

The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 25 Mar 2022 14:02

WOW! Mi Keamcha Yisroel!

I've been hanging around here for a few weeks and I'm totally in awe at what's going on here. The battlefield of Klall Yisroel! I really find it hard to believe that for so many years I was struggling on my own when there was a whole world out there giving chizuk, tips and advice, fighting this battle together. So many of you have such profound insightful things to say! I'd like to tell my story, it's actually the first time I'm thinking of this aspect of my life as a story, and definitely the first time sharing it. I think writing it will be a help for me.

I'm 30 and I've been struggling for around 18 years. It started right from when I picked up the concepts of sexuality (actually from a classmate showing me a dictionary...). Throughout my teenage years in yeshiva I would be MZ"L frequently, at first feeling very guilty but as time went on those feelings faded. Although I never gave up the battle, I rarely managed to stay clean for more than a few weeks. I would fantasize quite a lot and had an irresistible pull to any inappropriate material (catalogues, radio music, books etc) I could get my hands on. During those years I didn't have any access to internet so didn't come across porn (other than when I was about 14 and I looked through a mag in a kiosk, until the storekeeper caught me and I ran for my life), but I for sure wouldn't have been able to withstand the burning desire that such an opportunity would trigger. May seem funny after what I just wrote, but I actually did very well in yeshiva; loved learning (I still do) and was considered a good bochur. Then got married and at first things were going good, for first two years of marriage I don't remember acting out at all. My pull to 'lower level' inappropriate material also lessened. But then the nissoyon of internet showed its ugly face and sent me flying, I was straight away onto porn. Although we never officially had unfiltered internet at home and even filtered only when my wife needed it for work, I found (or created) plenty of opportunities to access porn, and with time chat sites as well. That's where I'm holding now; it goes with tekufos. When I have a way of accessing the internet, I'm possessed by this ruach shtus that knows no limits or boundaries and walk around with this burning thumping chest bursting with lust... And when I have no access (like now, [I use a filtered internet suite]) I'm back to the person I want to be, focused on my learning and not acting out in any way and can easily forget that I have a problem. This past elul (!) I got a huge teiva to buy myself a portable wifi with the sole purpose of chatting to a girl who'd been spamming me (from a different internet tekufo). I can't describe the impossible internal fight that went on! I couldn't dream of doing it with Rosh Hashono 2 weeks away but the ruach shtus in me was absolutely desperate and was even secretly hoping that things would get more real than just online. I was dragged to the store (that's what it felt like) bought the device and kept it until 2 days before yom tov. Rosh hashono wasn't easy. But I got back to myself pretty quickly, until a few months ago when I realized a really easy way to get hold of an internet dongle, which triggered a powerful urge to get one, which I did, again after an internal battle (this time not as dramatic). I chucked it a few weeks later and was back to normal... until a few weeks ago when I realized the filter of the internet suite I use was totally down. Within 5 minutes I had downloaded porn onto a stick to view in private... And that's when I decided to look into GYE (I only learnt of its existence a few months ago from an ad I saw).

I don't know where or when the next nisoyon will pop up, but I know it will and also know I won't be able to withstand it, unless I do something about it now. But how can I fight a yetzer hora when it's not there? In my present matzav I have absolutely no desire for porn, think of it for what it is, empty trash that has absolutely nothing to offer me, but that's all meaningless once the ruach shtus takes over. (Of course I still have a YH and got plenty to work on, but I'm not overtaken with lust and busy with things I shouldn't be). I've sometimes held on to the internet instead of getting rid of it just to be able to resist and overcome it but it's a lost case. I've learnt from the GYE handbook that we shouldn't be fighting it head on, but I'm still not sure the right course of treatment for me.

Thank you for reading this far. It's amazing to be able to share all this with a non-judgmental growth orientated crowd that can relate to it all, only why didn't I hear of you earlier? I'm really hopeful of finally getting somewhere in this battle.

iwillmanage. B'ezras Hashem.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by bisyata dishmaya - 25 Mar 2022 14:20

Welcome!

