

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 AnsheiZusha - 29 Apr 2020 20:26

You got this!

Please look at yourself as a whole, and not just at this struggle you have.

You're not just a guy who struggles with this. You're a ben-torah, a rebbe, a holy Jew, and a fantastic, growth-oriented person who happens to be struggling with this.

And even if you say you fail every two-three weeks, try to increase that as much as you can. If you can make that three-four weeks, and then four-five weeks, that will be an unbelievable accomplishment.

I believe in you with all of my heart and soul.

Let's do this, chevra! Rekindle the fire!

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 29 Apr 2020 21:18

At first the 90 day chart and counting consecutive days was inspiring. Not anymore. For me it just makes falling feel like failing. What I need is the opposite, I am finished with that feeling of failure.

For me falling isn't failing. My goal isn't not falling anymore. my goal is to be better then I was yesterday and tomorrow, to be better then today.

The 90 day chart is just an ego booster or buster for me. Don't get me wrong, I use the chart as a powerful tool but for me I need to put it into context with my general growth as I progress through my journey.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 30 Apr 2020 15:56

Today I am 11 days clean. I feel great!

I was tempted to say that my goal is to beat my last time or something like that then I caught myself.

My goal is just today.

Please Hashem help me with my struggles today and please help me with my relationships and with my *avodas hashem*.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by TheFighter99 - 01 May 2020 11:19

awesome! Just one day at a time. You can do this

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 05 May 2020 21:14

Hey everyone, 16 days clean B"H and so far so good.

I would like to share something I was thinking about regarding love and relationships. The *Torah* approach is that the root of the word love in Hebrew (????) is the word (??) to give. Learning to give and sacrifice for others is essential in order to have the ability to love someone.

Giving in order to receive a return and "loving" someone because of your personal benefit isn't love. That's called selfishness.

So why is giving such a big part of love? Some of the components of love are that we love someone who loves us and we love someone who gives us pleasure. Giving enables the other person to love us which in return causes us to love them because we sense their love for us. The only thing missing here is why this doesn't work in reality.

The answer is that we need to recognize what others do for us in order to love them. This is so important, to realize that someone loves us and to recognize what others do for us are vital.

Take some time and think about some of the things our parents and spouses and even *Hashem* do for us. Then ask yourself why? Why do they do them for us? For no reason other than that they love us! recognizing that others love us can really help us love them.

So in a nutshell, *Hakaras Hatov*, recognizing the good, is the way to receive love and thereby being able to love in return.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by DavidT - 05 May 2020 23:12

Just to add some sources to the post above:

Rav Hirsch, breshis 22:2 ??? ????? - ?????? ??, ??????? ??? ?????????? ???????, ??? ?????? ???????
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Rav Eliyahu Dessler (*Michtav Me'Eliyahu* volume 1, *Kuntres HaChesed*, pages 35-38.) explains, "Every positive emotion stems from **giving** and flows outward from us to others, whereas every negative emotion revolves around **taking** for selfish motives." Indeed, the root of the Hebrew word for ?????, love, is ??, to give. In other words, "**Giving leads to Love**

The Ibn Ezra says, *“Man lives to bestow love onto others and, in turn, longs to be loved”* (see *Devarim* 30:19). Nevertheless, love without constraints can result in a *disaster*, as it says, **“Love corrupts clear thinking”** (See *Rav Schwab on Chumash*, pages 327-329 and *Bereishis Rabbah* 55:8).

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 07 May 2020 21:33

I remember when my daughter learned how to walk. She kept on tripping and falling and then getting up again. I never got upset at her or angry at her for falling. I understood that in order for her to learn how to walk she just had to get back up.

When she fell I would cheer her on telling her to get back up and keep on walking. The entire experience was just special and never was I unhappy with her.

This experience taught me something about our relationship with Hashem. All he wants is for us to get back up and keep on walking and no matter how many times we fall, he is always cheering us on and saying "you can do this", and of course he is never upset or unhappy with us. Hashem will always love us and there is nothing we can do to change that.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 19 May 2020 05:59

Today I reached level 5! Huge accomplishment for me!

I am B"H doing very good so far however during my journey I am starting to struggle in other areas. This seems so strange to me because I would like to think that I am growing. What is even more strange is that it's almost like the better I am here the more lax I am everywhere else.

Is this part of it? Is this what just happens to us? Am I thinking to much?

I just want to be a good person, husband and father, is that why anything else is just a non factor? I feel like I am inspired on this journey mostly because by my family, they truly are the most important thing in my life. Does that mean that nothing else matters?

I feel like I have become so focused on my family that nothing else matters. Is that a bad thing?

On the one hand I want to tell myself just forget about it, you are growing and be proud of your accomplishments. On the other hand though I am really not happy about the rest of my day. I am just nervous that when I start working on other things it will stress me out, not that I am not stressed out already...

I don't want to work on something else only to lose this battle...

Which one is the Y"H?

I guess I am just confused, but it is really nice to write it down.

I would love to hear what you all think.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 19 May 2020 14:19

If everyone would be focused so much on their families that nothing else matters, I think Klal Yisroel would look even better than it does already! Wives and children desperately need totty/daddy's attention! It is extremely normal to replace the "addiction" with another one. BH you chose being addicted to your family... It may also be a result of realizing that you may have drifted away from your family when you were busy feeding the lust machine in your brain, and now you simply are making up for that. Enjoy your family tzaddik!

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by DavidT - 19 May 2020 17:40

Belief is a powerful driver of change. Repeat studies have shown that people have more success replacing addictions and entrenched bad habits than those who don't believe they can change.

