

Still work to do but there is always hope!

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 13 Oct 2022 02:26

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This was posted on another thread and someone suggested putting it on its own thread. I hope this helps someone see that there is always hope...

At the age of 14 I was groomed by a 33-year-old man and had my first gay (or any) sex. I blame myself because I was attracted to him; I was not forced — but I was just a kid. Still, I blamed myself for wanting it.

That set in motion literally 40 years of virtually daily compulsive gay encounters, sometimes several in a day. I was so compulsive that I couldn't work until I satisfied the need. I would just leave my office.

Though raised in a non-religious home, Hashem watched over me and protected me through the AIDS epidemic which didn't stop me but the fear made me much more careful about what I did, so I never got infected. But I was always traumatized and terrified.

In those days, I wanted desperately to stop but I couldn't. I would mark on a paper calendar each day I could go without (kind of a pre-GYE 90 day calendar, but this was before the internet) but it never lasted more than a couple of days. Much of this while married. I felt so guilty and horrible and wanted to stop but it was impossible. It's a miracle I am alive.

After 40 years of that madness, when I was at my lowest point...divorced, at odds with my kids, that a dear friend asked me to go to a Chabad and talk to the rabbi. For some reason I was willing to do that (to please my friend—I was sure it was a waste of time) and literally a miracle occurred. I listened to the Rabbi tell me some hard truths about what I needed to do and what I needed to stop doing if I wanted him to try to help me. The first miracle is that I allowed him to be very frank with me and didn't tell him off. The second miracle is that from that moment, I put on tzitzis and a kippah and never acted out with a man again. That was 15 years ago. So I know the impossible is possible. I have done it. I stopped actually having sex with men.

But the urge to watch porn and masturbate I have not been able to completely control. I can for varying periods of time, but then something happens —stress or sadness/depression and I slip. I used to be afraid to give up having sex with guys thinking I could not live without it. I did give

that up and found that I CAN live without it. So why is it so hard to cross this finish line regarding porn and masturbation? Same feeling exists as though I could not live the rest of my life without it. But I know that is untrue. I've proven it. So why am I falling?

I hope this painful story gives hope to others. I am still attracted to men but at least I am not committing the aveiras associated with having sex with them. Now I need to do more to control my P and M.

Thank you all for being here on GYE. Without you we are all alone.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 08 Feb 2023 01:13

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[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 08 Feb 2023 01:10:](#)

Won! Won! Won!

Love that! Really made me smile! Thanks, bud.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Eerie - 08 Feb 2023 16:20

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Hey, TG! That's wonderful! Keep trucking! It goes up and it goes down, but hold on tight, you'll be alright!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 17 Feb 2023 00:06

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The good news...

**120** clean days!!

the not great news...

the last 4 days have been nail-bitingly tough. Like a constant onslaught. I'm exhausted from fighting it off.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!

Posted by Eerie - 17 Feb 2023 00:13

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YOU. ARE. A. **HERO!!!!** Keep it up and keep inspiring us all! You have given so much for Hashem, I know I can't begin to imagine how proud you make Him!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 17 Feb 2023 00:15

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[Eerie wrote on 17 Feb 2023 00:13:](#)

YOU. ARE. A. **HERO!!!!** Keep it up and keep inspiring us all! You have given so much for Hashem, I know I can't begin to imagine how proud you make Him!

Thanks, Eerie. On days like today and the past week, you have no idea how good that is to hear.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Eerie - 17 Feb 2023 00:32

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My dear friend, from the first people I had the pleasure of getting to know here, you can always reach out for a pat on the back...or anything else:)

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 17 Feb 2023 06:33

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[Teshuvahguy wrote on 17 Feb 2023 00:06:](#)

The good news...

**120** clean days!!

the not great news...

the last 4 days have been nail-bitingly tough. Like a constant onslaught. I'm exhausted from fighting it off.

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Idk what you look like but you must have a buff neshama

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by retrych - 17 Feb 2023 10:38

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Yetzer always flares up before dying down...just a bit more BEH!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 17 Feb 2023 12:11

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Keep it up tzaddik, and start helping others!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 17 Feb 2023 16:46

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Dear GYE Chevra,

I have not written anything of substance in a long time. Actually, I doubt there will be any real substance here, either. I'm just feeling so blue and down and depressed that it's affecting everything I do and I have no one to share it with. I retired recently and now I have a lot of time on my hands. I want to use the time wisely, so I decided I would use it to do the Torah learning I never really had the time or energy to do before. I got off to a decent start, very excited about it and it really made me feel awesome. I remember thinking how amazing it was that it just energized me and I felt so productive. I even remember telling my wife that when one of my sadder family circumstances would start to make me feel really down, if I would just pick up a sefer and start reading, I would immediately feel better. So why do I seem unable (read unwilling) to follow that pattern now? Why am I choosing to just sit in my sadness and waste my precious days? I'm not such a young man. Who knows how much time I have left. I don't want to waste any of it feeling bad, so why am I allowing it?

I am devastated by the fact that my only remaining living biological child has chosen not to speak to me for the past 7 months. I have been blocked on his phone and I cannot reach him,

and he is not reaching out to me. He is doing this because he thinks I am being unkind to my sister, who pretty much has no one in the world now. He doesn't seem to understand that my sister has been horrible to me my entire life. She has serious mental health problems, which I could manage. However, she is also extremely mean and vicious. We were never, ever close and she has tortured me my entire life. I long ago put up a wall to protect myself from the toxicity. She even prevented me from attending our mother's levaya! There is a reason why she has no one now that my parents are both gone. That didn't happen by itself. But my son only sees that I have a marriage (not to his mother) and a family who cares about me and his poor aunt is all alone and has nobody and I am being a "terrible, terrible person" for not swooping in to be there for her.

