

My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 22 Sep 2022 01:20

Hello, Friends.

My name is iLoveHashem247. I am a married man with a supportive wife and three wonderful kids. Looking at my life from an outsider's perspective, you'd think I have it all. I own a renovated home on my own private road with lots of land, run my own business with which i support myself, am fortunate to be able to learn many more hours a week than i work, and am a popular and recognized member of my community - and I'm not yet 30 years old. But all this comes with a price tag - a lifelong struggle with addiction, mostly with marijuana and risky sexual encounters.

I had girlfriends in high school before becoming BT, and had shmirat habit challenges, like most teens. I struggled with SB and engaging in sexual activities at massage parlors but was able to be clean for at least 6 months before marriage. during my wife's pregnancy with our second child, i unfortunately reverted back to my pre-BT habit of recreational marijuana during the stress of a second pregnancy (the first one outside of the shana rishona "infatuation zone"), which in turn let down a rabbit hole of other issues... i had recently been visiting massage parlors, not for the sexual experience (i do not engage in any "happy endings" anymore, rather when i do succumb it is for the exhibitionism that i can indulge in without making a massive chillul Hashem). I am also very disappointed to admit that i had a sexual encounter with a shiksa who picked up a business card i had left at a restaurant i ate in, she sent me lewd photos and we met up one time (sept 12, '22) where she performed oral sex on me.

I am struggling to break out of these addictive patterns - i have recently filtered my home office desktop, my work laptop, and my smartphone i use to run my business (main issue was watching movies and free "live cams"). The crazy thing is that i am a person who has made such amazing changes in my life - in many ways, I am the kind of person i look up to and always wanted to become - but it is the sticky residue of my past life that I'm having such a hard time getting rid of.

I am sick of who I've secretly become and the double life i am living.

I want to be fair to myself, honest and equitable with my wife, and and terrified of the shame i will face when standing before my Creator on my day of judgement.

Well, that was deeply revealing and I have revealed to you, fellow strangers, that which i have not even revealed to my wife. To be fair though, i have been fully open with her regarding the guarding of eyes and marijuana addictions, but have never ever discussed the massage parlor or infidelity.

HELP!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ??? ????? ????? ??? - 22 Sep 2022 01:58

Welcome to GYE, iLoveHashem247. I hope you find your experience here as helpful as I have. You have shared your story. You are on the right track.

You will soon find out if you haven't already that you are not alone. Each and every story is unique and one struggle cannot truly be compared to another. However, there are so many overlaps between our stories.

You wrote, "I am the kind of person i look up to and always wanted to become." You are! Your struggle with indulging in your sexual desires is but one facet of the entire you. There is nothing wrong with you. You have only done some wrong things. And now you have become part of an anonymous online teshuva collective. What we achieve as individuals and collectively in this community is nothing short of pure *gadlus*. Welcome to the giants!

My suggestions to you are to be active on this forum, both posting regularly and reading other threads, and to connect with a GYE partner or mentor.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Sapy - 22 Sep 2022 02:06

Hi Fellow friend, and courageous baal Tshuva!

Welcome aboard! And thanks for you honest and open post!

There are many levels of addictive behaviors, and many great methods to work on them. I would suggest you read some of the forums here, to get comfortable with the different ideas, and situations, and find to where you relate most. (Read threw some old ones too)

I just wanna point out, that for most of us, this is a journey, and not a quick one time fix, so don't get discouraged from the bumps on the road, just keep your eyes on the goal, and ride the waves...

May Hashem help you find the right path for youself to sobriety and meaning.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 22 Sep 2022 02:06

that was such a nice message, thank you so much for the chizuk! I'm definitely ready to go all in - i've dabbled with gye in the past but there are so many lives besides for my own at stake at this point.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by future paltiel - 22 Sep 2022 03:11

Hi, welcome to GYE. To begin with, I have to admit I love your username. From what you have written it seems like you live up to it. BH you are in the right place. GYE has the necessary tools we need in order to break free. To open up and connect with others is, even before receiving advice a very important step.

