

I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by hechochma - 27 Sep 2023 18:57

Hi everyone!

I'm returning to GYE after about 8 years of running away from my struggles with pornography and masturbation.

Since then I got happily married and am blessed with two beautiful children. My life has changed a lot but one thing that hasn't changed is my struggle with porn.

I'm posting now because I've been inspired to make the decision to face this battle by engaging with it instead of running away from it.

I've lived solely on avoidance for so many years - no internet, no smartphone etc. But over the last two years I found that my all the avoidance in the world won't stop me when I could easily pick up a device from a store while barely making a dent to my bank account - I can't avoid all the wifi in the tristate area or every store that carries phones, tablets etc.

I got rid of the internet in my numerous times - but it didn't do anything

It's hard for me to do this wholeheartedly when all I hear talked about from a Jewish perspective is getting rid of the internet etc

I am making the decision to change my approach today out of my own clarity of my situation - I will not change by doing what I have been doing until now

This morning I fell - which usually leads me to come here and read some posts until I go back to ignoring my problem - and I was blessed enough that eccentriccomposer started the Daily Dose of The Battle of Our Generation which I stumbled upon.

What an incredible book

37 I was very inspired by the following, from Chapter

"We will be challenged no matter how much we shield ourselves — which of course we should nonetheless try to do — and it is our job to win. If we are lazy and think that because we got rid of our Internet access everything will be fine and we don't have to work

on ourselves, we might end up flat on the floor. But if we also work to become masters of ourselves, we will hopefully ace every test

This is how I am reentering GYE -- I need internet access in order to be here - and I need to be here - because nothing else worked so far - not three therapists and not a few Mashgichim and a Rav. They all helped me a lot - but they aren't in the trenches with me so ultimately I need to take on this challenge proactively by living with it - in a positive guilt-trip free - motivated and iyh

successful way

And I need your help everybody - I read around a little bit today (After I fell miserably - okay I know I'm not supposed to say that but I'm not taking it back cuz that's how it feels!) and I am amazed at the deep, practical, positive, down-to-earth and constant posting that goes on here - I would love to be a part of it! (I was particularly inspired by eerie and einshumyeush to give credit where due)

I chose the name HeChochma because the pressure/negativity/intense path does not work for me - the change I hope to achieve by being here is to change by using the wisdom of doing things differently in order to learn to live differently

Just my basic story I'm a little shy of 30, I'm a yungerman and a Rebbe and I've been struggling with Porn for the last 19 plus years - Everything was available in my house growing up - hardcore magazines unfiltered internet etc. You just had to know where to find it - well I found it one day. Can't remember what life was like without porn honestly

Much to my horror in 9th grade I discovered that it is asur to masturbate while I was flipping through an english kitzur shulchan aruch. By eleventh grade I started to talk to my Rabbeim about my struggles - they were all very reassuring and there were better times and worse times, although I was sure that I was absolutely the most horrid person on earth - they did a pretty good job convincing me that I'm absolutely normal - if in a tough spot

Things went up and down and took a turn for the worse as I got to be a little older and more daring - with great siyata dishmaya I never ended up having any falls outside the digital world

I didn't expect getting married to solve my problems - thanks to GYE - and it didn't. Thankfully my struggles with porn haven't done serious damage to my marriage although I had to work out some emotional hangups with a therapist - Thank G-d it has all been up and up

But my struggle with porn has if anything just gone sideways

So I'm here today and I plan bln every day, to read along with the Daily Dose of the Battle of Our Generation, to share the struggle and to fight the battle alongside the ohavei Hashem who shine as bright as the rising sun's rays

!You are all an inspiration and a wellspring of wisdom to me

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by ainshumyeiush - 22 Oct 2023 22:54

Theres a saying in aa, recovery is progress not perfection. As long as youre still in the fight, that's what matters

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 26 Oct 2023 23:46

After my truly ***sarcasm*** monumental ***/sarcasm*** four day streak I fell again this afternoon - but not yet all the way down. Just masturbated and looked at semi pictures, no porn.

