

Just getting started

Posted by monseyid41 - 13 Mar 2023 03:24

Hello everyone, I am a new member of GYE and I am excited to be joining this chaburah of Yidden who are striving to come closer to Hashem. I would like to start out with a confession of sorts. I actually signed up about 2 months ago, not really knowing what this was all about, but hopeful that it could be helpful to me. Before I actually checked in or started any kind of program, I was reading a lot of the different comments from people in the forum, just to get a feel of what people were struggling with and to see if there was anything in common with my own struggles, and I was actually kind of turned off. Because when I was reading all the different stories of people with the challenges they have, I started thinking: "This is really not for me. True, I struggle with Shmiras Einayim, and I have looked at things and done things I shouldn't have, but these people are talking about addiction to porn, masturbating daily for years at a time, etc. these people have serious issues, I'm just a regular person who once in a while gets caught up with the Yetzer Hara. This is not the kind of crowd I belong in". Yes, that's the view that I had from up on my high horse. But some time after that I fell again, with porn and masturbation, and when I was feeling all guilty and horrible about myself, it hit me. Maybe I do need some help. Maybe I'm not any better than all those people in GYE that I so casually dismissed. So I went back on and started reading some more. And one of the first things I read in the forum was from Eerie, entitled "It's all in the name", and I literally broke down crying. Because I have so many things in common with his story. For one, I don't believe that I'm addicted, but it really doesn't matter if you give yourself (or anyone else) that label. The main thing is I have fallen many times in the past, and I am looking to improve myself, and that is true about everyone here. Also, I too am in chinuch and I am dealing with the same feelings that Eerie expressed about the hypocrisy of someone teaching Torah and giving over our heilige mesorah to the next generation when he himself gets caught up in the worst Aveiros (I read the responses as well and I found them very much on target). And then, when he mentioned that he discovered one computer in his school that had unfiltered internet, I almost fell off my chair. This literally happened to me as well (do we work in the same school?) So, thank you Eerie, for opening my eyes and allowing me to realize that we are all here for the same reason; not to judge anyone else and decide who's better than whom, but to grow together and help each other in our shared goal of Kirvas Elokim. And thank you as well to everyone else (if you're still reading at this point, double thank you!) for allowing me to join you all in this holy endeavor. I haven't actually gotten to my story yet, but I think this is enough for now. I would like to wish you all much Hatzlacha in your Avodas Hakodesh and I hope this can be a fresh start for me as well.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Yeshayahu 41:6 - 13 Mar 2023 03:46

Welcome welcome!!

We already have something in common as I'm also a big chassid of Eerie:)

I relate to everything you're saying. No clinical addiction, haven't been masturbating for years and years, never watched porn, and also in a position of influence. But falling to the YH nonetheless, and I have found GYE to be tremendously helpful! We are all in this together regardless of the level of struggle (I think it even says so on one of GYE's videos). It's true that it's easier to relate to people who are more in your ballpark but rest assured there are plenty of us who are in your situation. Please stick around and share your story with us; we are all soldiers in this army fighting the last battle.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by jackthejew - 13 Mar 2023 13:28

Hi! Welcome! Great to hear from you! Much Hatzlacha in the Milchemes Hakoidesh!

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Trying The Best - 13 Mar 2023 13:45

Hello and welcome!

this place is for everyone that wants to get helped in a comfortable way without knowing who you are! Doesn't matter if you're addicted or no.

just stick around and looking forward to hear your story!

And by the way, Eerie is my Rabbi here on GYE! He's amazing!

Enjoy,

Trying the best

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Eerie - 13 Mar 2023 19:33

Hi, my friend! Welcome to the family! I'm humbled to have a small part in your joining us, if something I've written about myself helps one Yid come closer to home, then it's worth all the effort. And I'm looking forward to getting to know you! I'm sure you will be an asset to all of us here. Please stick around, and keep posting.

p.s. You can reach reach me at the email in my signature, or better yet, reach out to my mentor, the person who has helped hundreds of people break free, Hashem Help Me. He can be reached at michelgelner@gmail.com

Hatzlacha, and looking forward to hearing your story and your thoughts!

p.p.s. about us working in the same Yeshiva, if your name reveals the city you work in, we do not work in the same place:)

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by DavidT - 13 Mar 2023 20:38

[monseyid41 wrote on 13 Mar 2023 03:24:](#)

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Eerie expressed about the hypocrisy of someone teaching Torah and giving over our heilige mesorah to the next generation when he himself gets caught up in the worst Aveiros (I read the responses as well and I found them very much on target). And then, when he mentioned that he discovered one computer in his school that had unfiltered internet, I almost fell off my chair. This literally happened to me as well (do we work in the same school?) So, thank you Eerie, for opening my eyes and allowing me to realize that we are all here for the same reason; not to judge anyone else and decide who's better than whom, but to grow together and help each other in our shared goal of Kirvas Elokim. And thank you as well to everyone else (if you're still reading at this point, double thank you!) for allowing me to join you all in this holy endeavor. I haven't actually gotten to my story yet, but I think this is enough for now. I would like to wish you all much Hatzlacha in your Avodas Hakodesh and I hope this can be a fresh start for me as well.