Believing you can give up, allows you the space to plan how to give up, as you can focus your attention, energy and motivation away from the addiction itself to efforts to break and combat the addiction.

Change is possible. Humans are designed to adapt to change.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 21 May 2020 05:04

If I don't make myself happy, nothing will.

Just a thought that I had that is very relevant for me.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 24 May 2020 14:25

Here I am, 35 days clean B"H, and possibly the longest streak I have ever had (for sure since I started keeping track).

There is so much going on in my head, I don't know where to start.

As mentioned earlier, I am B"H doing fine in this struggle, but I am hurting everywhere else.

I did a lot of "I thought I was so and so..." "I thought I was the type who does this and that..." etc.

Everything that I have been working on in the last eight years all seem to be falling apart (okay not everything but it feels that way).

I am mixed up between feeling that I was lying to myself all this time about who I am, or that really I am lying to myself now about that as an excuse to give myself slack.

I feel that I am really rediscovering myself, but at the same time I really always had most of the knowledge, I just didn't know how to use it for anything real.

Were all my Yeshiva years a waste? After all they didn't get me to where I am today, or perhaps without them I would be who knows where...

Mussar never helped me in the past, but maybe when I learn more about life myself and relationships I will be able to actually understand what they mean.

I feel like a fraud, but maybe I was a fraud all this time (a learning one, gaining knowledge, davening and pretending to be holy) and only now I am seeing who I really am.

I know that I am a growing person and that I still am growing. I just want to know, is this a *Yeridah l'tzorech aliyah* or is it like the *Yidden* after *Kriyas Yam Suf* getting thrown into the desert.

On a different note, I heard a story about Rav Yeruchem Levovitz, that he was once walking with his talmidim when they passed a bank. Rav Yeruchem asked them, why do they put on a lock? For the professional thieves? For them, he said, a lock wouldn't help.

So, he said, it must be that the locks are for us, simple people. Were it not for the locks, we

would all fall to the temptation.

I think the analogy is self-explanatory.

There is more but I think I will save the rest for a different post.

Sorry about the ramble, just trying to get this stuff off my chest.

Looking forward to sharing more good news in the future.

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Re: Am I going to suffer for the rest of my life?
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 07 Jun 2020 12:54

Today, B"H, is a huge milestone for me on my journey. 49 days! Wow! Never in my life have I gotten to this point or even dreamed of it.

I am giving *Hodaah* to Hashem for bringing me to this point.

I also want to thank the many GYEers who have inspired me along the way.

Can't mention everyone but I really got chizuk from DavidT, HHM, Thefighter99, Jj123, iwillnevergiveup and of course singularity. The list goes on and on, every thoughtful post I read helps me get one step closer to my goal. Thank you to GYE for helping me get to this point.

Here are some thoughts and reflections on my journey so far.

I am an all or nothing type of guy, so for me the fear of failure can really hold me back from leaving my comfort zone. When something is powerful enough to get me to actually do something, and I don't live up to the high standard I have set for myself it causes me a lot of

disappointment.

I needed to learn that no one is perfect and that all that is expected of me is to try my best. This is not just from G-D but from anyone. If anyone expects from me (including myself) more than trying my best, then it's their problem if I don't, not mine (except when it's me, then it's a more sophisticated problem).

In nutshell learning that failure is an essential part of growing is an essential part of my growth.

On a similar note, not every time I fall does it mean that my system isn't working. I realized that it's a process and it takes time. I had that feeling that I was on the right track so even when I fall I know that as long as I stick to my program, I am on the right track. I don't have a perfect system, but I do know that if every day I focus on what I can do today and just today then I am more likely to have today.

There is no advice here, just my feelings now. If I were to give any advice (even though it's not my place as there are far greater and wiser people here) it would be this. #1. Is to know and understand that it's a process and that it takes time. We as pleasure seekers are trained to have instant gratification, so we might expect recovery to be the same way, but it's not. #2 There are many different things that work for many different people, you have to find what works for you and stick to it. You have to stick to something, anything, for a reasonable amount of time if you want to see any success. Falling isn't failing, it's part of the journey. You don't necessarily need a system overhaul every time you fall, sometimes you just need to take note and tweak something (sometimes you do need a system overhaul but not always).

All the emotional or *hashkafic* things really have to be experienced. I would read book after book and article after article and until I actually started allowing them into myself, they were just a whole bunch of useless information.

Anyway I really dislike long posts, so I will break it up a little.

Thanks

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

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 14 Jun 2020 19:36

Hey all, hope everyone is doing well.

In the last day or two some some little somethings started creeping in but with Hashem's help, I have been able to keep my head on straight.

I struggled a lot over Shabbos with overeating which I have been pretty successful at lately, so that made me feel a little anxious. Once I am anxious, Women start looking more attractive and old memories start resurfacing...

Today, while I was busy looking something up I decided to check if one of the loopholes that I closed was still closed (totally *l'shem shamayim* btw, I really just wanted to make sure my filter was working...).

Anyway, it wasn't.

With Hashem's help, I closed it without even a second look, and called the filter provider to close it.

Anyway, this is my official pat on the back!

I really hope to get back on track and not be tempted to start searching again. In the past when I would start searching, I would either find something, or make do without it, but either way would end with a fall.

I need to stay strong and remember all the things that I discovered on my journey. I need to remember that I really am not going to die if I deprive myself from masturbating.

That's the key for me. If when I die they tell me "you could have has this much more pleasure and you are a sucker because you didn't *chap arein*" it wont be the end of the world. When it's all over I wont have this huge mound of guilt for all the pleasure that I missed out on in this world.

So IY"H going to continue to share good news soon.

Wilnevergiveup

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