

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 Teshuvahguy - 26 Dec 2022 00:10

[yud909 wrote on 26 Dec 2022 00:04:](#)

I get so much chizuk from seeing posts like yours that show in real time how real and hard the struggle is and Bezras Hashem the follow up post tomorrow and the days after how you pulled through.

Keep it up, I'm rooting for you (and myself as I'm a few days behind you...)

And I get from you as well. Thank you for your wonderful posts.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 26 Dec 2022 21:13

I have a feeling this is going to be a long post and I thank everyone who will bother to read it all, as I have no other outlet for this terrible pain and I can't hold it in anymore. And the struggle with p*rn and mast is made exponentially harder due to all this emotional pain. My home life growing up was very hard. I was the youngest in the family (there were only 2 children, but I was the youngest person in the home) and I thought the behaviors that happened in my house were normal. Maybe if one of my parents had been ok, they would have balanced out the other and

counteracted the damage, but both my parents were mentally unhealthy (my mom was a narcissist, which I didn't really understand until I was in my 50s; and my dad was a weak man, chosen by my mother because of his weakness and manipulability, and he was often depressed. He may have actually been on the autism spectrum -- Asperger's? -- had they diagnosed those things back in the middle of the last century). My older sister was also mentally ill. When I was young, she had an eating disorder and, I later found out, she had Borderline Personality Disorder which made her not only sick, but mean, and I was a frequent target of her meanness. So basically, I had no protection at home and no one sane there to clue me in that the stuff going on in the house was not happening in all the other houses, as well.

So my mom was a very strong and manipulative person, but she was also very pretty and charming, and I loved her very much...so much that I never realized how she was setting me up to fail. My mother set both her children up to fail as she, unlike most parents, could not bear the idea of her children doing better in life than she did. Also, as a narcissist, she was grooming us to always circle her, vying for her attention and ready to serve her needs. She basically hobbled her children. And my dad was a frustrated angry man who did not know how to relate to me so he just didn't in any positive way. I got yelled at and stuff but not a lot of love from him (he didn't know how to express it) and no blueprint from him how to be a boy and grow into a healthy man. I'm sure that is how I ended up homosexual. The women in my life acted so superior to me (I truly believe my mother did not like men as people, and she and my sister treated my maleness as if it were some kind of disease. On top of that I was artistic and not athletic, so it was already hard for me in public school to fit in, but the dynamic in my home turned me into someone trying to be on the winning side (the females were the winners) and so I was pretty "faggy"* and was mercilessly teased. I was called faggot* long before I knew what it meant.

So I believed that women were both scary and way too good for the likes of me, and with my dad being who he is, I was starved for any kind of male bonding or affection, and I certainly did not have any male friends because I was such a misfit loser -- though I possessed extraordinary musical talent, which only made my hope for a normal childhood even dimmer. As a preteen, I began to sexualize my craving for male love, affection, protection, and acceptance and then, like I stated in my original post, I happened to look a little too hungrily at a man on the street (I was all of 14) and the next thing I knew I was in his bed. He was 33. Yes, it was his fault. Yes, it was statutory rape. But that said, I looked at HIM. I picked HIM. I wanted HIM. So how could it be his fault? He gave me alcohol and porn and sex and I was an addict for the next 40 years (see original post). My emotional connection to porn and masturbation as a self-medication is extremely strong and that is why I still struggle so hard today. I no longer have sex with men so porn and mast was my only outlet.

10 years ago. my 23-year-old daughter died suddenly. I'm pretty sure I have never actually dealt with her death, and I have just plodded along trying to cope with it. It haunts me. I'm positive I have PTSD from it. I sometimes get waves of nausea from the anxiety attacks when I think of her. All the memories make me sad. I could have been a better father. I was a mess much of

the time, but I adored my children in a way my father never loved me and they knew it. My relationship with my parents in later years (once I finally realized the damage they had done) was strained. The atmosphere with them was toxic and I had to protect my own mental health...but I made sure my children had their grandparents. My sister and I have never been friends. She is still sick and mean and I cannot handle that. My mother died 5 months ago. and my only living child, a 40-year-old son, has not spoken to me since the day she died, because now my sister, his aunt, is all alone and I am a terrible person for not rushing in to fill the hole in her life now that her mother is gone. For 15 years, I have explained to him over and over how hard it is for me and how I had to protect myself mentally from them, and that is why I did what I was able to do but I couldn't do more...and he ALWAYS said he understood, and supported me. He got it. Until he didn't. And now, I have lost my other child to my mean sister. He has not contacted me, he has blocked my phone number so I cannot contact him.