I wish you lots of success.

Shana tova umetuka to all!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by Face the challenge - 22 Sep 2022 04:28

Hey,

wanted to wish you a big welcome to the team! Your post was amazing! It was easy to see in your words that you are an amazing person who is trying to get a good connection with hashem!!

I'm not married and I grew up 'frum' so i can't relate to some of the particular struggles that you have, but i definitely know in a general sense what you are going through. I've lived the 'double life' for far to long and now with the help of hashem and the gye family I'm managing to break through and you will definitely be able to break through too! The fact that you already filtered your devices, joined gye, and posted, shows that you have taken several major steps in the right direction. So, take a look around, see what there is to see and I hope that we all are gonna hear great things from you!!

All the best!!

-ftc

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 22 Sep 2022 11:00

Update - maybe i can make this into some sort of blog? Never done anything like this before. I spent a few hours scrolling through GYE last night, and my wife asked if maybe this would trigger me? I wasn't sure but i said probably not.

I'd like to add on to the story that although i was shomer habrit when i got married, my hashkafa and mindset toward sex was still pretty twisted. my wife is 100% a giver, even when it is not good for her, and i am the first man she was ever with - so for the entirety of shana rishona, we were "intimate" (although i believe the actual intimacy of it went out the window pretty fast) every day, sometimes multiple times a day.

This damaged her emotionally, since she thought she was protecting me from the dangers of the outside world but in reality i was just using her to indulge. fast forward 5 or 6 years, and we are now trying very hard to rebuild our intimacy and take down the emotional walls that she has put up around sex, in order to protect herself from the pain of what she went through in our first year.

anyway, i woke up this morning at the tail end of a wet dream, and BH instead of "Diving in" and finishing the dream with "a swim," i managed to cut it before it ended and wake up right away.

The first thing i did is hop on GYE and write about it. I hope that this is not becoming an outlet for me to replace my addictions that i broke off from (drugs, movies, news, etc), but only time will tell.

goodbye for now fellow anons.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by yechielmichel - 22 Sep 2022 13:55

Hi,

I would recommend you find someone in real life that can be supportive and speak to them.

Letting go of the burden of the secret is a huge deal. Shame dies when exposed to light. And

doing it anonymously isn't the same.

If you speak to the right person, it can be a big boost to overcoming challenges. Make sure it is someone who you trust, and can "handle" it.

You know how to make major life changes.

Think about what worked then, and where challenges come up for you now.

Set up gedarim and get busy with positive activities.

There are lots of good resources on here. The F2F program seems to be culmination of years of research and experience, plus tons of articles, people sharing their stories etc... Take advantage of those, however, I would not recommend spending a lot of time on the forum, as it can be just another drain and "addiction" as you correctly express your concerns. So set a time limit on it.

It also seems that you could benefit from experienced guidance in how to heal your intimacy with your wife.

Much success in your journey

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 22 Sep 2022 14:04

Yechiel Michel,

Thanks for the response. I had thought of these things, but the question is with whom do i discuss? Big rabbanim are not so easily accessible. I am scared to seek out someone in my circles who i can speak with about it because of the stigma. The best person i could think of speaking with is very open minded but we are not holding in the same place hashkafically on certain issues, but then again, is anyone the same as their fellow? I think not.

This friend once helped me when i had a very painful eardrum rupture, and gave me medical marijuana to ease the immediate pain - and discussed my addiction journey together with me and my wife. he doesn't judge and is actually in the medical field but i am so scared. what if he is not the right person to speak with? Then it is just awkward and my secret is held with someone else which is terrifying.

in the past when i had made major life changes, i left the place i was living in or changed my environment or people i associate with. I have shifted where and how much i work, which helped but there is a limit... i have so many more responsibilities now and cannot just dissappear.

also, re. experienced guidance on how to deal with intimacy with my wife - it was recommended to reach out to michelgelner@gmail.com. the last time i discussed such personal issues was when i was in outpatient rehab for marijuana in my early 20's before i got married. I spoke with Dr. wilansky of tempo group in woodmere and he really challenged me and helped me grow. but i live so far from him now... ahhh i feel like i want to go and grow and win but am stuck at a cross roads and don't know where to go.

