

Introducing myself

Posted by in_ardua_tendit - 16 Dec 2020 21:01

Hi everyone,

I wanted to take the time to introduce myself on the forum finally, though I've been off and on the GYE website since about August.

I have been struggling with porn and masturbation since about age 24, and I am 30 now. To be frank, it has been an issue in my life for much longer than that - since about age 11 or 12 - but I didn't really realize that it was a problem for me, and that I could not stop, until my early or mid-20s.

At times I have felt completely hopeless. But now I feel hopeful. At times that part of me which loves the addictive behavior loathes the idea of stopping. But right now the part of me that is not the addiction is hopeful. I have known great depths of suffering and despair...in a way which almost effaces the self. I am sure many others here have experienced these sorts of feelings, and this strange mode of being in the world. It is within our reach, though, to live fully and embrace the full scope of our humanity, rather than working to be numb to feelings and experiences, or to escape from life. This is a slow death-while-living.

I had a strong filter, which I cannot disable on my own, installed on my phone on Sunday (thanks to TAG and GenTech). This is not itself a solution, but I am hopeful it will be a strong supportive member, and help create some space in which for me to make progress and work on addressing underlying issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to share here, and thank you to the creators and supporters of GYE. I look forward to continuing to engage with the community here.

IAT

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by Zedj - 16 Dec 2020 21:15

Hey, welcome I.A.T

Thank you for sharing your story.

A filter on your phone will help alot, it doesn't make the yetzer hora go away though..
surprisingly he sticks around;)

Wishing you much success and Afreilechen Chanukah!

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by eved41 - 17 Dec 2020 00:05

A warm welcome, IAT!

I'm not one of the most experienced here, as you can see by the number of posts I've written, but I wanted to welcome you and encourage you that there is definitely hope. When I read some of the great success stories linked in one of Mark's threads, at: guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/265946-Free-Iust-Truck-Towing---see-page-1#265947, I saw that many guys here have been in pretty bad shape, and grew tremendously over time. It is possible, and we can do it, too.

I am sorry about your suffering, and I understand what it's like to try to escape from life by acting out. According to Dov, our real problem is Life, on Life's (Hashem's) terms. For the whole post, see here:

guardyoureyes.com/forum/4-On-the-Way-to-90-Days/124072-Dov-Quotes?limit=15&start=15#126355.

Stick around the forum. There's a lot to gain here.

I agree with Zedj about filters.

Much success, and have a lichtige rest of Chanukah!

eved41

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by OivedElokim - 17 Dec 2020 05:40

Welcome!

Make yourself at home here, and keep coming back. If you post you will be accountable and will find solutions, with HaShem's help.

All the best

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by starting - 17 Dec 2020 20:44

Welcome

You seem to have analysed your situation quite thoroughly. Just a comment which may help you guide your way of viewing this and to help you seal your decision.

What do you enjoy about these behaviours?

How does it make you feel during and after giving in?

How about when you overcame your desire, how do you feel then?

Do you achieve the pleasure/enjoyment/happiness you were aiming for when you indulge?

You say that you are now feeling hopeful. You implied that right now the part of you that is not the addiction (the real you? Your actual unadulterated will? Think about that) is giving you the strength to come here and break free.

Stick around, try out the methods that have been tried and proven here, work out what works best for you.

There is a way for you too.

Hatzlocho

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by starting - 21 Dec 2020 06:45

How are you doing?

Would love to get to know you!

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by YeshivaGuy - 31 Dec 2020 23:54

[starting wrote on 21 Dec 2020 06:45:](#)

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Would love to get to know you!

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by in_ardua_tendit - 01 Jan 2021 03:17

I'm doing okay! I worked out today for the first time in a long time, which felt great. And am trying to get back to tracking what I eat, which helps me to keep from gaining weight I don't want to, or eating just because I can.

That said, I struggle with finding myself giving in to temptation...even if the filter is strong, there are certain ways around it, or I can start finding material arousing that I wouldn't have sought out beforehand. So this is a somewhat constant issue.

I posted in the other forum room that I am challenging myself to ninety days, starting today. There were a lot of helpful comments there. One thing I want to do is journal consistently. I think this will help me to better understand what I am feeling and how that plays in with this struggle.

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 01 Jan 2021 12:28

If you post your journaling here, you will have the added benefit of the chevra responding with validation, chizuk, and advice. There also will be an element of accountability. Hatzlocha!

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by in_ardua_tendit - 27 Apr 2021 17:21

Hey everyone,

I want to add some to my introduction. You should know the full me. I was born in 1990. My mother converted to Judaism. I was raised initially in a Conservative shul that my dad's family was and remains very active in. I was raised to know I was Jewish. I took it very seriously even as a child. I also knew my mother's parents were Catholic and that was her family background. We went to their house for Christmas and Easter most years. My dad didn't come. They lived across town and I was very close with them and loved them very much.

