

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 - 13 Oct 2022 19:57

I just posted something but not sure where it went, so here's the gist of it again

SO i am away from home during chol hamoed visiting family. It's a nice big place with lots of triggers from before i was BT. In the past it has been very hard for me to come back to my relatives since so much of what i see around here reminds me of my former lifestyle. Regardless, i have been working with my wife on developing a positive and gratitude focused attitude when visiting here and recent visits have gone pretty well.

Last night i was visiting a sibling who lives nearby, and the last guests left the sukkah around 1am, and i stayed until about 1:30. Got back to my accommodations around 1:45, took a nice long bath with a good book, and got into bed around 2:30. I saw my wife sleeping like a baby and a very strong urge to be with her overcame me. I know that if i acted selfishly and started touching her, she would, of course react because of the touch but the next day she would be exhausted and grumpy (even grumpier than if i did this on a regular day because it would be a traveling day). so i went to the opposite edge of the bed and scooted over when she rolled towards me. I was so tired and aroused to her that i knew if i started even hugging her then it was game over and i would take for myself without considering her need to rest. BH i was successful in holding back even though it was quite difficult and she slept though the night without even waking up from me. I asked her in the morning whether she noticed anything and she had no clue. I shared the story with her but she didn't really celebrate it with me or think about it much (she was stressed out bc she was supposed to drive home with the kids earlier in the day and things got delayed). Not sure if i should bring it up again and discuss it with her, or just move on and let her feel the difference in the relationship over time since she wouldn't understand this struggle anyway....

Anyway, today my wife and kids went home earlier than me, as i am staying at our accommodations until the night to participate in a local simcha, then will get a ride home with some neighbors driving in to the event. as soon as my wife left, i realized that i now have access to several cars i can borrow for as long as i want, and about 8 hours of time with which to do as i please. Right away, the urge to go to a massage parlor for an hour plus came upon me. I can spend my entire day indulging and nobody will be any the wiser. I am currently writing about it, and reaching out to my mentor for support. I am using the middah of laziness to serve me in this challenge right now and hopefully over time the constant refusals on my part when feeling these urges will help to rewire my brain - which after all, has become accustomed to escapism instead of resilience when presented an opportunity to do so. I noticed that i tend to try to escape my reality when faced with any kind of discomfort - physical or emotional, and have been working on facing my reality face to face and increasing my resilience to pain.

Does anyone have any interesting comments or tips & tricks on how to increase resilience in general?

Finally, a thought i had is that being mindful of what triggers an urge and what time of day these challenges happen will help me fight the good fight. I take (daily) medication for ADHD which i have successfully lowered the dosage of (with the help and guidance of the prescribing psychiatrist) over the years. I used to take 50+ mg per day, now most days it is just 18mg (of long acting meds) with an extra 5-10mg of fast acting ritalin as needed.

I noticed that towards evening when the long acting meds wear off my appetite for food and sensory input opens up. I have tried taking some ritalin later in the day to help ease the transition, but then i can't fall asleep at night. Would love some input on how to approach this challenge with someone who has experienced it personally.

writing out these thoughts and feelings is very therapeutic. I know i leave a lot of unanswered questions hanging on the thread (pun intended) but just recognizing these ideas as i type them out and reviewing what i wrote (and seeing your comments) does so much to straighten out these thoughts. In all honestly, one of the biggest advantages is actually getting the ideas out on some medium where i can review and recognize that these thoughts and feelings exist in this form!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by frank.lee - 13 Oct 2022 21:34

Very proud of you! (Maybe this discussion should be in the BB forum?)

is there an open synagogue nearby where you can go to learn? Stay strong!!!

You can do this!! Just need to find something healthy to keep you busy and out of trouble. Using laziness as a tool is great in this case!

Realize that if you succeed this time, it will bring BeH two great benefits: you will empower yourself to succeed again when you are where challenging situations, and you will gain from your relationship with you wife growing stronger from your investing in it with this.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by yechielmichel - 14 Oct 2022 16:14

Two quick thoughts. You seem to really know what you are doing, and I am anonymous internet stranger that skimmed your posts, so take it for what its worth:

It seems like you are putting in massive efforts to get through temptation. I believe this is what they call white-knuckling.

