

Hello Everyone

Posted by yesodchazak - 04 Jan 2023 01:24

Hi everyone, this is my first time posting on the forum so I thought I would share a bit about my experience.

I'm currently 19, and live with my parents. I didn't grow up in a religious setting, and there are few Jews where I live. However, my family is not irreligious and when I was a child we would go to synagogue most Saturdays. My family always observed certain mitzvot and traditions (for example celebrating holidays, eating only kosher meat). Since my mother is originally from Israel, she taught me Hebrew at a young age.

I was probably first exposed to pornography at age 11 or 12 in school. I don't remember exactly how it happened, but I remember an instance in which a kid was playing porn videos in class. As a kid misdirected curiosity led me down the dark rabbit hole of porn. I was inherently disgusted and traumatized by the things I saw and knew how wrong it was but the shock of what I saw kept me looking. Since then, I have consistently tried to quit but have not yet achieved permanent freedom. Over the past several years, I have generally relapsed every few weeks - few months. Subconsciously, it became a reactionary behavior during times when I was overwhelmed by negative emotions and not consciously present.

For years I was so ashamed and felt unable to talk to anyone about the issue or look for help online, but that just made me feel even more lonely and only perpetuated the habit. The self-hatred and feeling of unworthiness made me physically ill. In short it caused a lot of suffering. Since then I spoke to some friends about the topic, and discovered that most if not all of them were also exposed at a young age and developed a habit. I eventually told my mom, who was a bit shocked at first but responded supportively.

All this has taught me about struggle, and led me to develop a greater sense of empathy and compassion for others who are struggling. It has led me to a deeper understanding of life and to find answers to some of life's most important questions. This understanding has helped me change my life for the better, and become more aware of my purpose. I have been working harder to let go of the things which held me down in the past, and as a result have started to heal and become truer to myself. Sometimes it's really difficult, but I try to see the positivity in every situation and remember that everything is ultimately for the best. The more a person trusts in God - which is beyond the limitations of this world - the more a person is able to transcend those limitations.

I wish you all the best, and am sure you will succeed in overcoming your challenges

=====

====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by Zedj - 04 Jan 2023 04:15

[yesodchazak wrote on 04 Jan 2023 01:24:](#)

Hi everyone, this is my first time posting on the forum so I thought I would share a bit about my experience.

I'm currently 19, and live with my parents. I didn't grow up in a religious setting, and there are few Jews where I live. However, my family is not irreligious and when I was a child we would go to synagogue most Saturdays. My family always observed certain mitzvot and traditions (for example celebrating holidays, eating only kosher meat). Since my mother is originally from Israel, she taught me Hebrew at a young age.

I was probably first exposed to pornography at age 11 or 12 in school. I don't remember exactly how it happened, but I do remember an instance in which a kid in my class played inappropriate videos in class. As a child I was always curious, and that curiosity led me down the dark rabbit hole of porn. I was inherently disgusted and traumatized by the things I saw and knew how wrong it was. Despite that, the shock of what I saw kept me looking. Since then, I have consistently tried to quit but have not yet achieved permanent freedom. Over the past several years, I have generally had a relapse every few weeks - few months. Subconsciously, it became a reactionary behavior when I during times when I was overwhelmed by negative emotions and not thinking consciously.

For years I was so ashamed that I felt unable to open up to anyone about the issue, or even search for help online. Unfortunately, this made me feel very alone and only perpetuated the habit. The self-hatred led me to become physically ill, and caused a lot of suffering. Since then I have spoken to some friends about the topic, and discovered that most - if not all - of them were also exposed at a young age and developed a habit. I eventually told my mom, who has been supportive and has helped me stay away from triggers when I'm vulnerable.

However, all this has taught me a lot about struggle, and develop a greater sense of empathy and compassion for others who are struggling. It has led me to a deeper understanding of life and find answers to some of life's most important questions. This understanding has helped me change my life for the better, and become more aware of my purpose. I have been working

harder to let go of the things which held me down in the past, and as a result have started to heal and become truer to myself. I try to see the positivity in every situation and remember that everything is ultimately for the best. I try to keep in mind that the more a person trusts in God - which is beyond the limitations of this world - the more a person is able to transcend those limitations.

I wish you all the best, and am sure you will succeed in finding true freedom.

Wow!

Thank you for sharing your story.

It seems like you have a great perspective on the struggle.

Wishing you much continued success

=====
=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 04 Jan 2023 12:30

Welcome. Hang around. Get to know the chevra and iyh you will graduate! Sounds like you are the kind of fellow that will iyh help many other guys once you get a hang of how to stay clean.

=====
=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by DavidT - 04 Jan 2023 17:34

[yesodchazak wrote on 04 Jan 2023 01:24:](#)

However, all this has taught me a lot about struggle, and develop a greater sense of empathy and compassion for others who are struggling. It has led me to a deeper understanding of life and find answers to some of life's most important questions. This understanding has helped me change my life for the better, and become more aware of my purpose. I have been working harder to let go of the things which held me down in

the past, and as a result have started to heal and become truer to myself. I try to see the positivity in every situation and remember that everything is ultimately for the best. I try to keep in mind that the more a person trusts in God - which is beyond the limitations of this world - the more a person is able to transcend those limitations.

I wish you all the best, and am sure you will succeed in finding true freedom.

