

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 - 22 Feb 2023 03:44

Markz, thank you for your kind words but please remember that I'm just a regular guy, just like you. Maybe I even sit next to you in Shul.... And how do I do it? A day at a time. Sometimes just a few minutes at a time on a hard day. And not always successful, my eyes might wander but I have the highest level filters (anything I needed that was blocked I either got access or figured it out with my brain) and if I have a slip, I move on immediately.

Eerie, thank you for the kind words. In all honesty, I just wanted a ton of mozzarella sticks and gnocchi and if I didn't share with someone that would be gluttonous. At least this way I had a rationalization :p

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Yosef Hamevakesh - 22 Feb 2023 11:35

@ILH You're a huge inspiration! You have an iron will, and it's something that all of us are amazed by and want to emulate. Keep on showing us what it means to fight for holiness!!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 23 Feb 2023 13:03

Gentlemen, BH the storm has passed.

I shared a general idea that j was struggling very much and how I overcame (very generally) w my wife and she was very proud.

yesterday she told me that she feels very safe with me.

last night I wanted and she wasn't feeling it, but said I can try to get her to that mood - it didn't work and after a minute or two I said it's ok let's try a different time. She really appreciated that, and I felt like we accomplished feeling closeness davka by not being physical but rather mutually and happily agreeing to try a different time.

TYH

p.s. my Rav gave me a psak that I should stop learning till 1pm every day and focus on building my assets. I have been working very hard JM developing my current project and BH am accomplishing things I had been pushing off. Set up a 30 min chavruta with my neighbor in the mornings - goal is 6am before Daven if still working my way down to those hours - and I carry a pocket sized chok leylisrael with me and try to learn each day's portion by the end of the day.

really pushing myself to succeed and although I'm learning less, I'm also running away from life less and have been less fearful of taking risks and pitching my business as well as my wife's startup (which I'm basically starting up and she is providing the professional services).

feeling empowered.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ytw - 23 Feb 2023 16:06

amazing, you are such a HUGE hero,

regarding learning, I wanted to share a thought I had, when the Mishne says "??? ??? ?????? ????? ??? ??????" it can also mean that it's better to learn less (of course after discussing daas torah) mindfully, than learning more without the right mindset. It's the quality that counts more than the quantity...

keep up your amazing heroic work, and keep on inspiring the nation. ????? ???? ??? ?????????? ?????? love you and need you.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 23 Feb 2023 21:45

I had a thought. One of the main lessons my parents taught me from a young age is never give up and also that I am special.

The result of this is that as an adult, even though sometimes I am feeling bad about myself, or in the dumps, in general, I love myself, and think highly of myself.

I don't like speaking about myself in front of others in this way, but it seems like it gives people a lot of strength to see what I write so hopefully this will too. one thing I know is that I have a very strong willpower, and when I am determined to do some thing, one way or another, I will do it. This attitude of self-love and self admiration is the one that I have whatever I am accomplishing great things.

During periods of my life in which I have seen many failures, my attitude towards myself has been opposite. The negativity has not helped me, and more often than that hinders me in coming up with ideas on how to succeed, and to overcome whatever challenge I am facing.

At the same time, I always try to recognize and build relationships with people who are greater than me in the areas I want to improve in. I try to remind myself often that the trait of arrogance

should be completely avoided, and eradicated and humility is the ideal. To look at people and see what I can learn from them. And when I forgot to think this way,, my wife reminds me very quickly!

Bottom line, I think that we tend to focus too much on the minutes and seconds of the slip up instead of recognizing the days and weeks and months and even years of success. Recognizing all of the amazing things that we have accomplished is something that will greatly raise our own self-esteem in our eyes.

Even somebody who slips up daily, or even multiple times a day, how many hours of the day are you not slipping? At least 80%!

We are all people who want to do the right thing, we want to be close to our Creator, and we want to do His will. Why focus on the negative?

a breslover once explain to me, that it could very well be that the depression that comes after a fall is more damaging than the fall itself. It is to be avoided by all means.

hope this gives someone chizuk and ty for reading my slightly snobby post.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 23 Feb 2023 22:48

Continuation of the thought above:

so how did I end up addicted to marijuana and hooked on sexual escapades? I think it's a result of a mixed blessing. Although my parents made an effort not to spoil us, my siblings and I were very pampered. Vacations around the world - Florida, London, Aruba, Israel, etc. and the "best Jewish education that money can buy." My parents paid millions for the combined education of myself and my siblings.

practically speaking, this exposed us to many things. We became very worldly with all the fancy camps, exotic tours, and hotel excursions.

although the concept was nice, what ended up happening is that I was exposed to many things that were not good for me. Going to hotels meant ogling girls at the pool and trying to “hook up.” Pesach in Florida meant visiting the local massage places / brothels. Vacationing in eilat meant underage drinking, going to exclusive day camps meant sharing cigarettes with strange girls after lights out. Being a part of the group of students aspiring to Harvard, Colombia, and yale meant smoking joints on weekends to wind down from the hectic and overloaded school week.

