

Still work to do but there is always hope!

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 13 Oct 2022 02:26

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 iLoveHashem247 - 19 Feb 2023 04:35

[Teshuvahguy wrote on 19 Feb 2023 04:26:](#)

ILH247, as always, I really appreciate your input. Please know that I have forgiven them all. That's not the issue. I understand the mental health issues behind the behaviors and I don't blame them for what was. I even forgive my sister. She is mentally ill and I get that. I can forgive her but I can't be close to her because she will harm me ultimately and I need to protect my own mental health. And I'm not angry with my son, either. I'm terribly, terribly hurt by his behavior over the last 10 years. And I don't really understand it, or him. For some reason, he seems to harbor deep anger toward me that is usually under the surface but then suddenly erupts at me. I'm not sure why. Part of it is because I became frum. He resents it because he feels I "changed the rules" on him since we were not religious when he was young. But, he was already 25 and living on his own when I became religious, so it didn't really affect him. He is now 40. I have never tried to influence him to become religious so that's not the issue. I've been very clear that I became frum at a dark moment in my life as a way to help myself, and he clearly sees that I am a much better person as a result, so I'm not sure why he is upset by it. And his understanding of what happened with my mother and sister is just false so his anger is truly misplaced. Or, this was just the excuse he needed to finally let out all his anger and cut me out of his life. Anyway, I am literally the most forgiving guy on the planet. I have many flaws but that is not one of them. I'm just hurt and disappointed. And having buried his sister, the loss of another child, even one who has been so hard on me, is very hard to cope with. But I will. Just like I did when my daughter died. I can survive pretty much anything after that.

That's some heavy stuff, man.

thank you for your kind words, and for sharing a bit more detail. it is very big of you that you have been able to reach this point.

I wonder what mission and message our Creator has in mind for you with these challenges.

have you ever thought about that? if so what, if any were your conclusions?

just the SSA and premature death of a child – each one on its own – are challenges that most people would not ever encounter in their life, because it takes a very special strength to be able to overcome.

I was actually speaking with a friend today about this idea. When it comes to SSA, if you don't have it, I think it is very near impossible to understand it. But if you do have it, what are you supposed to do with it? There's so much potential in such a big challenge, but how does one access and actual that potential while serving the Creator with joy at the same time? Is it simply a matter of inaction and mindset? Is it more?

hopefully an older and wiser man such as yourself can shed some light on these ideas to a young man like me. There is so much you can teach us. About life, about resilience.

Looking forward to it, my friend.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 23 Feb 2023 15:59

Today I must report that on Tuesday, after 125 clean days, I had a fall. Instead of -- like I would have in the past -- dealing with this by getting super down on myself, engaging in "all-or-nothing" thinking (I'm either 100% successful or I'm 100% failure), and telling myself, "How can I go to shul and face Hashem when He must think I am this disgusting, terrible, irredeemable

waste of humanity, I am choosing to frame this fall differently.

For 125 days, I was clean. Every moment of every one of those days, I was resisting my yetzer hara and not seeking forbidden pleasure against Hashem's wishes. I still have those days of success in fighting my YH. For 2 days (Tuesday and then again on Wednesday), after 2 solid weeks of horrendous and relentless pressure from the YH, I finally caved. It happened so fast the first time, I didn't even have time to consider calling HHM or anything else to stop myself. As often happens, the second time, having had a recent taste of the pleasure and having already ended my streak, I willfully engaged in that pleasure a second time, and for that, I am truly sorry. However...

I am choosing to focus on my amazing success over more than 4 months. That success defines me far more than my moment of failure. Out of 127 total days, I was successful 98.4% of the time and I failed 1.6% of the time. So which statistic should I focus on more? Unlike in the past, this time I say focus on the 98.4% success. That is something to celebrate. The 2 falls? They are two potholes in the road to complete sobriety that I happened to stumble into. That's all.

So, I fell. I got a little bruised, but I got right back up and am back on the road again. Thank you, Hashem, for allowing me (for the first time in my life) to see a negative event from a positive perspective instead of demonizing myself and convincing myself that I am a useless failure. That thinking always led me down a road of further self-destructive damage. This time, I am avoiding that and limiting the self-criticism to the legitimate negative actions I took. This fall is not about who I am as a person. This fall is simply about something I did. It does not represent who I am.

Thanks, guys, for always being here when I need you. I see now that I have to get my iphone filtered, because that is the tool that got me. I started reading something that was very mild (I shouldn't have been looking at that, either) and of course, it got me going and things escalated rapidly. I don't ever use my laptop because my wife uses that and I'm too afraid I will forget to shut something and she will see what I'm doing, so the computer is not an issue. Over the years, it's always the phone that gets me. Is there some kind of filter for the iphone that will still allow me to see news and Google appropriate information while completely blocking anything that can lead me astray? If something like that is available, please let me know. I use my phone a lot and I don't think I could explain to my wife why I suddenly can't look anything up without arousing suspicion.

