

My Story, Being Honest For OncePosted 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 habrit 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 habbit 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 tha tl 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 iLoveHashem247 - 30 Sep 2022 02:48

Update & responses:

first of all, wow thank you all for the kind words and support! I never really thought of myself as a warrior, just have tried to figure out what needs to get done and just do it. I was telling a friend of mine regarding giving tzeddakah beyond your comfort zone that we have to serve Hashem with all of our middot - including (maybe especially) those with which we rebelled in the past. So when i understand what the right thing to do is, i turn my brain off and just do what needs to get done. Then, when i let the thoughts back in, the deed is already done. I've used this middah in) gone to massage parlors while my wife was exhausted and the kids missing their abba.

anyway, for the update, may Hashem bless HHM many times over for his friendship and guidance. He's encouraged me to check in with him daily, and to call when struggling. So instead of turning off my brain and falling down a rabbit hole of bad decisions, he helps me take a moment to be mindful of my situation and recognize the feelings for what they are... and then move on.

I had been working of focusing more on my wife before joining GYE about a week and a half ago, but didn't really know where/what exactly to focus my efforts. In just a few short days HHM has helped me turn the focus on my wife, and she has shown an excitement and passion in life in general and also toward intimacy in particular that i have not seen in several years...

instead of playing the blame game and focusing on what she could be doing better, i am just trying to think of her constantly, calling her when i am having trouble with shmirat enayim, filling and running the dishwasher when the sink is full, etc..

Also, since filtering my work smartphone (my regular cell is a light phone - amazing device), i have been feeling withdrawal symptoms from the lack of videos/movies/live cams/news... TorahAnytime.com has been a big help!

side note - I stumbled upon a random shiur on the halachot of women shaving their heads. Seems like this is more of a chassidishe minhag, shaving the head three days before the mivkeh. This is super interesting and I always wondered, what's with the head shaving? do they shave it all the way down like with a razor? who does the shaving? Would love some more

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Chessesd1 - 30 Sep 2022 04:00

How were you able to stop going to massage parlors??

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Geshmak! - 30 Sep 2022 05:01

Hi! I'm a proud chasidishah guy here.

I don't know what ur so amazed abt. But if you want to know it's not a big deal... my wife just shaves down to the bottom by herself... it wasn't easy for her in the beginning but now she got background info from a chasidish married guy on this topic used to doing it once in a while and she knows it's the right thing and it brings much Bruchah and kidushah to my home so she does it happily! Hope I helped you with ur wonders...

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by excellence - 30 Sep 2022 12:15

@ilovehashem247,

Amazing, a relief for me to hear about your progress. well done!

looking forward to many more positive posts.

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Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 30 Sep 2022 12:43

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To answer your question though, **it's really hard**. What helps is to identify my triggers and to work on being mindful when i am stressed. For example i know there are only two days in a week when i have the "freedom of schedule" to go there. I make sure to learn a little longer those mornings and go to work later so that i do not have the extra hour in my day available. I also spoke about it with Hashem Help Me (one of the hardest things i ever did was verbally

admit this deepest secret to someone) and he advised me to set up a knas system (admittedly have not yet taken the time to write it down yet) for going to a street with such a place, googling such a place, and going to such a place. What's hard is that i found a place that does massage only (without trying to push "extra services") but with the touch i had enjoyed. I went there once, then two months later, then a month later, and then it reached the point where i went twice in a week, and i said enough is enough this is starting to ruin my marriage! Or maybe it was already ruining it for a long time but i was only starting to realize, kind of like the idea of "if i can smell my B.O. today, then someone else was already able to smell it yesterday."

it's been a week and a half since i last went, but Rosh Hashana in the middle helped stretch it out. I believe that a month or two down the line is when i will start seeing if this newfound inner strength is really going to hold up.

Another thing is that i have been pretty honest with my wife about my struggles, and i can't hide any more secrets from her. As hard as it was, being open with her about marijuana use was a big help because when i felt that i needed an escape and was on the brink of going to a place i could buy from, i can call her and she can help me identify my feelings and talk me down enough to make the turn to go home instead of drug shopping. **Again, mindfulness is the key concept here.** If this massage parlor stuff happens again i would need to tell her, and the thought of what it would do to her is devastating. My wife is such a kind, happy, gentle, loving, giving person - if she knew i was doing that, it would be such a deep insult to her, especially since i am the first man she was ever with and she has allowed herself to be so open and vulnerable with me in that part of her life.

I have considered how the consequences of going again outweigh the "benefits" of going. But when i am in a state of yish and depression and stress, the thinking part of my brain isn't really working. So once i start feeling down i try to talk it out with someone close to me who can help me recognize how i am feeling and why. Most of the time the issue is not such a big deal, and is something that will pass. Most recently, my accountant mistakenly paid quarterly sales tax with an extra digit - that's a big difference! I was able to talk myself down and then with some digging realized that i can apply for a refund and get the money back in about a month. And Hashem knows, maybe in a month i will be strapped for cash and need that exact amount of money... time will tell. Either way, going to a massage parlor won't get my money back any faster (and to be honest with myself will probably be damaging for my parnassah as well by damaging my kedusha and zechuyot).