This pain of all this loss is making my struggle with porn and masturbation so much harder. How many losses can I take? I lost my manhood to homosexuality. I lost my first marriage because I was still acting out with men and my first wife didn't like that (surprise, surprise, but I COULD NOT STOP). I lost my daughter to death, and I now lost my son to the darkest side of my own family. My mother and sister made me believe from very young childhood that women don't like men and especially not their private parts. So I turned to men who definitely liked my private part. But I still have this notion of women in my head and it makes it so emotionally scary to have relations with a woman that I don't even try. My wife knows all about my past and she does not push me but I know I am cheating her and I am cheating myself. I feel shame about my penis and I feel she must think it is disgusting (even though she says the opposite -- these paradigms die hard). I'm stuck and frustrated. I can't go to a non-frum therapist because they would tell me I'm gay and I should embrace it. That's how my first marriage ended. I can't tell a frum therapist because I'd be way too afraid somehow my horrible story would get into the community and my poor wife would be a laughingstock and we would have to move.

So this is why I struggle so much and feel so sad. I am trying to understand what Hashem wants from me with all this baggage. Thank you all for reading (if you bothered to, and if you didn't I certainly understand). P.S. If, somehow, anyone realizes who I am by the details here, please don't out me. I can't take any more trauma. I'm too old to start again. Thank you.

* This is not language I personally use. It is necessary to convey the truth of my history but I do not personally use this kind of derogatory language about other people of any kind.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 26 Dec 2022 21:20

HUG!!!

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

Posted by Eerie - 27 Dec 2022 17:06

Wow, wow, wow. My dear friend, my heart aches for your pain. It really does. . And the fact that you're here after all you have been through and continue to deal with, it's beyond my comprehension. May Hashem give you strength, my friend!

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

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 27 Dec 2022 17:37

I want to apologize to everyone on here for my post yesterday. In that moment when I was writing it I was feeling such intense pain that to contain it and not express it felt just impossible. And every word is true. But in the past 15 years, since I became a Baal Teshuvah, I have completely changed my life. It was the woman who is now my wife who gently urged me to talk to an authentic (orthodox) rabbi. She knew my family history and all I had been through. I took her advice, and with the help of a Rabbi and this amazing eishes chayil, I reclaimed my life. I stopped my sexual compulsion to act out with men (that was a condition of my Teshuvah 15 years ago) and I have never, since that moment, struggled with the desire to be with a man again — a thought that previously would have been utterly impossible. I still struggle with porn and masturbation, but I am 67 days clean now and really working on it. I have tackled and mastered my bad middah of getting angry and speaking without thinking. I became shomer Shabbos and mitzvos at age 53 after not believing in G-d or anything else at all. I go to minyan, I try to learn Torah, and I work on my middos constantly, always looking for ways to be a better person and a better Jew. My wife is so proud of the life I have built out of the ashes in which she found me. I have become a much better father, but ironically, my biological son seems to resent the one thing that enabled that growth (embracing Torah Judaism). While he sees that I am a much better person, he also seems to resent that I “changed the rules of the game mid-play.” I hope someday he will give me a chance to explain again, why I could not step in to help my sister, but if he doesn’t, I know that I did nothing to provoke his current treatment of me. Anyway, the bottom line here is that although I do have all this incredible pain from my life that I described yesterday, I also have the knowledge that Hashem showed me a way out of the mud and darkness. 15 years ago, Hashem saved me when I was literally at the 49th level of tumah. He didn’t write me off, he lifted me up. He gave me a second chance to be a good husband to my literal angel of a wife, and to be a good father to my son and stepchildren, who all love me

like their own father, who failed them. Hashem has allowed all of this. So I just want to balance the post about pain with this post about redemption and hope. Thank you all for being patient with me and accepting of me. This is truly the only place where I can share any of this and have other humans hear me and touch me with comfort and compassion. So may Hashem bless you all with myriad brachos and show each one of you the path to your personal refuah (I hope that makes sense-not so good with the Hebrew stuff!) Thank you Hashem for everything you do for all of us and thank you, GYE.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Hakolhevel - 27 Dec 2022 18:35

TG.

Great posts

i would never know from your other posts on this forum that this the type of pain you deal with. You're a inspiration!

Just one piece of practical advice. If you are scared of using a local frum therapist (if there are any) many frum therapists today operate on zoom, so you can find someone who lives way outside of your community.

