

From two identities to True self

Posted by true_self - 28 May 2023 23:02

Hi everyone this is my **very first time** writing about myself on the forum.

I have now been posting on the forum for a while, and now I took my time to open my very own thread and tell my story.

Thanks to all my friends here who are constantly helping me, giving me inspiration, aspiration, motivation, positivity and ambition.

Special thanks to **Eerie**, **HMM** & **Cordnoy** (and acharon acharon chaviv my **wife**).

MY STORY - LIVING WITH TWO IDENTITIES UNTIL REVEALING MY TRUE SELF.

I grew up in a chassidish community & had a pretty regular childhood.

I was first exposed to inappropriate sexual behavior that took place between my close friends back in school when I was around 9 years old, but I was not physically involved (for the most of it) & have never been attracted to guys sexually.

In yeshiva ketana at the age of 14 a friend exposed me to a lot of adult information about sex masturbation etc. basically like many of us, my first exposure to this topic was not in the way it should have been.

Ever since then I started masturbating from time to time just for the pleasure it gave me, only after a while did I discover that it's a great sin (a friend also told me).

I wanted to stop masturbating so hard but unfortunately it was not going, every time after I masturbated I promised to myself that it's the last time. I used to count how many times I masturbated but eventually I lost track.

In those days my main triggers (this is what I remember now) where catalogues, magazines etc. (anything with lust images) and on the streets, (at some stage I can remember gazing at the same model in a catalogue repeatedly while m* I literally felt deeply connected with her, those images still come up in my mind with all the details from time to time).

As time passed & I kept on falling again & again, I started to realize that It's a serious struggle that won't disappear overnight, little did I know of what awaits...

As time went on I got on to the internet and browsed inappropriate images, it then continued to

videos and inappropriate sites and platforms. I felt like slowly being dragged into more & more of this unwanted behavior, and I did not have the tools to get out of it, I was trapped.

Almost 2 years ago at the age of 18 I was first exposed to real porn. At first it was a huge shock for my brain but later on I became more & more accustomed to it & eventually stayed up till very late at night to watch porn & masturbate.

Not long after that I b"h got engaged, 5 month later I got married besha tova, between my engagement & my wedding I almost didn't watch any porn, that made me believe that I can solve it by myself, after all this was the biggest secret in my life & I was not yet ready to open up to someone else about it.

The first few month after I got married I was completely clean from P&M & I thought that I've achieved true freedom; but very soon as the stressers came along the way I discovered that I was still imprisoned, It was very hard for me to face the fact that even after having an awesome marriage with such a wonderful wife I'm still watching this garbage...

It was already from right after my engagement that I started having challenging thoughts about sharing my struggle with my wife in the future; however I still couldn't imagine myself sharing it.

Today I'm married for almost a year. I did not have a typical shana rishona, (more details in the future beH) we had many challenging experiences together which made us grow stronger & better.

One night (19 mar 23) it was after 2 very tough weeks for me with a lot of stress, & I have been heavily engaging in porn & masturbation to a point that it occupied my head completely, I wasn't focused during the day.

My wife has a really strong intuition & she sensed that something is wrong with me, she had nudged me several times in the past to tell her what bothers me but I always got away with all sorts of explanations that it's nothing major, however at that point I felt that I can no longer hide it from her, I could no longer keep it a secret. The pain of living a life with two identities was already unbearable, I felt like an hypocrite & that I'm betraying my wife.

I did the unbelievable and shared it with my wife, to my surprise (or not quite, i did know her quite well by then) she was very accepting understanding emphasizing and comforting, It was a tremendously awesome experience, I sobbed myself out until I was dry from tears, and so did she (and yes I do recognize that I have tons of what to be grateful for to hashem for such a wife, and I am).

Previously I felt that I'm living a double life with two identities & if anyone would discover my dark side I would be done... forever, no respect, no love, no empathy... from here and on it all changed.

I find it that opening up to another person, and to even a anonymous community like GYE, and realizing that I'm not crazy or any different then my friends in real life, but actually a normal

human being like everyone, where the first and most essential steps of my recovery.

I'm not a hypocrite, I'm a beautiful and wonderful person that does many good things, and also struggles with the struggles of this generation (shoutout to Eerie).

I'm privileged to be part of a battalion of soldiers on the frontlines of the toughest battles against the enemy.

I look at my struggles and see the great opportunities that are hidden within them, and I reflect on how they have shaped me and made me who I am today.

I did not yet reach freedom but I did reach the path leading to freedom!

With the support of all my special friends out here I do it day by day.

I'm no longer alone.

I hope that some people can learn and gather strength from my story

More to come beH...

True self.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by chaimoigen - 14 Sep 2023 13:07

Here's a big, warm hug and a heartfelt Bracha.

Thanks for reading and understanding, comments and feedback of all kind are welcome!!!

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by Thoughtful - 15 Sep 2023 15:11

Don't let it pull you down, take it up as high as you can!

This feeling of vulnerability could open your heart this Rosh Hoshana to ask Hashem to help you overcome this once and for all.

??? ????

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 19 Sep 2023 15:13

Fell again!

Hashem! I have nothing to offer to you, But, a ?? ????, Please get me out of this situation ASAP because I can't take it anymore and things are to complex for me to manage on my own.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by DavidT - 19 Sep 2023 17:44

[true_self wrote on 19 Sep 2023 15:13:](#)

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Hashem! I have nothing to offer to you, But, a ?? ????, Please get me out of this situation ASAP because I can't take it anymore and things are to complex for me to manage on my own.

Sorry to hear about your fall, your broken heart is so evident. the Baal Shem tov writes that a ?? ??? is the key to open all the gates in heaven.