Amazing! You're a true role model for all of us! Thank you for the inspiration - please keep it up and stay connected here.. we need people like you in our great family here at GYE!

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by chancy - 04 Jan 2023 19:40

Wellcome Yesodchazak,

You made the right decision by joining GYE.

There are lots of different tools that you can use based on your preference.

You will also find lots of individuals who went thru and are still going thru some of the same struggles that you are. So stick around and get familiar with this amazing life changing site.

I would love to hear more about your current situation.

What you are your main struggle? Porn, Masturbation or both? did you ever go to therapy regarding this?

Only share what you are comfortable sharing..... this is a no judgment place.....

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by yesodchazak - 04 Jan 2023 22:19

In short, for me porn leads to everything else.

But fundamentally, my main issue is how I get to porn in the first place. It all starts in the mind. When a person has a thought come to mind, there are two ways things could go. A person could either reject that thought immediately, or entertain it. If a person entertains that thought, then they give it an opportunity to expand and develop. ????? ??????. If that thought is negative, then a person will continue to attract negative thoughts. The longer a person allows that thought to develop, the more difficult it becomes to redirect one's thoughts. Eventually, if a person does not reject the developing thought pattern, then it will manifest itself physically - ??? ?????? ??????. The more often a person hesitates before rejecting a negative thought pattern, the more their mind becomes used to entertaining that thought pattern and the more entrenched it becomes. As a result, it becomes even harder to redirect one's thoughts to a positive place.

To quote parashat Beresh*^t, "???? ?????". If a person doesn't leave an opening for a negative thought - a bad seed - to enter the garden of their mind, then no weeds can grow. It's much harder to pull up a weed that has already taken root than it is to prevent that weed from growing in the first place. However, all of us are here because in one way or another we let those bad seeds be planted. The goal is to completely uproot the weeds that have grown, and prevent any new bad seed from entering the garden of one's mind.

I haven't gone to therapy, but I have come across some books and videos which have helped me in my effort to change my mindset for the better. If you want, I can send you some titles and links. It is so true that if you change your mind, you change your world.

=====

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by Eerie - 05 Jan 2023 01:46

Wow! You sound like a seriously intelligent fellow, your post tells of clear thinking, purpose and direction. And you're so young! You have a beautiful future awaiting you b'ezras Hashem. You also seem to be well versed in Jewish thought, and it seems you experienced a lot of self-growth through your efforts. Keep posting, my holy friend! We want to hear from you! And of course, Keep trucking!

=====

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by tractatek - 05 Jan 2023 03:33

.

=====

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by yesodchazak - 05 Jan 2023 05:44

I haven't had a formal Jewish education, but your post reminded me of something I heard regarding the shema.

It has to do with the idea "?? ????? ?????,?? ????? ??????"

"??? ?????? ?' ???????? ?' ???"

'hashem' refers to "the right hand of the creator", or midat hachessed.

'elokeinu' refers to "the left hand of the creator", or midat hagvura

In the shema, the repetition of "hashem" emphasizes the idea that everything begins with revealed chesed and ends with revealed chesed, even if in between we experience dinim. And, ultimately, everything is one - ??? ?????? ??????? - the dinim are simply concealed chesed.

The creator, being ??? ??? ???, is always bestowing abundance unconditionally. Whether a person receives that in a concealed or revealed way - from the proverbial "left hand" or "right hand" of the creator depends on their actions.

The end goal of the nisyonot and yisurim an individual goes through is to bring a person to recognize that everything the creator does is good - the creator is "???? ????????" and everything is an expression of the love of the creator. The events in life which distance an individual from the creator (the action of "?? ?????? ??????") eventually lead a person to become closer to the creator (the action of "?? ?????? ???????"). Once a person recognizes the good that

comes to him in a concealed way, then it is no longer concealed and he recognizes all that comes to him as the revealed chesed of the creator. He sees beyond the duality and separateness of this world, and realizes that everything is fundamentally one.

"???? ???? ???? ?' ??? ???? ??"

This general concept relates to the pasuk from tehillim "???? ?' ????? ???? ?' ???? ??" (This same pasuk is also a famous chabad nigun)

This also relates to the pasuk "??? ???? ???? ??". The overview in my siddur references a story attributed to Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner. Most people would understand the pasuk to mean that a person is a tzadik because he got up despite falling so many times. However, Rabbi Hutner made the point that in order for someone to grow and become a tzadik, they must first experience those falls.

=====

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by taheerlibeinu - 05 Jan 2023 13:21

Wow.. i am completely blown away by you. To be 19 and have such a strong desire to change, the way you write shows maturity that far exceeds your age. To have opened up to your mum and gotten what sounds like a very positive response.. You are for sure on a very good path and so much further along then you might think. Keep going, don't ever stop.. keep trying and iyH you will get there. Wishing you much Hatzlacha.

=====

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by Teshuvahguy - 05 Jan 2023 16:00

Thank you for these beautiful and well-thought-out comments. May I ask which Siddur you are referring to in that post referring to Rav Hutner? Thanks, and keep on posting. It's amazing reading.

=====

=====

Re: Hello Everyone

Posted by yesodchazak - 05 Jan 2023 17:26

Thanks,

it's The Expanded Artscroll Siddur, Wasserman Edition.

=====