I was given everything... except a sex education and tools to increase my resilience.

I learned about sex from classmates, porn, and first hand experiments with girls in high school. Those parties at teenager’s home when the parents were out of town and the hookah bars - opportunities to pick a mate and practice being selfish.

I didn’t even know there was a concept of shmirat habrit until I went to Israel for a few years instead of going to some fancy shamancy gehennom college.

if I ever felt any emotional pain whatsoever, I couldn’t ask my father for help because he usually just told me to be a man and tough it out. My mother was too busy doing Chessed for others to notice anything about me other than my academic strides and struggles, and when the iPhone came out, a big part of my relationship with my parents died because they (especially mother) we’re too busy with their phones to notice ME.

don’t get me wrong, they are warm and loving parents, supportive and caring about my success but the definitions of success I was built up toward were ultimately not the ingredients to create an emotional successful and happy person.

We started keeping Shabbat when I was in grade school, but only when I “flipped out” did the family really start to get more frum.

that's all I can write for now, more later.

But main idea is that a skilled and secular educated person might not necessarily have the resilience to face difficulties and failures in life and can turn to other outlets for the good feeling and resilience to overcome.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 26 Feb 2023 05:26

Continuation:

my years in Israel were transformative. The first thing I did was read biographies on every big Rabbi that I could find a book on. I figured if I'm going to live my life according to what these people are saying then with all due respect, who were they that I should listen to them? As I read through different biographies, the common thread was that these were all people who made an effort to perfect themselves. Many, if not most of them overcame tremendous adversity.

especially striking was Akiva, who went from working as the manager of a multi billionaire's assets, to his estranged and impoverished son in law, who had the humility to listen to the encouragement of his wife and start learning from the bottom up. sitting in preschool learning Alef bet with little kids and with that same grit and humility rising to become one of the most meaningful and impactful men who ever lived on this earth. Rebbe Akiva is one of my greatest role models and inspirations... but I still couldn't figure out why I was having such a hard time dealing with challenges.

maybe it was the fact that I had always excelled effortlessly - I had been handed all kinds of opportunities; I was a natural sailor, crafty builder, too smart for school - never studied and always aced everything. But I was stumped when it came to seriously learning Torah the first time. I was in Shiurim taught by true gedolim... and I simply did not understand. The words made sense individually but for the first time in my life I had to actually work hard to understand and excel at something. I didn't really know what to do with that.

the week before yeshiva I went to a bar on ben Yehuda street with some guys I knew and essentially cheated on my former GF who was still living in the USA (she was a year or two younger). I didn't tell her, and waited until she eventually called me crying and guiltily admitting that she "hooked up" with someone else. I thanked Gd and broke off that relationship. But why didn't I have the guts to tell her what I did? It's not like we were going to get married. It was purely a selfish relationship. Fortunately, even in high school I was not much of a "party guy." I went to less than a handful of big parties and nightclubs. They were really dumb and kind of gross. One thing that really infuriated me down the line is one of the only house parties I went to, where you could smell the drugs three blocks away. When I walked into the house the parents were sitting calmly in the living room like it was normal to host a teenage drug and s*x festival in their own house. They weren't stupid people and I really hope they get a chance to do Teshuva before they day. Only Hashem knows how many pure Jewish souls they helped to destroy. So many of my classmates "married" shiksas. And these parents could have helped to do something to stop it.

Besides the horrible chinuch taking place all around me (I really must give credit to my parents - they h didn't know what they were doing raising us as baalei Teshuva, especially at the start of the process, but they ALWAYS made their best effort to instill morals and values in me and my siblings. My extended family is now in a much better place now BH and it is all due to my parents' courage to challenge their reality until that point), one of the things that still boggles me to this day is why would not one and not two girls choose to do things to me that would cause them no positive physical benefits and was 100% me taking from them.

I struggled to understand the picture that was forming before my eyes.

fortunately for me, I was too scared to buy drugs from Arabs, and not "clique-y" enough to get drugs from the cool American boys so my years in Israel were drug free.

I spent a few years intensively working on my middle and trying to build the foundations on which I would become a ben Torah in the future. I reshaped the vision of the girl I planned to marry, started wearing tzitzit, put tefillin every day, and in general just tried to figure out what it meant to be a good Jew.

the concept that success does not equal having lots of money was new to me and took a long time to sink in and for me to clarify the ramifications of that concept.

I would come home for pesach all fired up, but inevitably would fall.

during pesach break of my first year in Israeli yeshiva I flew down to the Miami area for pesach. I also had my own rental car and nobody to hold me accountable for what I did and where I went. So I did things like go to the yeshiva get together in one of the posh hotels where a classmate's family did the catering, then stop by a sex worker on the way back to where my family was staying.

I was trying to hard to grow but I couldn't escape from the YH for these things.

Over the summer I went to a program hosted by a kiruv organization as the "frum yeshiva boy" and found myself laying next to a girl from the trip the next summer when we were both in Israel between semesters.