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by Dave M - 25 Mar 2022 14:41

[iwillmanage wrote on 25 Mar 2022 14:02:](#)

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Welcome to GYE! Stick around here and start to develop connections with some of the veteran members here. When the Y'H rears its ugly head, reach out to these members to get chizuk to work through the difficult moments. Right now, things are clear, but it's just a matter of time, when you will be hit with another lust attack. The time to start fighting is now, when you're thinking clearly.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by david.e123 - 25 Mar 2022 14:42

Wow, what a story.

Welcome to this amazing site, there are a lot of wonderful people here that you can talk too and they WILL be able to help you IY"H.

Lots of hatzlacha.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by DavidT - 25 Mar 2022 14:52

Welcome to GYE!

The first thing you should do is realize that you've already done a great step in the right direction by reaching out for help, Hashem will surely help you get out of this..

You are NOT alone!

We are living in extremely challenging times and many people are suffering like you. At the same time many have also recovered and so will you with Hashem's help.

Here are a few things that can lift your spirits and give you a clearer perspective on these issues.

1- These shiurim are a great source of chizzuk and inspiration theshmuz.com/series/the-fight/

2- We suggest that you read this book guardyoureyes.com/ebooks/item/the-battle-of-the-generation

3- Review the great tools and recovery info in the GYE Handbook guardyoureyes.com/ebooks/item/gye-handbook

Also it's very important to CONNECT with someone in real life. The opposite of addiction is not sobriety - it's CONNECTION. Addiction thrives on isolation! Find someone that you can share your pain and struggles with. And finally, have someone who can cheer you on and celebrate your both big and small wins with you!

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by Vehkam - 25 Mar 2022 15:57

Thank you so much for coming here and sharing your story. The longer you stick around the more you will realize that everything you wrote is a problem shared by so many of us. I struggled for over 30 years and was never successful because I did not reach out to others and did not have a connection to someone who was helping me. I always thought I was strong enough to figure it out on my own. Slowly but surely I fell deeper into the yetzer hara's traps.

I want to address your question about how to fight this if right now you have no desire. The answer to this is that you have to be actively fighting this every day. Especially when you are not in the heat of the moment. The resolve and the motivation needs to be in place before you are tested. I personally read a chapter of the book the battle of the generation every night and I find that this is very helpful for my resolve.

There are many small changes that you can make in your life as part of your battle. If you are actively searching for inspiration in fighting this battle you will find many ideas here which you can apply to your own life. The more you are on the offensive against this the less likely it is that you will fall when you are tested.

Looking forward to being inspired by your growth.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by cordnoy - 25 Mar 2022 18:11

[Vehkam wrote on 25 Mar 2022 15:57:](#)

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There are many small changes that you can make in your life as part of your battle. If you are actively searching for inspiration in fighting this battle you will find many ideas here which you can apply to your own life. The more you are on the offensive against this the less likely it is that you will fall when you are tested.

Looking forward to being inspired by your growth.

Welcome! Sorry to hear about your challenges. While I agree with some of the above, I disagree with some as well. I bolded one portion. Sometimes when you view this a fight and a battlefield, you can get caught in the crossfires. Make a plan, take some steps, then breath. Then, move onward accordingly.

Godspeed to you

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by Vehkam - 25 Mar 2022 20:07

Perhaps we have a different understanding of what actively fighting means. In any case my statement was based on parts of chapters 34 and 35 in the book the battle of the generation. Of course you can disagree...

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by cordnoy - 27 Mar 2022 03:42

[Vehkam wrote on 25 Mar 2022 20:07:](#)

Perhaps we have a different understanding of what actively fighting means. In any case my statement was based on parts of chapters 34 and 35 in the book the battle of the generation. Of course you can disagree...

