

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 richtig - 27 Sep 2024 18:11

[ilovehashem247 wrote on 25 Sep 2024 23:46:](#)

Sooooo.....

Boy, have I got a tale to share tonight!

read carefully, and please, do share your feedback below. I'd love to hear what the chevreh have to say on this topic.

Here it goes:

I came to realize (with lots of program and therapy) that when my life feels unmanageable, I try to control it. When I try to control it, I am failing to admit that I am powerless over _____ (fill in the blank). My need to control started when I experienced traumas and difficult times in life. By surrendering control to Hashem with prayer and humility, and giving over my burden to Him and not carrying it myself, I admit powerlessness and become free from the slavery to my addiction.

That was the intro. Here's the story:

Was reading a book on the toilet today (second in relaxation only to reading in the bath) when the leader of the cult I'm an Ex-member of - who has been running smear campaigns on me, intimidating my extended family and myself, and who had been the subject of many paranoid episodes, nightmares, and therapy sessions - this man called me up on my cell phone.

I'd deleted the number a while back and I guess that also unblocked the number, so I answered with "hi, who is this?"

The response was "this is ***** *****", how are you?"

I exhaled a breath of disbelief, and **hung up**. Would've been superbly satisfying with a flip phone. Alas, my dump phone is of the non-flip variety.

(How do you think I am, buddy? Alive and well, no thanks to YOU!)

I spoke to my sponsor and some old timers, consensus was to treat him as an unwanted solicitor if he calls again - "sorry, not interested in what you're selling, please respect my privacy and don't call me again."

If he calls to apologize for trying to destroy my life and my extended family's lives (0.000000000000000000001% chance of that), I can say "thanks for the call, please respect my privacy and don't call me again."

What do you guys think? What would you have done?

Cordnoy, please share your character response, and also your serious response. Thanks!

That sounds like a perfect response. I can only imagine it would feel more geshmak to give it to him over the head, but as you point out, trying to control is admitting powerlessness. More power to you!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by richtig - 27 Sep 2024 18:12

[ilovehashem247 wrote on 26 Sep 2024 22:47:](#)

thanks for the comments guys

so to follow up

the person(s) he sent to try to reach me are also confused

I told the messenger he can convey the following message: "please respect my privacy and do not reach out again. I'm not interested. goodbye."

Are they confused you aren't buying?! Delicious!

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by Muttel - 27 Sep 2024 20:11

Yes, delicious!

Being someone who is a pleaser, I get special hanaa seeing you thwart their attempts.

Rock on, bro!

Muttel

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ilovehashem247 - 30 Sep 2024 03:35

So I guess I passed the first test, a few days later a slimy contractor who owed me a repair on my property worth just about \$15k sends me an invoice for \$25k (i.e. that I should pay HIM) when I sent him info on my pending invite from a Beit Din in his community. Intimidation tactics.

Realized that the guy doesn't care about Beit Din anyway because nobody with Yirat Shamiayim is making up invoices with 4 pages of a baloney story.

Accepted G-d's decree, decided not to take him to Beit Din, and that is when the serenity hit.

I'll survive. I don't need to obsess over this sad, sick man.

I didn't think about him over the weekend. I'm sure he couldn't stop think about how he's going to "get" me. Or maybe not...

Don't know, don't really care.

Happy to have this newfound skill of moving on in life.

Thanks G-d, 12 steppers, sponsors, and therapist.

Most of all, thank you self, for learning acceptance.

It's a damn good thing to have in my life.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 02 Oct 2024 04:14

I am experiencing something very strange.

I have dealt with at least 3 crazy people in the past week, crazy busy before Yom Tov, working a 12 step program, work, life, bills, credit cards, chinuch, relationship with wife, etc. etc. etc.

There is chaos around me, but no chaos in my mind. I am starting to taste serenity, and I don't know what to do with it.

I am so used to introducing chaos into my life when things are getting wonky so that at least I can control it when things start spinning out - but I'm not doing that these days and I am kind of confused with how to just be ok with being ok.

