

My journey

Posted by supremeone - 04 Aug 2021 15:35

Hi,

I joined several years ago but I never got to this point.

I am 26 years old and I have struggled with shmiras einayim since I was a boy of 11. But only recently have I gotten to a point where I do believe I understand myself.

I used to think the yetzer harah was a living thing, something separate from myself which inhabited me and made me watch what I did. To be fair this is how they teach you at a young age. I always thought there was something twisted and wrong with me.

I then went to yeshiva in israel and I thought this time I would beat it. But I didn't, and the guilt consumed me. Eventually I spoke with a rebbe who gave me some clarity and changed my perspective a little. He gave me enough tools to start really thinking about. Once I left yeshiva I had a moment of clarity, the yetzer harah is not a thing, it is me. It is my physical essence, it does not have conscious thought, it has only physical need.

But despite thus clarity I began to hate that physical part of myself. I thought it evil and disgusting. I had moments of success and then moments of failures but the deep misery was mostly abated.

Fast forward to 2020 a beautiful woman joined my work place, not religious but Jewish. She had some struggles and I helped her, I knew she wasn't for me but I still wanted to help her. Maybe for some selfish reason, maybe I was genuine. The result was I helped her and she has had some successes. We became friends.

We had a lot of conversations, she hated religion for various personal reasons which after hearing I couldn't really blame her. Our conversations were enjoyable and actually changed my perspective a little. But as time wore on I began to develop deep feelings for her, sexual and emotional. In a way she had the same for me. But all I could think was I loved Judaism, God

and my mother. The disrespect i would show all three by having a relationship with this woman would be tragic. So I kept my distance but we had a conversation about my feelings and hers. We both knew it shouldn't happen. Thankfully I have strong feelings against hook up culture which means I didn't ever want to just hook up. I wanted a relationship. I have a reason for mentioning this but I will digress first.

I began to watch a lot of lectures from someone I believe to be a righteous non Jew called Jordan Peterson. He spoke about Carl Jung and his theories of the shadow self, the self we repress. In 2021 I had a massive break through, I let my thoughts wonder and wrote out my feelings of guilt, anger and disgust (my shadow self) and found under all of it there was a simple need which I was repressing. I wanted a physical relationship. And there is nothing wrong with that. But I also want an intimate emotional relationship and above all I want a spiritual relationship. All of which are not just permitted in halacha, but emphasised as important.

So what keeps me from engaging in a hook up? The fact that for 15 years I have waited for all those physical firsts is amazing, and I can wait longer. I no longer feel shame or angry about that, it is one piece of a relationship to look forward to. Along with the challenges and conversations and all the other great things a marriage can bring.

Unfortunately I still have issues with pornography and shmiras habris. And I need some advice. The problem is more than being single, the problem is when I feel trapped or anxious these two things act as a comfort. Also when I see this woman I mention I feel tension and some resentment that I can never be with her. I do really like her as well as have some lust towards her. I refuse to feel guilty for being human as I do not think it helps, my sins will be atoned for in the right time. But how does one gain control over his physical desire with repressing it?

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Re: My journey
Posted by HappyYid - 04 Aug 2021 16:42

Hi! Welcome

I don't have much to say at the moment, I just wanted to welcome you here.

It's a great place to hang around. Please stick around and keep us updated.

Look around at other threads and see what might work for you. There is a lot here.

I wish you lots of luck!

HappyYid

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Re: My journey

Posted by FighterWithFire - 04 Aug 2021 16:53

First of all, congrats on posting. It's a huge step, and welcome to GYE.

Secondly, the fact that you have held off on having a physical relationship for 15 years is truly inspirational, and your attitude of "I've done it this long, I can do it longer" is amazing. (BTW, Jordan Peterson is absolutely terrific.)

I cannot tell you how much I relate to your post. I'm a 20 year old bochur in the States, and have been struggling with porn for 3 years. My story is here: guardyoureyes.com/forum/1-Break-Free/366231-I-want-a-girl-so-badly

Again, welcome to GYE, Hatzlacha with the fight, and may Hashem bentch you with finding your bashert soon!

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Re: My journey

Posted by Markz - 05 Aug 2021 02:27

[FighterWithFire wrote on 04 Aug 2021 16:53:](#)

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Re: My journey
Posted by Rt234 - 05 Aug 2021 07:35

LEarn As much Torah as you can!

That Is by far the best Way.

Torah is probably the most important peice Of this fight.

I Tried it all.

all the best!!

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Re: My journey

Posted by ColinColin - 05 Aug 2021 14:04

Welcome.

Great respect for you having the presence of mind to work on yourself and analyse what is happening to you.

From reading your post, I think your great immediate challenge is the woman at work.

What I write now will be hard to read...but I have experienced similar myself.

Do not feel guilty for having feelings for her, you have clearly grown close in a respectful way, no physical intimacy.

After all she is Jewish, so you have helped a fellow Jew with their problems.

But this situation will drain you every day of your life.

You have to decide...either it is a massive test on the way to your soul mate...or she is your soul mate?

I so, you would have to have a very serious discussion about what would happen if you did make the relationship official.

Would she be prepared to keep a Kosher home and Shabbat?

If you could join a Beit Knesset where you both felt comfortable and welcome, a community that suited you.

If not, then you have already answered that these are deal breakers for you....the very foundations of observance.

Then you have to be really tough...and find a new job, as seeing this woman on a daily basis is not possible...it will probably destroy you.

And it can hinder you from finding your Beshert.

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Re: My journey
Posted by supremeone - 05 Aug 2021 15:28

Hi FighterWithFire, thanks for the reply.