Yes I do, and that's ok.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by Avrohom - 27 Mar 2022 04:56

Welcome! Wow, what a story - sounds so similar to the epiphany I had in discovering GYE just a few months ago. You can read my story here: [Forum \(guardyoureyes.com\)](http://forum.guardyoureyes.com) I had thought I tried everything, was a great Bochor, then married and all the same couldn't shake this massive uncontrollable monster. Everyone's story is unique - but there are many tools and strategies available here that you may never have been aware of. (I certainly wasn't.) I think both Cordnoy and Vehkam have a point - and different things work for different people. Look around, see what might work for you, reach out to people, and IY"H you will find Hatzlocha.

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by iwillmanage - 28 Mar 2022 08:26

Thank you all for such a warm welcome. I really appreciate all the chizuk and advice.

In regards to Vehkam and Cordnoy's posts, I'm not really following the machlokus haposkim here. Correct me if I'm wrong but I understood Vehkam's advice of 'actively fighting every day' even when there's no desire and things are clear, to mean things like getting a daily chizuk from emails, shiurim..., posting on the forum (like V. himself does daily – thank you Vehkam, you're a true inspiration!!) and contemplating on correct attitudes and perspectives. Basically not being masiach daas from the topic and trying to preserve the freshness of the chizuk. Is it such things that Cordnoy is advising against? I find it hard to understand what could be wrong with that. (I can understand that someone who's constantly in the heat of lust should take it easy, step by step, instead of constant 'battling', but my question was how to fight the YH when the lust and desire isn't there.)

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Re: The story of my struggles

Posted by cordnoy - 28 Mar 2022 11:50

[iwillmanage wrote on 28 Mar 2022 08:26:](#)

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In regards to Vehkam and Cordnoy's posts, I'm not really following the machlokus haposkim here. Correct me if I'm wrong but I understood Vehkam's advice of 'actively fighting every day' even when there's no desire and things are clear, to mean things like getting a daily chizuk from emails, shiurim..., posting on the forum (like V. himself does daily – thank you Vehkam, you're a true inspiration!!) and contemplating on correct attitudes and perspectives. Basically not being masiach daas from the topic and trying to preserve the freshness of the chizuk. Is it such things that Cordnoy is advising against? I find it hard to understand what could be wrong with that. (I can understand that someone who's constantly in the heat of lust should take it easy, step by step, instead of constant 'battling', but my question was how to fight the YH when the lust and desire isn't there.)

Everyone needs to know himself; the more a person fights and concentrates and focuses on this issue, the bigger the challenge becomes. Precisely as you put it; if you will not be masiach daas from it, it will not be masiach daas from you. If you can handle that, go for it. Your question at the end: figure out where your pitfalls lie and plan accordingly.

Godspeed to you.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by Vehkam - 28 Mar 2022 12:30

I agree with cordnoy that having “the battle” on your mind too much can technically make the yetzer hara seem bigger. Those types of thoughts definitely need to be curbed at least for some people. On the other hand I do believe a growth focused program which includes a few minutes of chizuk every day is universally beneficial.

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by iwillmanage - 28 Mar 2022 18:49

[cordnoy wrote on 28 Mar 2022 11:50:](#)

the more a person fights and concentrates and focuses on this issue, the bigger the challenge becomes. Precisely as you put it; if you will not be masiach daas from it, it will not be masiach daas from you. If you can handle that, go for it. Your question at the end: figure out where your pitfalls lie and plan accordingly.

Get your point, thanks

Think my number one pitfall is a computer without a filter (even though no access). Plan on getting one in next few days bl"n. Should have been done long ago...

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Re: The story of my struggles
Posted by DavidT - 28 Mar 2022 19:29

Pushing sexual fantasies out of your mind won't work because it perpetuates the pink elephant problem. In other words, when you tell yourself not to think about pink elephants, you'll find that you only think about pink elephants! Research demonstrates that trying hard to suppress specific thoughts means that they're more likely to dominate your thinking.

So what can you do? The best way to deal with such thoughts and fantasies is to try to ignore them, tend to more important matters, or shift your focus to something else. This idea is known as hesech hadaas in Hebrew.

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