Coming out to do what I didn't do last time and get on here and say that I fell. And I hope that I will get back up and keep on coming, even tho I'm honestly a bit discouraged.

Does it actually get easier to live without porn and masturbation at some point? This stuff is my sleeping aid, my anti-stress medication, my antidote to boredom, my escape from loneliness - how do I live without it?

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by foolie - 27 Oct 2023 01:04

Slowly

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by frank.lee - 27 Oct 2023 06:54

Yes, it gets much easier, if you take the right steps. Like to avoid triggers, remove easy access etc. and you rewire your brain and body.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by chaimoigen - 27 Oct 2023 13:01

[HeChochma wrote on 26 Oct 2023 23:46:](#)

Does it actually get easier to live without porn and masturbation at some point? **This stuff is my sleeping aid, my anti-stress medication, my antidote to boredom, my escape from loneliness** - how do I live without it?

It does. With time, patience, hard work, and Siyata Dishmaya. Give yourself a hug, you're on your way.

Realizing that you are **using** pornography and masturbation to avoid loneliness and stress is an incredibly important awareness. You know that it's not that you want it for what it is, it's that you're using it as a means to an end, to numb the agony that sometimes is living. Do they work that effectively? Are there other, better ways? If you could tap into other, perhaps better ways, would you have the same question?

Here's a warm hand,

Chaim Oigen

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by davidt - 27 Oct 2023 14:17

[HeChochma wrote on 26 Oct 2023 23:46:](#)

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how do I live without it?

Someone who is addicted to lust lives in a perpetual cycle, that alternates between three basic states.

1) Void: *A feeling of a deep void of "I need, need need". Not a very happy state, to say the least.*

2) Giving in: *Letting go to "supposedly" fill the void.*

3) Depression: *A deep inner depression for feeling powerless to break free of this viscous cycle, of living a double life and living against one's own's beliefs and standards... These feelings lead to another void, and so, back to state 1.*

What a sad and pathetic existence such a man lives.

You need to know, **it is possible to break free!** It may take some mental and spiritual surgery, but it is well worth it. We have to be willing to let G-d take it away from us, as we pray " *Mal es livaveinu le'ahavah uleyira es shimecha*" - "**circumcise our hearts** to love and fear you".

Sometimes these things have become deeply ingrained in our sub-conscious. We need to give it up and let G-d take away this aspect of our lives that is destroying us from within. And if you make the journey and break free, not only have you earned your place in the world to come, but in this world too, none of the three depressing states that we mentioned above will remain with you. Life will suddenly take on new meaning and happiness.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 29 Oct 2023 01:54

[chaimoigen wrote on 27 Oct 2023 13:01:](#)

[HeChochma wrote on 26 Oct 2023 23:46:](#)

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Here's a warm hand,

Chaim Oigen

Thank you for the chizuk! It definitely took me a few years of work before I was able to get a clear picture of how I use masturbation and pornography to avoid difficult feelings. I always knew it theoretically - but I am able to actually see it in real time now.

As for "other better ways" of coping - theoretically, I'm all in. But I've never had the experience of anything working consistently to deal with, stress, loneliness, sleeplessness, anger, fear etc.

Reaching out to people is something I'm trying now, but people aren't always available and they don't always have the presence of mind to listen - altho the guys here are exceptional, I must say.

I'm really just worried as I start this journey with a level of maturity I never had before - Am I always going to be "substituting" for my addiction with knock-offs, trying something to relieve my difficulty and wishing I could have my little crutch back?

What is the healthy way to deal with all of these things?

I don't mean to ask for **advice** I mean to ask for **experience**. As my therapist says "All the advice given in the world isn't worth one experience shared." Which is why I'm asking the oilam here - you guys have experience with this - to the exclusion of anyone else I know.

What is the experience like of not having your addiction? What is in its place? How does it feel to have the new comfort instead of the old comfort? Does it sometimes not work? Is that upsetting? How do you deal with that?