I live in upstate NY (monsey area) if that helps.

feeling stuck - would appreciate on somehow getting direct and actionable advice on next steps!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by jackthejew - 22 Sep 2022 17:00

In my own journey, the experience of discussing these topics with the people I chose to trust was less painful and more healing than I'd thought it would be. Most of the Rabbonim, Rebbes, and Rabbis of our generation are (by necessity of the challenges of our Dor) more open and accepting regarding helping the masses of Frum, upstanding Jews who struggle with P&M than the popular preception.

@michelgelner@gmail.com, otherwise known to this forum as Hashemhelpme or HHM, has helped many people (myself included) in all things related to this fight, not just by helping resolve intimacy questions for married people but also providing invaluable advice, perspective, encouragement, and sometimes incentives to us bochurim.

In regards to how a sex addiction can impact intimate relationship, please check out this audio from Dov, one of the premier members of this forum: guardyoureyes.com/GYEFiles/MP3s/Dov/Dov's%20Recovery%20Talks/Lust%20kills%20love...why.mp3

Hatzlacha!

(That obligatory disclaimer: I am not married, and I'm FFB, so I'm not saying any of my experiences or ideas may work for you. Not necessarily valid in Nauru. Void where prohibited Restrictions may apply)

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 23 Sep 2022 02:21

Update

WOW what a warm, generous, supportive community!

I have been doing lots of reading, thinking, and thinking some more. I've discussed some of the interesting concepts with my wife and feel like we are on the cusp of a relationship revolution. I had my first "chattan shmooz" ever tonight, after more than half a decade of being married.

wow. we have all been missing out on such amazing relationship potential. Lots of hard work ahead, but i'm ready to rock! Who is joining me?

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 28 Sep 2022 02:10

Shana tova!

I had an experience over yom tov that I'd like to share.

I was walking to shul early in the morning, beautiful cold air, was enjoying the weather when all of a sudden as i emerge from my driveway a very... shapely... frum looking woman crosses in front of me.

she was dressed covered to her wrists and ankles, but not much was left to the imagination. I tried to keep far behind and look down but at a certain point was transfixed.... there is a point halfway on my walk to shul where most people walk straight ahead but there is a shortcut that i take on the side and i was asking Hashem, "please let her continue straight!" but of course, she took the shortcut.

I waited for her to continue further before i started walking down but i guess she was walking slow and i came out of the path right behind her.

I thought to myself, is this how I am going into davening on rosh hashana??!?

so i pulled my eyes away, and cut through a backyard and walked through a stream (on stepping stones not in the actual water) in order to avoid continuing to look.

When walking into shul, I was thinking that it was a failure that I walked behind and watched her for so long, but then told myself, "no, it was really a win because you managed to pull away and gave up the remaining 5-10 minute walk behind that woman for Hashem!" After that i had a really special davening.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Sapy - 28 Sep 2022 02:16

Beautiful! What a nice way to start the year!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by YeshivaGuy - 28 Sep 2022 08:17

Ur a Tzadik.

Thanks for sharing!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by FighterWithFire - 28 Sep 2022 13:35

@iLoveHashem247-you're an incredible warrior. Your recognition of what you've been through and the grit you show in your posts to fight through it is amazing. Keep fighting, and remember, GYE is here for you and with you every step of the way! (I would also recommend talking to Hashem Help Me, otherwise known as HHM [michelgelner@gmail.com]-I was also very hesitant to admit the graphic details of my struggle, but he has been an instrumental force in my road to recovery.)

Hatzlacha!

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