The truth is, I was prepared to reach out an olive branch once my mother died because I am NOT mean and vicious and I am NOT a terrible person and I DO have sympathy and rachmanus on her. But then all the nasty goings on around my mother's funeral was just the last straw and I knew I could not engage with her. All of this has been explained ad nauseum to my son over the past 10 years and he has always reassured me that he completely understood that I needed to protect my own mental health. In fact, he would often ask me why I keep telling him, when he, himself, had frequently told me to step back for my own safety. Then ON THE DAY MY MOTHER DIES, he cuts me off and I haven't heard from him since. I had a very difficult relationship with my mother, as well, as she was a narcissist and did a lot of damage to me, my sister, and my father, but in the last months of her life, I finally broke through and we had some good interactions. Yet when, on the day she died, I tried to share how happy I was that I had gotten to have those few visits that were good and I got to be loving and kind to her and she was kind to me, he bit my head off saying that I didn't do \*\*\*\* for 10 years!! He KNEW I was doing the best I could and trying to be the best son I could be under the circumstances. When my mother was alone and needed help, my sister was living with her and caring for her. Had she not had my sister there, I would have made absolute sure my mother had EVERYTHING she needed. Baruch Hashem, she had my sister.

So I feel misjudged and abandoned by my only remaining living child (I had another child who passed away in a tragic accident) and I AM DEVASTATED. I have had to face the fact over the past 10 years that he is not the person I thought he was and hoped he would be. He lacks warmth and is highly judgmental and he has been relentlessly hard on me. It's probably for the best that I not interact with him at this point but these realizations are terribly painful.

Anyway, that is fueling my current bout of depression and anxiety which is, in turn, I believe fueling my difficult time resisting turning to porn and masturbation to soothe myself. I'm fighting like crazy, I'm wasting my days, I'm feeling sorry for myself for being saddled with the nisayon of SSA to the exclusion of attraction to women. HASHEM, WHY DID YOU GIVE ME THIS? ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE NORMAL. WHY DID I NEED THIS SEXUAL PERVERSION IN ADDITION TO THE HORRIBLY DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY GROWING UP?

I apologize for the long post. For those who didn't read it, I don't blame you. For those who did, thank you for giving me a place to express my feelings.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 17 Feb 2023 18:03

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HUG!!!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Eerie - 17 Feb 2023 19:39

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My dear friend, I can't answer any of your questions. But I do know that when you, a person who has so much stacked against him, a person who literally turned his entire life around for Hashem, a person who fights like few people I know, and for one reason only, to do what's right, that person is shaking the very world!!! I am not in shomyaim, but I can only imagine the scene, of Hashem calling all His angels, and he tells them "Look! down there, in that fithy world, there is a person, roght there, do you see him? He gave up everything he knew. He changed everything about his life. And do you know why he did it? TO MAKE ME PROUD!!!" and the angels stand open-mouthed. My friend, you are our inspiration! I'm sending you my virtual hug, and I ask you to pray for me, and for all of us here. There's no question that your prayer is so precious, like HHM posted on the other thread, when you look away from that guy and look into your siddur, that IS your shining moment! And Hashem loves you for it, and He's waiting to hear from you. Keep posting, and let us know how you are!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 17 Feb 2023 19:48

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[Eerie wrote on 17 Feb 2023 19:39:](#)

My dear friend, I can't answer any of your questions. But I do know that when you, a person

who has so much stacked against him, a person who literally turned his entire life around for Hashem, a person who fights like few people I know, and for one reason only, to do what's right, that person is shaking the very world!!! I am not in shomyaim, but I can only imagine the scene, of Hashem calling all His angels, and he tells them "Look! down there, in that filthy world, there is a person, roght there, do you see him? He gave up everything he knew. He changed everything about his life. And do you know why he did it? TO MAKE ME PROUD!!!" and the angels stand open-mouthed. My friend, you are our inspiration! I'm sending you my virtual hug, and I ask you to pray for me, and for all of us here. There's no question that your prayer is so precious, like HHM posted on the other thread, when you look away from that guy and look into your siddur, that IS your shining moment! And Hashem loves you for it, and He's waiting to hear from you. Keep posting, and let us know how you are!

Wow. Eerie, thank you, thank you, thank you. You gave me strength. I never see it that way so I need sometimes for someone to show me that side of things. Just thank you for seeing me differently than I see myself and helping me to see myself in a better light. Good Shabbos!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 19 Feb 2023 04:01

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Dear TG

you have an opportunity that not many have

you have the power to make a choice that is so hard to make, it doesn't really feel like a choice.

you have the power to choose to forgive. Your son. Your sister. Your mother. Yourself.

understand that people who act in a hurtful way are doing so because they are often in tremendous pain and/or suffering from emotional and/or mental instability. Bones and flesh can take a long time to heal, but heal they do. Internal pain - mental, emotional pain - does not always heal by itself. Sometimes you have to make that choice, that mindset shift.



I'm not saying it's easy. In fact, it may feel like it's near impossible.

but if you recognize that instead of looking at the hurtful behaviors you can instead choose to feel empathy, and maybe eventually even love... now that is a tremendous power you are holding in your hands.

may Hashem give the strength to choose.

hang in there my friend.

respectfully,

your friend

ILH

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