It's a new thing for me. I like it, but it feels kind of like new leather shoes - kind of uncomfortable but I know in my heart that it will be amazingly pleasant in a few weeks.

Anyone here ever dealt with this before?

Would love to read your thoughts on the matter.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 08 Oct 2024 03:36

I joined Ray of Hope's zoom lecture featuring Rabbi YY Jacobson tonight for the male members of the group (a support group for people who have been sexually abused).

I was uplifted but also very confused.

I was victimized, but I also victimized others when I was in the depths of darkness within my

substance addiction.

I was used by my tutor throughout my early teenage years (over two years, I think). I know things happened but there is nothingness when I try to remember - not black, not white, just... nothing. There are brief flashes of memories, like one Pesach night where we skipped the Seder (our families were both in Florida at a hotel for Chag), and all I remember is being given a lot of alcohol (sangria?) in a hot tub, then waking up all groggy to my mother yelling at someone (probably Her, the tutor) while I was tangled up in a bedsheet with only sopping wet boxers on me (or did I put on sopping wet boxers when my mother came in the room? No clue).

I am confused because I was the abused but also - very briefly, and many years later - the abuser. Does that make me evil, too?

How can I justify my actions? How can I make amends? What actually happened to me? This tutor was not the only woman I have "blank memories" with. What else happened - and with whom?

I am very confused.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by BenHashemBH - 08 Oct 2024 12:16

Dear Brother,

I can't imagine what you have been through and are going through now. I'm so sorry that this happened to you. Davening that you find healing for your past, clarity for your present, and hope for your future.

BezH you should have a year that is *kulo tov*.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by ilovehashem247 - 10 Oct 2024 17:15

I am going to my parents for the first half of Yom Tov, and plan on sitting with my mother to ask her what happened and to have a conversation about this molestation parsha....

scared of what might come up.

The truth is hidden from me, and I suspect that this trauma is what kicked off my addiction(s). I've come to realize that addiction (at least for me), is my mind's way of not facing life - especially when it comes to traumatic topics.

I'm in a headspace where I am ready to face my trauma and work through it... I have no idea what I am opening the door to but I do know that in order to heal, the best way forward is through.

Please daven for me to have strength and clarity.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once
Posted by anonymousushi - 11 Oct 2024 04:44

Wow you really went through a lot.

here I was thinking I'd been through difficult circumstances, while there are people out there with stories like yours- cults, abuse...

Not that this is comforting to you in any measure- but you should know that I get chizuk from hearing how others have managed to bridge a crevasse of seemingly unsurmountable circumstances-seemingly much larger than mine.

If you could do it, i certainly should be able to as well.

continued Hatzlocha in the battles, and may we win the war.

Gmar Chasima Tova

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 11 Oct 2024 18:36

reflecting back on the past two years, i am glad to recognize that i do not hate myself any more

I am a good person

great husband

loving father

humble son

kind friend

honest seller

respectful buyer

I have other parts of me too, but I best not forget those parts of me that are lovely

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 13 Oct 2024 21:06

so I was reading "Out of The Shadow" by Patrick Cairnes over YC

a few realizations:

1. There is a definite "before" and "after" type of masturbation in my life. The innocent explorations of a boy vs the compulsive masturbation of an addict. the changeover was in my early teens.
2. My tutor "Michal" was not my only molester. I realized that around 12-13 years old, a family came over for a shabbat meal, and their oldest daughter "Maya" (who was my age or at most a year older) had my fondle her breasts in public on the way home, and in my bedroom (under her bra) once we got to the house. I did not initiate, rather it was forced upon me. In hindsight, this was not a "coming of age" hook up. I was molested, raped really - I was aware of the sexual physical touching but was not asked to give, and did not supply my consent.
3. I have recollections of blackouts with both of these females, i.e. a mental snapshot of a scene, dark and foreboding emotions with a thick wall up blocking the actual emotions. No memory of context, how I ended up in the situation, what happened, or how and when I left.

4. My sexual acting out was often accompanied by and/or "enhanced" with the use of drugs and alcohol. When "Michal" was molesting me, we got high together a lot. I was exposed to alcohol around the time I was hanging out with "Maya" and her sister "Maya Junior."

