

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 iLoveHashem247 - 29 Dec 2022 00:41

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Start here for foundational info

The Coming Revolution by Rav Zamir Cohen

[a.co/d/fL6usF7](https://a.co/d/fL6usF7)

?Thank you for the kind words, but you must understand that it is one and the same person. It is so important not to beat yourself up and let yourself go down because I thank you for the kind words, but you must understand that it is one in the same person. It is so important not to beat yourself up and let yourself get down because one part of you has a certain drive and struggle.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 00:41

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[Eerie wrote on 28 Dec 2022 23:18:](#)

Not only is it not nothing, it is everything! It is tons! And don't forget the main point, don't let the YH convince you to feel bad that you have struggles, the struggles are your ticket to all the good things, the struggles are what make you beloved to Hashem, the struggles are what make you special! Never forget how proud you make Hashem that you are fighting. Keep trucking, my holy friend!

Honestly, Eerie...it's so hard for me to see myself as a good Jew. I tend to focus on all the things I'm not doing and I forget to look at what I am doing. I work so hard on myself to be better all the time. Sometimes depression gets in the way and distorts my view of what's what. So hearing from others that they see good, that they look at where I was and where I am and see big growth, that helps me connect more with my successes. It's really valuable to my growth. Thank you!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 00:49

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[iLoveHashem247 wrote on 29 Dec 2022 00:41:](#)

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I ordered the book, and thanks for recommending it.

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

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Posted by iLoveHashem247 - 29 Dec 2022 01:41

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Enjoy! Also anything by rabbi Aryeh Kaplan. "Encounters" (Encounters [a.co/d/eTkPooB](https://a.co/d/eTkPooB)) is a great start.

and very important to learn Halacha. If you are ashkenaz start with this (Kleinman Edition Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Code of Jewish Law 5 Vol Slipcased Set [a.co/d/30k7Obj](https://a.co/d/30k7Obj))

if you are Sephardic this is an excellent resource: <https://judaicaspot.com/products/yalkut-yosef-17-vol-set>

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 01:47

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[iLoveHashem247 wrote on 29 Dec 2022 01:41:](#)

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if you are Sephardic this is an excellent resource: <https://judaicaspot.com/products/yalkut-yosef-17-vol-set>

Though I have not read Encounters, I'm a big fan of Aryeh Kaplan. And, I am ashkenaz and just ordered the Kleinman kitzur shulchan aruch at the suggestion of my Shul Rabbi! Looks like you think alike! Despite having the Metsudah set of shulchan aruch in the house, my rabbi says the Artscroll is the one to have. Thanks for all the recommendations!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 02:33

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Well here's some good news: **70 days!!!**

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by chancy - 29 Dec 2022 18:33

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Good idea.

I love Rav Zamir cohens books. he is amazing.

But TG, if you want more in terms of basic judaism, i would advise you to check out chabad.org  
it is mind-blowingly amazing what they have on their. you can spend weeks reading and  
watching everything from basic halachos to Kabalistic concepts and not get tired.....

I love it.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 18:38

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[chancy wrote on 29 Dec 2022 18:33:](#)

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watching everything from basic halachos to Kabalistic concepts and not get tired.....

I love it.

Hey, thanks, Chancy! Don't know why I didn't think of that. I'm not a Lubavitcher, but so what? I can still learn from their site! Great idea.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by chancy - 29 Dec 2022 18:44

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Im not a Lubavitcher either. But they have a lot to offer and not just on their site....

They are revolutionary. But lets not get sidetracked here

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by jackthejew - 29 Dec 2022 19:25

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[chancy wrote on 29 Dec 2022 18:44:](#)

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You can also try the Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan translation of Derech Hashem. The Derech Hashem is a codification of the system of Judaism, and it goes through how it all fits together in a stunning way.

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 19:30

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[jackthejew wrote on 29 Dec 2022 19:25:](#)

[chancy wrote on 29 Dec 2022 18:44:](#)

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You can also try the Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan translation of Derech Hashem. The Derech Hashem is a codification of the system of Judaism, and it goes through how it all fits together in a stunning way.

JacktheJew...just finished my first read of Derech Hashem last week. Need to read it again and again to gain deeper understanding and to retain more in my brain. Was so thrilled with it that I started Daas Tevunos. Amazing stuff. I'm sure I'm only grasping the very basic concepts but I am really getting a lot from the Ramchal. Thanks for the suggestions. Keep 'em coming!!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by chancy - 29 Dec 2022 20:00

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TG,

you are not gonna belive this, but i myself also finished the derech hashem for the first time last week.....

The Ramchal is second to none!

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Re: Still work to do but there is always hope!  
Posted by Teshuvahguy - 29 Dec 2022 20:22

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[chancy wrote on 29 Dec 2022 20:00:](#)

TG,

you are not gonna belive this, but i myself also finished the derech hashem for the first time last week.....

The Ramchal is second to none!

Any special insights from it you saw? I'm sure i didn't get out of it what someone with Torah education would...so if anything jumped out at you let me know!

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

Posted by connected - 29 Dec 2022 20:25

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I recommend learning the Derech Hashem with Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb's shiur - if you dare.

I finished DH four times. Once on my own, once from R' Ari Bensoussan, and twice from Rabbi Gottlieb.

Rabbi Gottlieb can be challenging to follow, but the clarity I gained from his shiur is immeasurable. (As a bonus, he answers questions via email, which I took/take advantage of.)

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