I beg Hashem daily to give me the strength to overcome my challenges and ta'avot because without Him, I am a lost cause. Just like Hashem is the one allowing me to understand my learning, just like He sends me customers and decides how much they will spend, so too He gives me the strength to overcome my challenges... ?? ??? ????? ?? ?? ????? ??? ????? ??? ??

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But i do not let myself become complacent. I fight every day because i know once i stop fighting back, i am lost... there are too many people depending on me in order for that to happen. And regardless of whether people know my deeds behind closed doors or not, they know when something is not right.

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knas - i'm not sure.

if you go again, you'll tell her - that may be because she is safe and she will have pity.

ultimately, what are you doing to change?

i've asked myself that question many times.

meetings, reading books, being sponsored by a mentor, consistent calls with others as a group, mussar, program - those are some of the things that helped me - they get to the core; am i cured? no.

as an aside, and with the greatest deference to HHM, massage parlors cost money - let's set the scenario: you pay \$150 an hour + \$100 for extra services, then add \$72 for the knas. if i'd present to you a different address where the girls are 7+, speak in 5 languages, dress with exquisite lingerie and will cost \$360 for 75 minutes, would you take it? [the knas can be a way to justify the past hour; the \$ makes no difference.] just thinking aloud.

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I think the question should be *AM I completely cured **yet**?* Maybe, maybe not. Nevertheless, with all the efforts menttionned above it would be impossible thato you are not in the process of being cured. It's ok if you can not notice it yet. If you keep it up others might notice it first and one day you'll look at your life and say "wow! Is that me?? I can't believe where I got to. Why didn't I do this earlier??"

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 30 Sep 2022 15:46

[Trouble wrote on 30 Sep 2022 14:34:](#)

[iLoveHashem247 wrote on 30 Sep 2022 12:43:](#)

[Chessesd1 wrote on 30 Sep 2022 04:00:](#)

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One thing i can tell you is that i have long ago set a boundry that i 100% absolutely refuse to be motzi zera in such a place. Even when i do fall and let myself go to these places, MZ'L is a line i simply cannot cross because then turning back is going to be much MUCH **MUCH** harder. I fell in that test just once, before getting married, and i felt like i was the one being used. And

ultimately i really was. When i've gone there in recent years it was for a "soft touch" where they basically give you chills for whatever amount of time you're there.

I actually had a conversation with one of these women and asked her how she feels about doing what she does. She was honest with me and told me that she does not enjoy it and she does not want to be doing it but she has no work papers, is not a legal citizen, and this is how she is able to make the most money. So yes, we are the ones being used. They like Jews because Jews spend money.

Even when doing an avera I try to minimize the pleasure of the avera and not allow my self to be in a fantasy land. I focus on being mindful and try not to lose myself and float away in a cloud of experience. I force myself to remember that i am laying butt naked on a table, with some strange woman touching my back (who does not want to be doing this), while my family is waiting for the moment i will come hoe to hug everyone and give them attention. Try enjoying a massage with that in mind... it helps stay far away for longer.

I recently had a big win actually, i was in one of these places and it was a younger pretty woman who was doing the service, and after about 10-15 min she wanted to "fully finish the job" - i almost fell, and it got me so scared that I told her "no way," threw my clothes on and just ran for my life.

But then i just ended up going somewhere else more "toned down" the next week because i let my ga'ava swell up after that "half win"

I think the biggest thing is to try to shift the focus of the passions - for example i have such a special family, why am i running away from being there from my wife and kids? they love me, and want me in their lives! I am still trying to figure out why i am running away from a life that so many people wish they had... people begging Hashem for children, people begging Hashem for a wife, people begging Hashem for the free time to learn more, people begging Hashem for a safe and cozy place to live... Why am I running away from this? I try to focus on what i have and not take it for granted, and i think a big breakthrough will be when i figure out what am i running away from? *(if anyone can help me figure out the answer to this I will be eternally grateful)*

I don't think that the goal is to look for a "cure" for our struggles. Hashem gave us these tests

because we are here to work on this middah of addictive personality. But the big test is to figure out why? what can we do with this trait? The answer i have come up with thus far is that if Hashem knows what is best for us, and He gives us all that we have in life, it must follow that we have an obligation to use those powerful and dominating character traits in the way that we can accomplish greatness with them. So if you are like me and have ADHD, use that ability to perceive nuanced details to zoom in and penetrate the depths when learning, use it to see into another person's eyes and perceive how they are feeling and maybe give them the kind word that they need to hear. if your mind is like a floodlight going in all directions, use your other traits such as stubbornness to narrow that beam and make the mind a powerful laser. for example, i saw a guy outside of shul today holding a lit cigarette in one hand and an unlit one in the other hand. I thought it was strange and interesting so i asked him why is he doing that? He told me that he used to hold a lit cigarette in one hand and a full pack in the other, and he is trying to work his way down. WOW! We celebrated that win with a big smile and handshake. it's all about the little wins but then again, the real struggle is shifting the mindset and focusing on our goals (which i have yet to fully clarify for myself...)