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

Posted by ytw - 23 Feb 2023 16:25

WOWOWOW, what an amazing strentghfull message, you're amazing hashem loves you.

although I'm sorry to hear about your fall, I wanted to share an interesting story that I once heard from a very big chsidishe comedian, he said that one day a bochur approached him and gave a big thank you for all his work and for all the jokes and shows that made him in a good mood, the comedian told him thanks but why did you decide to approach me now, (it wasn't after a performance or play etc.), so the bochur replied that usually you thank a person after he finishes..., for example, you get a piece of cake, you thank the baker after finishing the cake, because until the end you can't really thank him becuae it might just get even better & you'll have to thank him again etc., but now, the bochur said, he took upon himself to stop watching any videos or clips, so now that he finished watching the comedian he approched him to give him his full thanks,

????????, now that you finished a round of 125 DAYS (what a huge significant number), you can truly celebrate it fully.

so, keep up your amazing heroic work, let's move on to the next round...

and let's keep on celebrating...

your friend and admirer,

ytw.

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

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 23 Feb 2023 16:29

[ytw wrote on 23 Feb 2023 16:25:](#)

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finishes..., for example, you get a piece of cake, you thank the baker after finishing the cake, because until the end you can't really thank him because it might just get even better & you'll have to thank him again etc., but now, the bochur said, he took upon himself to stop watching any videos or clips, so now that he finished watching the comedian he approached him to give him his full thanks,

????????, now that you finished a round of 125 DAYS (what a huge significant number), you can truly celebrate it fully.

so, keep up your amazing heroic work, let's move on to the next round...

and let's keep on celebrating...

your friend and admirer,

ytw.

Thank you so, so much for reading my post and for your encouragement. I can't tell you how much it means to me.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by chancy - 23 Feb 2023 17:50

Hey TG,

You are a solid Bal Tshuva!

That means that you faced situations that you could have done what you used to do for decades and years, but you chose not to.

Do you remember what posted from the Holy Yismach Moshe? I will repost it just for you, so you see what you did in these 127 days. And what you will continue to do for the next couple of decades.

So writes the holy tazaddik.

On Rosh Chodesh Av of year 5144 in the morning, i dreamt and it was revealed to me the following, if a person sinned his whole life, or he was totally immersed with sins, **or he was**

addicted to one specific sin with a strong connection, and afterwards he regrets and cries terribly and he accepts upon himself to not sin anymore, even if he transgressed on all Krisos or Misos Beis Din, **he is FORGIVEN! and he doesn't need to do Tshuvah Hamishkol** (Tshuva that is weighted, meaning the opposite end of the spectrum of what you sinned in, e.g, a very hard form of tshuva),

Because the pain that he has leaving behind the connection and addiction that he has to that sin, is considered a cleansing as would Tshuvah Hamishkol.

Everything that the Rishonim and the Arizal ZT"L gave out to do these difficult tshuva's is only for someone that wasn't addicted in that sin, then he should fast to atone for the forbidden pleasures that he partook in, however, when someone is addicted to a sin, a whole time his YH is pushing him to do what he's used to be doing, and he refuses and leaves that path of sin over and over with all of his might, **he has immense pain to slaughter his YH time and again, and there is no greater tshuva then that!**

Blessed is Hashem who wants only good.

I hope this will motivate all of us suffering with this pain to continue down this path of tshuva, seeing that all of the pain is actually the best medicine on this world. DO NOT DESPAIR! It will get better.

Keep on inspiring us as always.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 23 Feb 2023 18:00

@chancy, thank you so much for your kind words and your encouragement. Your post gave me enormous strength! You are always here with the right encouragement and I love you for that!!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by chancy - 23 Feb 2023 20:29

I love you too!

Please stick to it and know that are are all rooting for you!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 23 Feb 2023 20:33

Your attitude is phenomenal. Your perspective is the true way to view this incident. Continued hatzlocha!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 23 Feb 2023 20:57

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 23 Feb 2023 20:33:](#)

Your attitude is phenomenal. Your perspective is the true way to view this incident. Continued hatzlocha!!

I owe every bit of my good attitude to you, my friend. Your patience when I am negative and angry or sad and depressed is nothing short of amazing. And the no-nonsense talks you give me help me keep my head on straight. How can I ever thank you for being willing to carve a place for me in your days? The value is incalculable and I have no words for my gratitude. Thank you.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 23 Feb 2023 23:10

This is refreshing because this is really the path to ?????? ??????

where all your sins are not just forgiven (like teshuva me'yirah) rather they are tuned into

merits!

kol hakavod keep it up!

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

Posted by frank.lee - 23 Feb 2023 23:12

You can tell her that you are encouraging someone else to be more careful with guarding their eyes, and in order to motivate them (us) you are also doing something in the area of shmiras
you want to do

something meaningful as a matching campaign

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

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 24 Feb 2023 00:28

Day #1 post fall. I will continue to...

KEEP ON TRUCKING!!!

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einayim. Even though there is possibly nothing bad that can be accessed

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

Posted by Eerie - 24 Feb 2023 00:31

My friend, you never cease to amaze and inspire! I loved your post about the proper way to see a fall. If only I could copy it and post it on every refrigerator in klal yisroel. Keep soaring!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 24 Feb 2023 00:46

[Eerie wrote on 24 Feb 2023 00:31:](#)

My friend, you never cease to amaze and inspire! I loved your post about the proper way to see a fall. If only I could copy it and post it on every refrigerator in klal yisroel. Keep soaring!

Thank you, @Eerie, for always being there with an encouraging word! It's people like you who bring GYE to life for so many others.

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