5. Much of my sexual activity as a teenager was accompanied by drugs and alcohol, and my relationships fit the mold of compulsive sex addiction. For example, masturbating as many as 5 times per day, public exhibitionism and sex with "girlfriends," multiple girlfriends at one time, without either knowing of her co-girlfriends.

6. The women I tended to gravitate to around the time I was being molested with either fellow sex addicts or emotionally weak and vulnerable, and I used them to satisfy my own needs.

7. My sexual compulsions often fit the mold of the predation that I was under - that is, I was taken advantage of when I was weaker and more vulnerable than the molester, and the molester had a power advantage over me. For example: massage parlors/prostitutes, my young nieces, drunk girls at parties, etc. Even the types of erotic literature I was pulled to was themed around family members or teachers, or similar taboo power play pornography. My brain could not handle what was done to me, and I must have tried to justify it and/or make sense of it by repeating upon others what was done to me again and again. I now realize that my molesters were (are) sick women, and that what they did (their MO) will never "make sense" to me because it was not done from a sane and mentally healthy place.

8. When I was in yeshiva in Israel, my compulsivity did not stop - I spent hours every week practicing "voyeurism." I would sit by the second floor window in my dorm room, and feast on the birds eye view of tourists in the Jerusalem town I was in, looking for open tops or tight clothes.

Bottom line, my addiction was triggered through sexual trauma. Working through it will not take the addiction away - it is a lifelong disease, and I need to learn how to live with it - but my hope is that understanding how it got started will help me understand myself, my triggers, and my background better and will help me be more compassionate toward myself.

For the record (this is a personal journal, after all) some goals I want to reach with these realizations:

1. Get a better idea of what actually happened with my molesters, especially with "Michal."
2. Learn to forgive myself for molesting my nieces, and figure out what amends will look like (not near step 9 though so this is a long term goal). This may include disclosure to them and paying for therapy, etc.
3. Continue learning how to cope with pain/trauma/discomfort in a healthy way.
4. Guide others who have gone through similar experiences.

5. Reach a place of forgiveness within myself toward myself for the harm I have done others with my sexual acting out, most especially my nieces who I really do care for dearly and am extremely pained over the damage I have done to them.

6. Let go of my fears that my nieces will pass on my generational trauma to my kids - we are next door neighbors, and they play with / babysit my kids a lot.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 14 Oct 2024 23:24

Reposting with edits, hopefully not too triggering:

post 1 from a week or two ago:

Warning: Spoiler!

post two originally written last night:

Warning: Spoiler!

I tried to keep it ambiguous and non triggering, while still clarifying thoughts and feelings. Please let me know if you think I should make any further edits, thanks.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 15 Oct 2024 23:12

My father has been helping me to pay for therapy. I asked him to send a payment today, and he asked me to "please try and resolve the issue by the end of this year."

LOL!

If only he knew...

I wanted to say back, "try to talk to your teenage kids about sex and puberty and healthy boundaries, instead of handing them a book and walking away" but that wouldn't have done good for anyone.

He has no clue!

The only person I can fix is me.

Every [sponsored] dollar that goes toward therapy is a free gift

Thank you Hashem for the opportunity to grow through action and also through inaction.

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Re: My Story, Being Honest For Once

Posted by ilovehashem247 - 21 Oct 2024 03:13

Had a conversation with my parents over YT about the molestation.

My bottom line understanding is that the perpetrator seems to have, indeed, acted out with me. Also, her family covered up what happened, and my parents didn't probe deeper. Sweeping under the rug and denial.

Sounds pretty Jewish....

Also just want to surrender that the niece that stayed by me over the summer is here with her mother and sisters.

They invited themselves over last minute, and got to my house before I did after being away for YT.

Lust hitting pretty hard right now. Fighting the fantasy, but the way to win this is by surrendering and just letting go.

I am not seeing her naked and I cannot have sex with her.

Not even a chance.

Not even an option.

Warning: Spoiler!

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