Welcome!

It's so good to have another fellow yid that is here for the same purpose like all of us - to become better people and do the will of Hashem in these difficult times with such big nisyonos.

I'll write some tips based on the teaching of the Steipler Z"L.

1- It is crucial that one not give in to despair, chas v'shalom. One must constantly place his hope in Hashem to help him [to prevail over his yetzer hara]. Is anything beyond Hashem's power? And Chazal have taught us: "One who seeks to purify himself will be granted Heavenly assistance

2- Someone once came to the "Steipler Gaon" to complain about this problem. So the Steipler asked him "Are there times that you're misgaber" so he answered "usually I fail". So the Steipler asked again "And are there times that you're misgaber" so he answered "Yes, but rarely" so the Steipler explained to him that every time you pass the test it's a Kinyan that's yours to keep. The times that you fail are erasable.

3- Yiras Shamayim is a great tool for avoiding sin until the person has stepped into the yetzer hara's territory. Once he has already succumbed by entering a place, a website, or picking up a periodical that is forbidden, his yiras Shamayim will almost certainly not help him, as the Steipler writes in a letter: It is well known from the writings of holy sefarim that at a moment when the yetzer hara is overpowering him, a person loses virtually all his fear of Heaven, and only a faint residue remains. Therefore, when someone feels himself being overpowered by his yetzer hara, he should immediately go among people in whose presence he would be ashamed to sin.

Please keep us posted and stay strong!

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by monseyid41 - 14 Mar 2023 04:05

Thanks to all those who responded and welcomed me, each in their own way. It's amazing to have this kind of support and place of acceptance without judgement. I'm still trying to get my bearings and navigate my way around here. I've been binge reading a lot of the posts in the various forums, and I'm trying to get going with the flight to freedom, as well as reading a chapter a day from the book "The battle of our generation" which some people had recommended. I'm still not quite ready to share my full story, but hopefully soon I will be.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Vehkam - 14 Mar 2023 06:05

Get acclimated at your own pace! It took me a while to get comfortable enough to share.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by monseyid41 - 15 Mar 2023 04:32

In my initial introduction I didn't actually post my story because I was a little bit hesitant to publicize it but after being part of this wonderful group of Bnei Aliyah for some time now, I feel like I can open up to you. Since I was 13 I have been struggling with SSA. It was, and is, a long and painful struggle. All through high school, I was in agony from having to be around other boys whom I felt attracted to. I struggled to control my urges, while being constantly fearful that someone would find out. This is something that I feel is so difficult to explain to others who haven't experienced this (even as they have their own struggles). How do I explain what it means to not be able to daven properly in yeshiva or shul because I'm fighting the urge to look at other boys rolling up their sleeves to put their Tefillin on? Or what it means to go into Yom Kippur after a challenging year, trying to get a new start and to come to a real Teshuva, but I can't go to the Mikvah Erev Yom Kippur and come out with that feeling of purity and Kedusha because I know that for me it would just be a Mitzvah Haba B'aveira? And at the same time, I also had a strong and healthy regular Y"H for women, so it's not like I got a break when I went out into the street. And yet, at the same time, I realize that just because my struggle is different, doesn't mean it is harder than what anyone else is going through.

Anyhow, back to my story. The agony of SSA included not being able to have (or keep) regular friendships with boys my age because the boys who I naturally liked, I was also physically attracted to and the boys who I didn't feel attracted to (not so good looking), I also didn't like them or want to be friends with them. I actually had a really close friend in high school who abruptly distanced himself from me. I must have gotten too physically touchy or something and he sensed that something wasn't quite right. Although he was nice enough not to confront me, it was a really hard blow for me. I didn't really have many other friends. I actually ended up switching yeshivas because of that.

Skipping ahead a few years, my Rosh Yeshiva convinced me to go to therapy, not just for SSA specifically, but also because I was struggling with depression. That's when things got really bad. In the beginning it did help a little bit, but then, the therapist (a supposedly religious Jew) advised me to look at porn as a way to channel my sexual feeling towards women and hopefully that would diminish my attraction towards males. Big mistake. Not only didn't it work, but at that point I lost any kind of sensitivity to the Issur of Arayos and everything became Muttar. Since at the time I was doing it, he convinced me that it was actually a Mitzvah, to help me deal with my SSA. Although I stopped seeing him shortly after, I was damaged for life. I don't remember if that was the first time I looked at porn, but from that point on it became totally acceptable for me (like the Gemarrah in Kiddushin says). It also made me resistant to therapy in future years, even though I desperately could have used competent and healthy therapy.