Often leads to burn-out, resentment and even bigger falls.

Some ideas to look into are surrender to the higher power as in AA or riding the waves as in the F2F program.

Also, another thing that strikes me is your wife's involvement in your struggle and your continuing to seek out her support and validation (as in asking her if she noticed the night before). I'm sure she's a wonderful person with deep resources to support you, however, I will posit that it is ultimately not fair for her to carry this burden, it can cause her to loose respect for you, and that doesn't lead to a good place. Everyone needs a support system, at times we need that support system to be rock solid to fall back on, so make sure you have it, but I think it's much better when its not your wife. I know that people here with lots of experience sometimes encourage it, however, in your post, I see your wife front and center, when this is really about you, your struggles, you overcoming and becoming a better person.

Sorry if I missed the mark for you or inadvertently offended you in any way, as I respect you greatly based on what you have posted.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by Hashem give me koach - 14 Oct 2022 16:32

Hi, you should definitely reach out to michelgelner@gmail.com aka Hashem help me, he really helped me with my struggles(thanks to his help and encouragement I just went 6 months clean!!!!!!) the guy is a mamish a tzaddik to new levels. Trust me reach out to him your safe talking to him.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 16 Oct 2022 21:08

the past few days have been quite interesting! I went into shabbat feeling like a normal human being with the ability to talk to female in laws and nieces and see them as if they are just people without struggling in that area. Very refreshing!

over shabbat, i was reading a jewish magazine about the recent women's event about technology and they included an excerpt of a letter sent in by someone who said she decided to stop purchasing clothes from a website with very immodest models and they also (kind of stupidly) included the name of said website. So motzei shabbat i was responding to some emails and mr yetzer ha ra suggested that i go check out that site... which i did...

later that night i told my wife what happened even though it was quite embarrassing. i was exhausted and wanted to go to sleep after our chat (it was a long day with siblings and parents over for the weekend). For the first time in years my wife woke me up and initiated intimacy - i cannot even remember the last time that she wanted it and i was not at all in the mood and i was with her. I spoke to my mentor about this and he commented that i was with her leshem shamayim (never would have thought of it that way).

I reflected upon this and thought to myself - oy! what did i put her through all these years when she did not want and she did it for me. this is definitely cause for much greater appreciation and recognition of her dedication

story about the yetzer hara:

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 16 Oct 2022 21:26

to respond to recent commenters:

frank.lee - i stayed in the house and chatted with my father & spent some quality time with him. i also learned a bit and typed out a long post on the forum to keep me occupied and to get my thoughts out. i also just laid on the couch for a bit and finally was able to use my laziness for

yechielmichel - & Hashem give me koach - I have, in fact been in touch with the famous michelgelner@gmail.com AKA Hashem Help Me. His guidance has been indispensable! Re. the focus of the struggle, yes it is my personal struggle but at the same time it is in an area of my life that is inseparably intertwined with hers. There are many things that i share with her, and her acceptance and non-judgment of me, and her care and concern and understanding (to the extent that is possible for her) has strengthened our bond tremendously. At the same time, there are certain things that i share only with my mentor (based on common sense). But in general, i agree that information should be shared with a wife sparingly.

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 19 Oct 2022 15:03

A Fall & A Win:

The fall:

see previous post (Share with your wife according to the guidance of your Rav/mentor)

The Win:

I have been feeling quite sick since Sunday and throughout the entirety of Yom Tov. I spent a lot of time laying in bed. In the past, laying in bed during the day leads to fantasizing, which leads to dozing off and having all kinds of dreams that I do not want to have, sometimes it resulting in the need to change my sheets(?????? ????). When I got into bed yesterday my mind went to all kinds of wacky places, and I did not want to repeat what has happened in the past. So what I did was that instead of fantasizing of all kinds of different things that I shouldn't be, I started to daydream about my wife. Replacing her with those images I had in my head. But really, I did not want to see her in such a depraved manner, so my thoughts started drifting to going on hikes with her and going on dates with her and just her in general. I ended up sleeping for a few hours and thank G-d there were no bad results. (I shared this with her as well, but on the advice of my mentor, I was advised to refrain from sharing these particulars with her in the future).