I would point out that we NEVER have anything to offer to hashem, even if we do manage to stay clean. One of the main keys to success in thins struggle is to come to the realization that without Hashem we're truly powerless. Sometimes the pain of the fall can help you build a new foundation to build a stronger self by working on creating a real connection to Hashem.

Another point is that sometimes it's good to stay with the "post fall" feeling. On one occasion, a child who was deathly ill miraculously recovered. The parents went to their Rabbi, the Netivot Shalom, and asked what they should do as a payback to Hashem. Should they either donate a Sefer Torah or should they donate money to build a new shul? The Rabbi told them, "For now, don't do anything. Stay with the feeling that you owe Hashem." Naturally, we don't want to feel indebted. We want to feel like we paid back so we don't have to feel like we owe. But when it comes to Hashem, no matter what we ever do, we'll never come close to paying Him back. And in fact, the best way to serve Him is to feel indebted. I think it's the same in this struggle, sometimes we try to pay-back to Hashem after we fell, but we can never pay anything back - it's all from Hashem.

The world is full of temptations. If we want to hold on to lust, we will have **endless** opportunities to continue lusting at every turn. We will be fighting a losing battle by constantly trying not to look at things that we **do** want to look at so badly. Instead, **the real trick** to success is to learn how to let go of the lusting altogether. Instead of fighting it head-on, we need to simply **let go of it**.

As someone who is working the 12 Steps once wrote:

"Today, the fight is much easier for me. When I have urges, I admit powerlessness, acknowledge that Hashem is the only One that can - and will - help me, and I ask Hashem to remove the lust from me. I am frankly surprised by how much better this works than fighting the urges head on".

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by bright - 19 Sep 2023 18:55

[DavidT wrote on 19 Sep 2023 17:44:](#)

[true_self wrote on 19 Sep 2023 15:13:](#)

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That story is with a positive feeling. Many times these negative feelings are really the YH making us depressed, and are in fact a cause of sin themselves. If we were able to bottle that feeling of "why did I do this" on the other hand. The reality that it's just not worth the momentary pleasure. Well, that's a bottle I would pay for! But I have never found a way to do that...

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Re: From two identities to True self
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Good point! Research shows that we're better able to resist temptation when we feel good, not bad. Our research also indicated that not all bad feelings are equal when it comes to undermining self-control. For example, when we asked subjects to anticipate guilt instead of shame, it made them eat more cake. Guilt, it turns out, carries a triple whammy: It concentrates thoughts on the temptation rather than on self-control; it makes you generally feel bad, weakening resistance; and it heightens the expected pleasure from being bad, which makes the temptation more tempting.

It is important to understand the difference between *charata*= **healthy guilt & regret**, as opposed to *yiush*: **shame & despair**.

Guilt is about what a person did, and it can be a constructive feeling in that it can lead one to Teshuvah, to take corrective action. Shame, however, is what one feels he *is*. In other words,

guilt is “I **made** a mistake”, whereas shame is “I **am** a mistake”. If one feels that he is inherently flawed, that he is made of “bad stuff”, there is nothing he can do to change that. With guilt there is hope of improvement, but not with shame.

There’s a simple test we can do to know whether we are being motivated by healthy guilt/regret or by shame/despair. If we see that we want to get right back up and find ways to strengthen ourselves again, then it’s a sign that our “bad” feelings are those of healthy guilt and positive regret. If, however, we feel that we just want to give up, then it’s a sure sign that we are experiencing despair and shame, and we must quickly find a way out of these harmful feelings before they lead us to a vicious cycle of continued falls.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 20 Sep 2023 12:30

[DavidT wrote on 19 Sep 2023 20:07:](#)

[bright wrote on 19 Sep 2023 18:55:](#)

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Thanks!

This sheds light on what I'm going through so many times including now.

My question is, At some point the vicious cycle comes to an end, does that mean that after a certain amount of falls we decide that we can't be in despair anymore and we finally change to healthy guilt and shame??

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by bright - 20 Sep 2023 12:38

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by DavidT - 20 Sep 2023 15:59

[bright wrote on 20 Sep 2023 12:38:](#)

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Lot's wife was fleeing Sodom and Gomorrah with her family, Lot's wife turned around and looked at what she was leaving behind when they were specifically warned "...Do not look behind you..."

It signifies that we should always be looking ahead at what we can accomplish and not stay stuck by looking behind us - as you've mentioned.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by bright - 20 Sep 2023 22:13

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It signifies that we should always be looking ahead at what we can accomplish and not stay stuck by looking behind us - as you've mentioned.

As one of my rebbeim put it, "Only cows keep looking backwards not people".

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 21 Sep 2023 15:59

The Ramban says that part of vidu is "???? ?? ????", I guess that it needs to be in the right proportion, Or as I once read (can't remember where) that when a person is still in the mud of the sin he shouldn't focus on the sin rather look ahead to the future (as you guys mentioned) but after a while when he's truly ready to do teshuvah and it won't pull him back down, that's the time for "???? ?? ????".

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by bright - 21 Sep 2023 18:26

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Of course, but gotta come from healthy place, which isn't here.

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Re: From two identities to True self
Posted by true_self - 27 Sep 2023 10:50

Day 7 - bH I'm clean for one week and did not have any major urges, but in the last 24 hours the urges are rising, last night I dreamt of inappropriate stuff and that I was trying to watch porn but couldn't get to it, Shmiras einayim yesterday started well in the morning but was terrible the

rest of the day, today it started OK but not great.

I believe that I have the strength to stay strong while this surge is passing.

All the best.

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Re: From two identities to True self

Posted by redfaced - 27 Sep 2023 12:30

[true_self wrote on 27 Sep 2023 10:50:](#)

I believe that I have the strength to stay strong while this surge is passing.

All the best.

I believe so too.

You've prove yourself in the past .

YOU CAN DO IT!

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