

Turning Point

Posted by palomino.roamer - 10 Aug 2022 02:26

Thank you for reading, first of all. It helps to be able to share and to *overcome*.

The **turning point** for me in this struggle was realizing that the Noahide mitzvah prohibiting "sexual immorality" *includes premarital sex*, not just for Jewish people but for ALL people. For a very long time I have not been able to defend my attempts to behave piously. My attempts failed partially because they were attached to non-Jewish lust-addiction 12-step support groups. Another reason that they failed was because I saw so many people, including non-Torah-observant Jews, participating in this behavior and even encouraging it, G-D FORBID, that seemed to otherwise lead prosperous, happy, successful, "normal" lives.

I used to take comfort in thinking that if I can't be Jewish, I can at least be Noahide. But then, is this what being Noahide looks like???

Once I realized that this is **completely unacceptable behavior**, I was strengthened in my desire to stop. So, now I am here, **B"H**. Now I can defend myself from the scorn of the scoffers, accusing me of retreating into "orthodoxy" as a way to hide my shame. I'm hoping that the ideological hurdle is the biggest one. The mind controls the heart and leads it to the right path. Now I just have to **change my habits**, and also **clean up my life**. I have very severe consequences of many decades of this bad behavior and general neglect.

I have no children, but perhaps this is a blessing. If I had attempted to raise them while I was struggling with this addiction, they might have grown to be as morally warped as I was. I might never raise children now, and I fear that this is the consequence of this bad behavior, and perhaps this can never be repaired. It makes me very sad, but I have no choice: I want to **never go back** to the behavior that has ultimately brought me nothing but sorrow.

I thought that I was doing the world a favor. I thought that this behavior was an "outlet" for lust, anger, greed and unhealthy ambitions. I thought that this was what self-control was in the modern era. Now I see that it is just idolatry in a new form. I cannot fix the world. I cannot be envious of people that appear to be successful despite their decadence. I cannot be resentful of other people that learned to control themselves sooner, or that never fell into this addiction in the first place. **I can only fix myself, here and now**.

Over the decades, I've seen people stumble and fall. Then the ones who looked happy were actually not, and they could not pick themselves up again and move on. Then I saw people who had committed very serious errors, but they survived, recovered and thrived. What was the difference? **TESHUVA, repentance.** They ***admitted that they had erred*** and ***resolved to change their behavior.*** They didn't make excuses or rationalize. They did the work to change.

I am grateful to you all for contributing and participating, and I encourage you to learn from my example and not make my mistakes. Even if I never do get to do certain mitzvahs in my life, I am grateful for the peace of mind that sobriety has brought me so far. I am also grateful to the many rabbis along the way that knew that *something* was wrong but didn't know exactly *what*. They didn't have the words and the tools to help at that time. **Better late than never.**

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