When I was seven years old, my parents separated and ultimately divorced. The final trigger for the separation was that my mom didn't want us kids to be up so late at the Passover Seder that evening. My dad said too bad, or something like that. Of course there had been issues for years. Some of these were around religious conflict but many were not. My dad was out of work for three years, probably depressed, and a difficult person to be partnered to. My mom is also not always the easiest person. She has strong opinions and felt she could not get my dad to do anything for himself or his family's sake. I believe my mother took her conversion seriously and wanted her children to be Jewish. She never tried to undermine our upbringing but did want us to share in family holidays and occasions with our grandparents.

After the divorce my dad began to practice Orthodox Judaism and joined a modern orthodox shul next to our prior one. We (my sister and I) visited our dad every other weekend and he would take us out for dinner once a week. We also spent most Jewish holidays and then six weeks in the summer. I have to confess that I hated this much of the time. My mother moved to be closer to her parents - other side of the city - and I was very angry with my father whether this was fair or not. Angry that I had to be torn away from my mother and looking back angry about the whole situation. I even have class work from those first years including an assignment "write what your goals are" and one goal was to not visit my father.

At the same time I was exposed to a much higher level of religious observance (at my dad's we became shomer Shabbos and no longer ate out at restaurants - no kosher restaurants in our city - where before we kept kosher at home and would eat out but only order ostensibly kosher items etc.) - at the same time, my mom was exploring Christianity although we still observed some Jewish holidays at that time with her. But we didn't go to shul etc. So two very different households. We began to go to mass semi regularly with my mom and she eventually returned to Catholicism and was eventually confirmed in the Church. There was a time I wanted to grow up to be a Priest. To be honest I found much in common in terms of the style if not the form of the liturgy between catholic mass and synagogue. I don't think I was ever a "believer" in the divinity of Jesus but I learned catholic prayers, said the rosary sometimes, etc. I never accepted communion because I wasn't baptized or confirmed in the Church. At the same time I was going to synagogue with my dad twice a month and though no formal religious education was a voracious reader and would sometimes sit with the chumash reading the translation and commentary. I still have birchat hamazon memorized fully, etc etc. I still knew and believed I was Jewish.

Then the tricky part. One day my dad had me come up to dress the Torah. This was something I'd done at our old synagogue and at a retirement home chapel where my dad sometimes led Shabbat services. But this time on my way to the bimah someone said no - not rudely, but a firm he cannot do that. I was confused and embarrassed. My dad later explained it was because by their view I was not Jewish because the rabbi who did my mom's conversion was Conservative.

I pretended even to myself not to care but this hurt me a great deal. One reaction was a feeling of F U not to any individual but to the situation in general. I didn't ask to be orthodox and where most of my family went and by their standards I was Jewish as anyone else. Another reaction was self doubt. This came in much more as an adult. Who am I and what am I and what should I be doing. I resisted Christianity in part because of my Judaism. But was that all an illusion?

Now I am 30 nearly 31 years old and I am so confused not just about religion. Porn began to fill all the emotional voids in my life and to salve the hurt from my young teens. I've relied on it for so long. I have been in a relationship with a wonderful woman for almost five years and I feel like I should marry her but I also have so many doubts and so much confusion. I could say much more but should probably end here for now. Thank you in advance to anyone who reads this.

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Re: Introducing myself

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 27 Apr 2021 18:49

[in_ardua_tendit wrote on 27 Apr 2021 17:21:](#)

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Have you spoken to anyone (a Rabbi?) about any of this?

This sounds really complicated, I hope you can sort it all out. Sounds like you really went through a lot, I have no words.

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by in_ardua_tendit - 28 Apr 2021 01:01

It really just depends on who you talk to...

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by Lou - 28 Apr 2021 02:22

Hello and welcome back!

We on GYE are great for helpful tips,cheering each other on,and great advice here and there. However,after reading your post I respectfully recommend that in addition to coming here you seek a Rabbi and a therapist that can help you sort through the various complications that you mentioned.

We will still be here for the backup

Hatzlocha!

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by in_ardua_tendit - 29 Apr 2021 02:07

Thanks Lou, good advice and I have spoken with some Rabbis and do work with a therapist. Definitely not seeking answers here, just felt right to share about myself. I think it's not unrelated to why I am here.

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Re: Introducing myself
Posted by wilnevergiveup - 29 Apr 2021 04:42

[in_ardua_tendit wrote on 29 Apr 2021 02:07:](#)

Thanks Lou, good advice and I have spoken with some Rabbis and do work with a therapist. Definitely not seeking answers here, just felt right to share about myself. I think it's not unrelated to why I am here.

Thanks for clarifying, it was a little confusing from your first post, I misunderstood and thought you were seeking advice.

I am really happy that you are seeking the right guidance and wish you much clarity. I cannot possibly relate to what you went/are going through and I am happy that you shared that.

Yes Rabbis can be a confusing *parsha*. Because there are so many versions of "Judaism" you can get many different answers to the same question. I once heard from my Rav that when seeking a Rabbi, look for the someone who you respect and is respected by others, who feel you can connect with and who has the time to really understand you and remember to stick with just one.

Hatzlachah

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