Shortly after this, I went to learn in Eretz Yisrael and those two years were the best of my life. My learning took off to a whole new level, and I was able to gain a confidence and self-esteem that I had never had before. However, the Yetzer Hara wasn't exactly taking a vacation. Towards the end of my stay, I got involved with another bochur. It actually happened quite suddenly, and the other boy initiated it. But I didn't resist and this led to my first (and only) sexual encounter (B"h we stopped short of actual Kareis). Shortly after, I returned to America, got married and today I am happily married with children be"h. However, the struggle continues and these days, when I fall, it is usually with gay teen porn or with milder stuff on youtube. My attraction to women is still there, but it seems not as strong as my SSA. Thankfully, I don't think I'm addicted, just someone who struggles from time to time. After my marriage, I had gone a few years without any falls, and then, more recently, in the last couple of years I sort of got into a pattern where I would go from Elul until after sukkos really strong, sometimes until after Channukah, before falling again. And then the rest of the year it would be a few time here and a few times there, until Rosh chodesh Elul came again. But my goal is to stop the up and down, on again off again cycle, and just be clean and stay clean and then hopefully I can come to the next Yom Kippur as a full Baal Teshuva.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Trying The Best - 15 Mar 2023 05:03

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wow what a story!!

I am just wondering.... Did anyone ever hear of such a thing of telling someone- specially a young boy - to LOOK AT PORN to help for SSA?!?!?!

I mean,.... This therapist literally damaged you....like you said.

I am mamesh shaken up hearing this.

I am so happy you got to the right place and you'll bsd be on the right track fast!

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Eerie - 15 Mar 2023 23:52

[monseyid41 wrote on 15 Mar 2023 04:32:](#)

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Wow. That's a lot you were carrying around for so long. I'm sorry. I'm so happy you joined our family here. We care about you and we want to hear anything you'd like to share. My friend, with all that challenged you for so many years, and specifically your Yom Kippur challenges, realize how amazing you are to be the person you are today. While most of us were kvelling from Yom Kippur, and we left it on a high, convinced of the forgiveness we were granted, you left feeling crushed, forlorn, and rejected. I can speak for myself when I say that Yom Kippur is always a day I look forward to because I know I need so much forgiveness from Hashem. And in spite of your challenges, you built yourself up, you are in chinuch, raising a beautiful family, my friend, you are amazing! Keep sharing and keep trucking!

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by monseyid41 - 21 Mar 2023 15:00

Hello, everyone. I'd just like to share with you something that I have been feeling for a few days now but it's taken me time to put it into words.

In the past, when I have dealt with these struggles in Inyanei Kedusha, it has often consumed my life in a way that stifles me in other areas of Avodas Hashem. What I mean is, there are many things that I would like to work on such as my davening, dikduk hamitzvos, and general D'veikus, etc. However, when I am in the heat of battle with the Yetzer Hara, these things tend to fall to the side. Not necessarily consciously, but it's almost like deep down I'm telling myself: "Oh so you're struggling not to go surfing on youtube but you want to do ????? with Rashi? Seriously?" Or, "you're having non-stop ????? all day but you're worried about leaving davening before Aleinu?" These thoughts, even if subconscious, were always there because it definitely feels hypocritical to try to be ????? in "smaller" areas when you're struggling with ?????.

And yet, I think we all realize that that's nothing but ??? ???. However, since joining GYE and starting my current clean streak (only 13 days, but still..) I have been freed not just in the main struggle for which I'm here, but in so many other areas as well. I have been able to take stock of my Avodas Hashem and try to make adjustments or improvements without the dragging feeling of "what's the point?". Now it's like, "the ????? thing is being dealt with, I'm taking the steps necessary to try to make it permanent Be"h, now let's continue with the other 612 mitzvos". I know I'm not being so articulate, is this making sense to anyone?

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Sapy - 21 Mar 2023 16:00

Thanks for sharing! I think this is something that many - if not all of us - can relate to strongly, in many different variants, and you said it Beautifully.

To me I think it was the feeling of shame, of not being good enough for hashem if I struggle with pornography and these "big stuff", then I don't really have a fitting to hashem, and I'm like a laughing stock, the feeling of being knocked down in the eyes of hashem, like first be a basic Yid to him and then you can start other stuff.

And I feel this might be a cycle, and you might feel that way again in the future, questioning where your place is, and trying to reconcile the acting out with other stuff in yiddishkeit.

To me it took time to be able to feel like hashem still loves me, and loves me regardless of my struggles, he loves my essence, my being, and it's bigger than my acting out. And it is something I still struggle sometimes, and is a big part of my work.

Happy trucking brother.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by m111 - 21 Mar 2023 17:29

Hi, Welcome to the club of people who **care** about changing.

I also went through many years of trying to change but was not fully successful.

By joining and being involved with GYE in itself shows that you are seriously interested in doing the right things only.

The gemara says ????? ?????? most people wish they don't do P&M, but here we seriously do something about it.

?Give yourself credit for that!!

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Eerie - 21 Mar 2023 17:59

[monseyid41 wrote on 21 Mar 2023 15:00:](#)

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Beautiful! That means you really feel that you are working on this seriously, and you are! My only ha'rah is that you wrote "only 13 days, but still". My friend, what on earth is that supposed to mean?! ONLY 13 days?! 13 holy days of you being mekadeish yourself and the world, 13 holy days of you building yourself up, of fighting the YH, 13 days of growth, with every second being an eternal zechus for you and yours, and you say "only"?! How about making a kiddush or something, that's what this calls for, my dear friend! Keep sharing and keep trucking!

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