I almost had a breakthrough then - it was so close but I got sucked back in!

At a certain point the internal struggle was so great that I blurted out to her "I am sorry but I can't do this!"

I got half dressed in the room, then ran out to the hall, past her startled roommates, past surprised people in the hall and was out the front door of the lobby before j managed to button my shirt back up.

my father gave me a ride to that place and I lied ti him and told him I was meeting friends.

I couldn't get his face out of my head when I was laying with that girl and about to do something I knew I should not.

I felt like crying from embarrassment and shame.

I felt like a loser! I could not manage to “hook up” with one of my “greatest catches,” but at the same time I was a faker of a yeshiva Bachur. I took a taxi back to the place we were staying, told my parents I didn’t feel well and then shut myself in my room.

the next day I called a Rav I knew from my yeshiva (I think he had just left and started his own yeshiva that year) and half sobbing choked out the story from the night before. I wanted to do Teshuva! He told me to delete her number and to move on. He gave me chizuk and told me what a special thing running away that night really was. I was hopeful but still broken.

if only I had chased that lead, so many years of misery and suffering could have been avoided.

summary: my post high school yeshiva years were full of growth and Teshuva, but I still could not get over the (for lack of a better term) sex and drug addiction. The drugs were on hold due to no access, but between girls, P, & M - I was still addicted to the shmutz.

I would even sometimes sit by the window in my dorm room and try to get good looks at the tourists below...

that’s all I can write for now - hopefully I don’t trigger anyone but it helps to get it all in writing for the first time. Hopefully it will resonate with someone that reads this, and they will see that a person really can change even if they came from the opposite side of this battle.

more on the journey later.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by jackthejew - 26 Feb 2023 11:00

[iLoveHashem247 wrote on 26 Feb 2023 05:26:](#)

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my father gave me a ride to that place and I lied ti him and told him I was meeting friends.

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There's a Yosef Hatzadik moment right there!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by chancy - 27 Feb 2023 00:57

Bloody hell!

I am dancing from joy to Hashem that he didn’t give me these Nisyones and tests! I’m

shuddering to even think how I would look like.

This goes beyond my wildest fantasies living such teenage years..... BH I was always nice and sheltered..... At least from actually meeting girls.

you are an amazing inspiration for all of us! That You chose to become really frum yourself without anyone pressuring you when you couldn't been doing this your whole life..

wow wow wow

keep On growing and inspiring us!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 14 Mar 2023 20:15

Hi chevreh

i have been away for a bit and have lots to share and think about.

some near falls and previously undiscovered reservoirs of courage.

some struggles and some healing.

more to come later

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 24 Mar 2023 01:52

Hope to share the past few weeks but in synopsis was out of town for a while, second to last day of the trip I found myself in a massage place in a different country (no massage bed rather

a real bed, was def a beit zonot) right as we were starting I wanted to say that I am out, but I was choking up a trying to get the words out and then I remembered the promise I made to Hashem help me that if I ever go to one of these places again and experience one of these experience I need to tell my wife. It took everything I had but I yelled out from inside and it came out as a squeak "I'm sorry this isn't working I'm leaving"

was cursed out and told I'm wicked and gloom and doom shall befall me

was so hard but I left. I went to the beach and painted the rest of the day.

Today I also struggled a lot. I have not been feeling well today, and I was getting ready to go to a definite place of prostitution, and what I did is I kept delaying. I went to a bookstore, then I went to a food store, then I sat in my car for a while.

By the time I had been away for a while, my wife had summoned me back home and I was saved for the day.

i should have called Hashem help me first... anyway a few nice wins but I'm feeling quite weak

I hope you enjoyed my fascinating tale. Hope I never have to share it again.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ytw - 24 Mar 2023 16:40

WOWOWOWOWWOW, tears in my eyes...

mamesh a Yosef HaTzadik in our generation, your Koach in heaven is huge, take advantage of this and ask from Hashem for whatever you need.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 24 Mar 2023 19:39

[ytw wrote on 24 Mar 2023 16:40:](#)

WOWOWOWOWWOW, tears in my eyes...

mamesh a Yosef HaTzadik in our generation, your Koach in heaven is huge, take advantage of this and ask from Hashem for whatever you need.

Thank you for your kind words, but it is disconcerting that this keeps coming up. Finding myself in such a place even if I leave before anything happens is still not good news

And by the way, I did ask for some thing. I asked to be able to wake up early in the morning. I have been pretty successful at that since I have returned home. Besides for a few days where the night before I was out at weddings and so on I have been doing pretty well waking up early and it really makes a big difference in the day.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 26 Mar 2023 13:32

Public accountability - I feel like I am chasing my tail in terms of conquering addictions. If it's not sex, then it was drugs. Got rid of the drugs, started drinking. Avoiding the drink, stuffing my face with food. Feeling way too fat and want to lose at least 30 pounds kind of weird because I was always somewhat of a slim guy

Thinking and thinking how to stop chasing my tail and start living my life

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