I actually have read your story and because of your story decided to write mine. You seem to be quite self aware and I really wish you hatzlacha on finding a wife.

(and yes Jordan Peterson is amazing, his second book was brilliant and actually helped me have my most recent break through)

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Re: My journey
Posted by supremeone - 05 Aug 2021 15:29

lol [t234](#), I am trying, I just got a new chavrusah. Wish me luck! Finding a chavrusah is like trying to find a wife!

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Re: My journey

Posted by supremeone - 05 Aug 2021 15:38

Thank you [ColinColin!](#)

We have had that conversation, she will not become religious and I will not be irreligious. This week we actually had a conversation and we decided we needed to keep distance.

I believe meeting her was a huge test which I overcame, it is funny because I used to think God would never test me this way because I was not strong enough.

Finding a new job is not that simple at this point, although I am looking.

As for hindering me from finding my bashert, I am not so sure. (at the moment my main)

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Re: My journey

Posted by Rt234 - 05 Aug 2021 18:43

Hatzlacha rabah!!

lol I hear that!

Keep it up never ever let up!!

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Re: My journey

Posted by supremeone - 06 Aug 2021 13:17

So confession time, I don't really want to stop.

Question is why.

Well the reason is because right now nothing is moving in my life. I am still at the same job, doing a retake of the same exam and living in the same country.

So what does that have to do with porn?

Well it is familiar, it provides a certain comfort and acts as a certain release of frustration.

Except it doesn't do any of those things in actuality, which I am aware of.

So why keep doing it? Well the answer to that is, why not? What is my reward for being shomer habris and shomer einaim? Why torture myself endlessly?

You could answer, for your future marriage! For the kedusha! God wants it!

And I will respond, what future marriage? The way I see things right now, I don't think I will be getting married, the obstacles are impossible. Kedusha? What kedusha? I can't hold it so how am I supposed to know what kind of reward it is? God wants it? Well what about what I want? I keep shabbos and kosher, I perform multiple halachos every day. My reward is suffering?

So that leads us to meaning, suffering has meaning. But I am tired of suffering, this entire year and a half has been suffering without relief. It's hard to see meaning when all I can see is suffering.

And yes, loads of people are suffering, there is always someone worse of than you etc. They aren't me so I will take a pass on that one.

So why stop?

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Re: My journey

Posted by Captain - 06 Aug 2021 15:57

No doubt there's a lot of pain of confusion, and that could be justified. Most of the ideas to stop that you brought up are ideas mentioned here, but they are just gimmicks- something for us to motivate ourselves with but not the real reason. And of course they have easy rebuttals.

So it's great that you are searching for your real reason, the reason that has true meaning to you. I pray that you will find it soon.

Just wanted to comment on the kedusha reason you mentioned. It seems to me that you're looking at it that "will I be kadosh." Or more accurately, will I be perfect. Because if I'm clean for 300 days and then I mess up, then I'm still not "kadosh". And surely with the more likely reality for the immediate future, that I will win some and lose some, maybe go a few days and then slip possibly. So it's a waste of time because I won't feel "kadosh" (or "frum" or "a good person" or fill in your choice here).

That's not the Torah's perspective though. It's not about "who you are" or "are you kadosh". Hashem put you in this world to make choices, each good one provides tremendous reward, is such a significant act that it brings benefit to the entire world, and ultimately forms your true identity as a "kadosh" even if you did not feel so holy in this world (so I wouldn't spend too much time thinking about this part right now). And this is a million times more true things that are difficult (like this). Each little effort will be way more valuable than can be imagined.

Of course hearing this one from an anonymous dude is not going to change your mental makeup. But if you're looking for some Torah sources on this matter that you can read and will slowly help you change perspective, check out the resources in your signature or PM me for more.

Hatzlocha

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Re: My journey
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 06 Aug 2021 16:46

Perhaps this can be an understanding of the Medrash:

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We can emulate Hashem's Kedusha, but not its perfection.

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Re: My journey
Posted by supremeone - 08 Aug 2021 13:42

[Captain wrote on 06 Aug 2021 15:57:](#)

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Hatzlocha

An interesting idea, thank you for sharing. I am gonna be thinking about that one for a while.

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Re: My journey
Posted by supremeone - 08 Aug 2021 14:11

So latest idea.

I have been thinking about watching, but you know what else I have been doing? Destroying my lip, my lips get dry and I begin to bite the skin off. I lay in bed on Friday night for probably an hour just doing that. (Yes I know it is probably a chillul shabbos, it is almost involuntary)

So is there a connection? Two self destructive habits. Yes there probably is a connection.

I am incredibly anxious, I have this audit exam to study for, I actually hate studying because of the stress.

So what do I do? Going to have to think about that.

But you know what I know? Porn is not an addiction, it is a symptom of something larger, an inability to process stress and pain.

But you might say, hang on, so why don't you quit? Well quitting is not the issue, if I am in a good mood and I feel fulfilled I can go weeks without any porn consumption. I have done it in the past. But when I am stressed I can have 4 or 5 sessions a day. To illustrate, I am addicted to coffee, how do i know? If I go a day without coffee I get an awful headache. That is withdrawal. I do not have withdrawal if I go a week without porn.

So not an addict. Just an every shlub who created a dependency when he was feeling blue since he was a teen.

And that teen did not know any better, as Gandalf says, he was a fool, but an honest fool he remains. I think I am too hard on my young self. He did his best. Maybe I am too hard on myself now.

To give up porn requires sacrifice, and the kavanah in a sacrifice is as important as the sacrifice itself. And it might be the kavanah which is the hardest part. I need to see why I rely on it so much.

(btw I know I am using this seemingly as a place of journaling, but feel free to comment.)

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