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 21 Oct 2022 13:54

Today is day 31 of not going to a massage parlor. Reversing the trend!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by willdoit - 21 Oct 2022 16:25

Hi llovehashem247,

You are amazing!!!... I keep on checking everyday to read ur posts, your my personal aspiration

Keep it up!!!!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by Human being - 21 Oct 2022 18:36

Wow you are such a good guy! keep on fighting on buddy!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 21 Oct 2022 21:13

soooo.... the yetzer likes to strike when we are feeling confident.... Not a slip, not a fall, but a very painful win(?)

Curious to know what happened?

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by frank.lee - 22 Oct 2022 20:42

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amazing!!!

Next step would be to be able to empathize with her, and also to help her so she will not be as stressed. Sounds like you are an amazing husband!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 24 Oct 2022 18:02

I had a DMC with wife about anxiety attacks and how to deal with them from my end (see new thread in bale batim forum)

In other news, I will be back to my schedule of twice weekly office visits starting tomorrow. Feeling like I'm in a good place but almost expecting the Yetzer to tempt me to go to a massage parlor on the way home. Craziest thing is that i found a place where they do exactly what I had been looking for (i.e. soft touch all over with no sexual overtures) & it actually pushed me to GYE because i knew i can get sucked in to such a place.

So today i am saying **NO!** to massage parlors. And tomorrow I will say no (NO?) again.

I also decided to do something very daring. I had previously started my workday around noon last zman (work half a day and learn half a day). I recently started a new campaign that should be taking the business to new heights, and decided to spend an extra hour a day learning. I managed to get into the Roah Yeshiva's shiur as well. So my work day now starts at 1pm (and

ends around 3). I feel like this flies against logic, but last time I ramped up my learning and lowered my working, i made about 4x more money. I also pledged an amount of tzedakka beyond my means last year and managed to pay it off within the year. I doubled that amount this year. Strengthening my bitachon muscles here!

this zman i will be learning about 5 hours and working about 2.

Maybe I'll make so much money that I can just buy tons of real estate and have people managing it and I will just learn in yeshiva all day?

That's the goal.

Trusting Hashem. I know that He trusts in me to do the right thing as well.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 30 Oct 2022 02:43

A Week of Recovery In Review

You better get cozy, this is a long post!

What a week! there is a rule in life that "Kol Hatchalot Kashot" - *all* beginnings are hard. What I've seen with my limited experience in life is that the greater the aspiration, the larger the obstacles. I actually saw once in Likutei Moharan that you can estimate the level of potential greatness in a person or task or concept based on the magnitude of the obstacles in the way.

Regardless of obstacles, I know for certainty (as heard originally from Gedale Fenster) that there are only two types of days: winning days, and learning days. When one is determined to take away a lesson from even the worst catastrophe, that's not a loss - it might be a very

expensive lesson, but that can simply be chalked up to "tuition expenses" in the school of life.

In addition to this mindset, having a wise mentor can literally save a person's life (shoutout to Hashem Help Me!), but more on that later.

Let's list the aspirations that I started the week with:

- Don't be addicted (to food/drugs/sex)
- Be present at all times
- Become a talmid chacham
- Learn Torah as many hours per day possible
- ?- Be the best husband/farther/self I can be & fulfill my potential
- Empathize with my wife & be her friend when she needs one most
- Build a thriving business that requires minimal time out of my day & produces maximum profits

Now let's list the obstacles in the past week:

- First full post-yom tov work week began
- Business credit extended to me was due for immediate payment (from multiple vendors)
- Big slump in business (new campaign taking time to kick in, which is expected but uncomfortable)
- Got denied from joining Rosh Yeshiva's shiur... the night before zman starts
- Original chavruta I arranged for was switched out with a sleepy bachur
- Still feeling congested

Now, let's see how the aspirations and obstacles meshed together:

Regarding Business & Cash Flow:

Warning: Spoiler!

Next Big Challenge - Learning Related:

Warning: Spoiler!

Regarding Addictions:

Warning: Spoiler!

One of the most powerful tools in my arsenal:

Warning: Spoiler!

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