sexual beings, can change your brain's immediate sexualization of said people.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by chancy - 01 Jun 2021 18:52

In the spirit of having clarity, I worked through some things that were on my mind and got some clarity on the matter.

Either way, here are the guidelines that I came up with for myself that I feel are within my nekudas habechira.

I can survive if I don't (and cannot live with myself if I do):The first thing I do is rate the sexual potential of every woman I find myself behind in line at the grocery (yeah, spelling that out is a little gross).Rate the quality of modeling for the above mentioned women as if I am a model scout.Search and search and search for loopholes in my filter (even if I don't find any).When images of women in underwear show up in my promotions mail (don't ask me why), it's obviously very important to study every detail before deleting it, because who knows when the opportunity will arise again.Fantasize about sex with every woman I know (and don't know). it's really gross when you think about it factually.In short, I decided on the 3 second rule. No looking, gazing, studying (purely for academical purposes, of course...) etc. live women even when fully dressed, for 3 seconds or more. Obviously, gazing for any time at all is not in the plans but 3 seconds is what I feel is a reasonable amount of time to look away. The same 3 seconds apply to images of women who are not fully dressed that happen upon my screen or otherwise.

No seeking any inappropriately dressed images.

No dwelling on thoughts of sex with anyone, or images of inappropriately dressed women. Here too I decided on the 3 second rule.

This has nothing to do with what I consider a fall, just trying to make sure I don't lose my footing.

I would like to be able to manage this and be done with this site (at least on a permanent basis), if not, it seems like I will be here for the long run.

All the best,

WilnevergiveupHi Wilnever(ever)giveup.

I feel like im in the same boat as you. (Well, not the learning 10+ hours a day, im happy if i get 3+ hours a day).... but in the success i had in stopping masturbation, but not the other problems.

My Shmires einiyem is a bit different, as i (almost) always look away right away. but my problem is that i started being more and more sensitive to attraction. I can see any half normal look girl or guy and get an increase in heart rate.... i still look away but its slowly driving me crazy. I was never so attracted to everyone i was very picky. now im attracted to everything and everyone. so my putting the strongest filters doesn't help much when everyone i see on the street or in shul is a trigger.

I hope someone understands what i mean and that someone here as the experience to help out another struggler....

Thank youHi there! I don't have time for a long response, but there are 2 methods I know of that works...when you work it.

The first is frequently mentioned here. Training yourself to view them as people. Not (sex) objects. They are someone's sister, daughter or mother. They have feelings. Likes and dislikes. Problems and issues etc.

To illustrate this point. When I watch a TV show and it has an attractive woman in it, initially I am super attracted, but as I go through episodes and seasons and get to "know" them better, the intensity starts to diminish. I'm not saying it disappears, but knowing them as a person can influence an undiluted purely sexual view of the body. (Maybe that's one of the reasons why the excitement of a new partner fades...)

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Training yourself to see them as completely non-sexual beings, can change your brain's immediate sexualization of said people. Thanks Grant!

The first thing ive been trying and it works a little.

The 2nd thing i gotta try, it makes a lot of sense actually. its powerfull!

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by BeVeryStrong - 24 Jun 2021 10:37

Mazel Tov Willnevergiveup on 180! May you be zoche to many more and a clean life Bezras Hashem

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