All the best to you!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 27 Dec 2022 18:48

[Hakolhevel wrote on 27 Dec 2022 18:35:](#)

TG.

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Just one piece of practical advice. If you are scared of using a local frum therapist (if there are any) many frum therapists today operate on zoom, so you can find someone who lives way outside of your community.

All the best to you!

Thank you, hakolhevel! Honestly, I really try to be positive and supportive on here and elsewhere. Sometimes I just gotta let it out, but my default is to give a lot of encouragement and try to be helpful. We guys on here, despite being anonymous, come to have real connection to each other! Thanks again!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Human being - 27 Dec 2022 21:08

[Teshuvahguy wrote on 26 Dec 2022 21:13:](#)

I have a feeling this is going to be a long post and I thank everyone who will bother to read it all, as I have no other outlet for this terrible pain and I can't hold it in anymore.

So my mom was a very strong and manipulative person, but she was also very pretty and charming, and I loved her very much...so much that I never realized how she was setting me up to fail. My mother set both her children up to fail as she, unlike most parents, could not bear the idea of her children doing better in life than she did. Also, as a narcissist, she was grooming us to always circle her, vying for her attention and ready to serve her needs. She basically hobbled her children. And my dad was a frustrated angry man who did not know how to relate to me so he just didn't in any positive way. I got yelled at and stuff but not a lot of love from him (he didn't

know how to express it) and no blueprint from him how to be a boy and grow into a healthy man. I'm sure that is how I ended up homosexual.

I can't tell a frum therapist because I'd be way too afraid somehow my horrible story would get into the community and my poor wife would be a laughingstock and we would have to move.

I'm just reading and hearing your pain. Thanks for having the courage to post it. So much pain, hurt, anger, frustration, fear and so many more hurt feelings. I'm so sorry you have had so many deeply painful challenges. No one deserves to get treated like you did. You deserve love, care concern and warmth. Acceptance, support and guidance, not because of what you gain others, but rather because you are intrinsically valuable. And you are intrinsically enough, and good, and a human being. Tears and hugs, imagine me holding your hand.

Consider this a different post.

All licensed therapists are required to sign a HIPA form which prohibits them from sharing any of your information with anyone. If they do share, they lose their license and lose their job, parnassa and go down in shame. thousands of Frum people have shared similar information to you to 10s of Frum therapists. Go for help! You can do it! there's no downside (except money) only possibilities!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Human being - 27 Dec 2022 21:25

[Teshuvahguy wrote on 27 Dec 2022 17:37:](#)

I want to apologize to everyone on here for my post yesterday.

What are you apologizing for? Thank you for having the courage to post!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 27 Dec 2022 23:05

I'm so sick of myself. I can't take it. Today at mincha was a complete disaster. There were too many male distractions...usually I have been really good at tuning it out, but with SSA there is no mechitza to shield me. I was just all over the place with my eyes and thoughts of images that no one should have while davening. I'm sick to my stomach to think what Hashem is thinking about me. The yetzer hara owned me tonight. So sad. Times like this I truly hate myself.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Vehkam - 27 Dec 2022 23:35

[Teshuvahguy wrote on 27 Dec 2022 23:05:](#)

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Did you choose to have these thoughts?

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 27 Dec 2022 23:56

[Vehkam wrote on 27 Dec 2022 23:35:](#)

[Teshuvahguy wrote on 27 Dec 2022 23:05:](#)

I'm so sick of myself. I can't take it. Today at mincha was a complete disaster. There were too many male distractions...usually I have been really good at tuning it out, but with SSA there is no mechitza to shield me. I was just all over the place with my eyes and thoughts of images that no one should have while davening. I'm sick to my stomach to think what Hashem is thinking about me. The yetzer hara owned me tonight. So sad. Times like this I truly hate myself.

Did you choose to have these thoughts?

No, but no matter how hard I tried I just couldn't control it. My head and eyes seemed to have declared their independence. I was literally powerless. I'd look away and then right back. And there were issues in all directions. I just felt out of control. And to get an image in my head like I had while standing before Hashem. I don't think that's ever happened—with a visual like that. I'm like truly ashamed.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 28 Dec 2022 00:09

Can I share a secret with you?
Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 28 Dec 2022 00:22

[iLoveHashem247 wrote on 28 Dec 2022 00:09:](#)

Can I share a secret with you?
Warning: Spoiler!

Thank you sooooo much. That makes sense to me and I can see it differently now. I appreciate you (and all the guys here) so much!

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