What are your thoughts on this?

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15 / 20

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But then i just ended up going somewhere else more "toned down" the next week because i let my ga'ava swell up after that "half win"

I think the biggest thing is to try to shift the focus of the passions - for example i have such a special family, why am i running away from being there from my wife and kids? they love me, and want me in their lives! I am still trying to figure out why i am running away from a life that so many people wish they had... people begging Hashem for children, people begging Hashem for a wife, people begging Hashem for the free time to learn more, people begging Hashem for a safe and cozy place to live... Why am I running away from this? I try to focus on what i have and not take it for granted, and i think a big breakthrough will be when i figure out what am i running away from? *(if anyone can help me figure out the answer to this I will be eternally grateful)*

I don't think that the goal is to look for a "cure" for our struggles. Hashem gave us these tests because we are here to work on this middah of addictive personality. But the big test is to figure out why? what can we do with this trait? The answer i have come up with thus far is that if Hashem knows what is best for us, and He gives us all that we have in life, it must follow that we have an obligation to use those powerful and dominating character traits in the way that we can accomplish greatness with them. So if you are like me and have ADHD, use that ability to perceive nuanced details to zoom in and penetrate the depths when learning, use it to see into another person's eyes and perceive how they are feeling and maybe give them the kind word that they need to hear. if your mind is like a floodlight going in all directions, use your other traits such as stubbornness to narrow that beam and make the mind a powerful laser. for example, i saw a guy outside of shul today holding a lit cigarette in one hand and an unlit one in the other hand. I thought it was strange and interesting so i asked him why is he doing that? He told me that he used to hold a lit cigarette in one hand and a full pack in the other, and he is trying to work his way down. WOW! We celebrated that win with a big smile and handshake. it's all about the little wins but then again, the real struggle is shifting the mindset and focusing on our goals (which i have yet to fully clarify for myself...)

What are your thoughts on this?

sorry; i disagree with most of this, and my hunch is that you will escalate to levels beyond where you currently are. not a prediction, but a sense. please excuse my bluntness; that's the way i rumble. your red lines are cones, not goalposts (even though the expression says that those posts can be moved as well). this thought business that you are doing a noble deed by easing your stress laying naked while some fat girl who doesn't wanna be there, but she's strapped for cash - it's all a way of justifying and downgrading what it is you're doing - and here i'm gonna speak to myself as well - what you/i should be thinking about is: hineni muchan umezuman that i will be cheating on my wife now.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Chessesd1 - 30 Sep 2022 16:24

I sometimes was able to push my self not to go or I turned back as soon as I got there, but so many times I just can't hold my self back.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 30 Sep 2022 17:53

so please help clarify what should be done?

i do not think it is a noble deed, in fact the point was that i have found that being mindful of the grossness of the situation helps prevent more frequent relapses.

Any advice on how to fortify the resolve is welcome and appreciated!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Vehkam - 30 Sep 2022 20:42

"so please help clarify what should be done?"

i do not think it is a noble deed, in fact the point was that i have found that being mindful of the grossness of the situation helps prevent more frequent relapses.

Any advice on how to fortify the resolve is welcome and appreciated!"

a good sex addiction therapist should be able to help....

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by Dov - 30 Sep 2022 21:03

Hi chaver! I looked through this thread for a funny reason: as a moderator, a complaint about it was sent to me. The complaining party felt your original post was too dirty and inappropriate for frum site. Needless to say, the cereal and milk I was eating at the time almost flew out of my nose as I almost burst out laughing. What else are we here for **but** being honest about some pretty yucky behaviors?! I know a couple of hundred people who are clean today, some for many years already, because they started opening up right here on GYE and were guided to the right help...and took it.

So I was very happy to read your post and the ones after it. They have a ring of openness and honesty that helps us all do the same.

?I have had the pleasure of involvement in GYE and speaking with many members weekly, for almost 15 years, bH. It helps me in many ways and it's so beautiful to do what I can to help people a lot like me figure out what their next best move might be. You can PM me anytime you like or email me at wequithiding@gmail.com if you wish.

Whatever you decide to do, you have my friendship and tefilos!

Dov

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by frank.lee - 01 Oct 2022 23:20

You're asking why you (used to) keep going back to these places. It sounds to me like an addiction, something your body and mind is wired to do from past behavior. Not something rational, like you are subconsciously running away from something.

I am not a therapist but as Vehkam mentioned, you should definitely consider one, to assist you with tools to rewire your head and body, and help you be the best person you can be, and you want to be!

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