Thanks guys for all the help, you really are incredible!!!

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 29 Oct 2023 14:10

Of course there are bouts of withdrawal, and moments of wistfully thinking "if only i could do it - i miss it so much". The stress relieving replacements are not as inexpensive, take time, and don't always give that "bang". All that being said, it is very gratifying to BH be clean.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 29 Oct 2023 18:57

Thank you, Hashem Help Me. I appreciate the honesty of that response.

It's important for me to know this as I try to make headway here - because part of my last few falls was due to the tough discovery that alternate ways of dealing with stress are not "zila leh, pritza leh, nicha leh" - cheap, easy and fast - the way porn and masturbation are. But they also don't ruin your life, jeopardize your self-esteem and olam haba, lower the quality of your relationships, and lead to addiction.

So... I guess it's worth it to be clean.

It's just hard for me to hold on to that rock-bottom attitude of how horrible it is to be at a fall when all you want is a little one time escape at a particularly stressful time after a few weeks of being clean. Like, let a guy live a little, I'm just trying to make it through the day!

I have to work on keeping in mind that it doesn't work like that and that little slip is just the beginning of a long and miserable fall. AND I have to hold in mind EMUNA that I can survive without porn and masturbation.

I can. I will not die. I will not go crazy. I will not implode. I just need to express my pent up negative energy in another way - talking, writing, exercising - and I will slowly come down from all of the tension.

It's really emuna for me as I have never survived without this in all of my life as a thinking human (since 6). So hearing that life is good without porn and masturbation again and again is really helpful for me.

Day 3 - Almost back up to a grand four day streak here, and that masturbation hasn't led to worse things, bh.

Thank you everyone for your help.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 29 Oct 2023 20:42

Do you have an accountability partner/chaver?

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by frank.lee - 30 Oct 2023 05:26

Yes, it is so much better. From experience.

Imagine the difference between being addicted or free to smoking. Either always busy and pressured to get the next hit, or being clear-headed and able to live life and having zero interest in smoking. I

t's a different world and you will get there. It "just" takes some will and hard work.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by eyes - 30 Oct 2023 10:04

hachochma

Hashem helpo me is offering you for him to be your partner.

Grab the oppurtunity with 2 hands.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by chaimoigen - 30 Oct 2023 14:14

From experience, having someone you can call or text can make all the difference.

It's about so much more than having someone to hold you accountable. It's about connecting all parts of your life to reality. It's about having someone to talk to who understands. It's about having a connection in the face of the howling emptiness that we sometimes feel, and the difference a hand to hold can make. And there are special, experienced people here who can give you support and practical, wise advice that can help when you are going through a trying time. There are many more reasons, too.

Iyov had everything taken from him but his friends. Rav Chaim Shmuelelevitz famously said that for the Satan to take his friends away would have been the same as killing him, and the Satan was forbidden to kill him.

Happy to discuss further. Reach out to some of the special people here- you'll see new life.

Chaim Oigen

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 30 Oct 2023 18:06

@Eyes - thanks for the push - officially on the boat with Mori V'Rabi Hashem Help Me. Here's to day 5.

@Chaim - Thank you for the deep insight on the power of connection. As an addict I can't ignore the disaster of disconnection. I see how people here on GYE pursue connection with unabashed courage, indefatigable persistence and true dedication. It's strange to me how stark

of a contrast it is to the world that I live in, a world with so little focus and infinitely less time for connection. Everyone runs about their own lives, in their own little world, and we get together for tachlisdike purposes but how many people are carrying one another's burden, feeling and knowing each other's struggles (even in other less sensitive areas).

@Frank.Lee - Thank you, it's good to hear that - I watched my father quit smoking at 36, it was tough, but he was so happy to be rid of it. I know that the sex drive is not something to be rid of, but living without the "addiction" part of it does sound great!

@Hashem Help Me - Thanks for picking me up :-)

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