

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 HeChochma - 09 Nov 2023 14:31

[bright wrote on 08 Nov 2023 19:37:](#)

Perhaps more importantly - I feel like I don't have any friends.

Plenty of acquaintances to be fair - but friends - people I talk to regularly or share even a mashehu of vulnerability - noop.

There's tons of people that I are similar to me in the most external way - yungeleit in lakewood yada yada. But to connect in more than a small-talkish way - socially off isn't it?! And like if I have emotions - forget it!

That's how it feels to me - anyone else relate or have some thoughts about navigating this?

Move out of town.

Working on that. My wife doesn't really want to :-(

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by connected - 09 Nov 2023 16:25

[HeChochma wrote on 09 Nov 2023 13:59:](#)

I've always been jealous of the way chassidim roll into shachris with their coffee, pull up a chair next to another guy, make themselves comfortable start a gezunte shmooze. After a few minutes there's like 4 chevra there, hokking away and then finally the chazzan finishes korbanos and they roll off to davening. In the meantime, I'm spacing out hoping that when the chazzan gets up there he'll start from yishtabach and then regretting coming to daven in Satmer because I will be late to everything ever.

On a different note I did start davening in a heimishe place on Shabbos - that has been geshmak for me, not that I made any serious connections with anyone there, but at least the place isn't a freezer.

Yeah, we Chasidim have an awesome life. Much to be jealous of. Ehem ehem.

Any suggestions?

From what it seems, you hide out in Lakewood. If that's the case, my suggestion would be to move to Monsey and I can hook you up.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by ainshumyeiush - 09 Nov 2023 16:36

Im not sure if suggesting that you switch religious orientation and physical location are helpful (tho if they do i say become Sephardi and/or move to the Midwest)

have you considered joined an organization? Like bikkur cholem or chaverim or whatever. And maybe try finding a more community based smaller shul.

Or wear a name tag that says "hi! My name is _____. Will you be my friend?" what could go wrong?

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by Ki Sorisa - 09 Nov 2023 17:03

[redfaced wrote on 09 Nov 2023 02:23:](#)

[iwannalivereal wrote on 08 Nov 2023 20:05:](#)

So happy to hear about your inner peace! I too had similar experience in where I was super proud of my streak even when it was only like 2 weeks because I felt that inner change starting to happen which is such an important part of this struggle.

About your friend question... 2 things come to mind. First of all when we live with this deep dark secret it's very likely that even the friends that we do have, we can't build the relationship because subconsciously we're afraid that if we get too close they might find out about who we really are. The second thing I have noticed (sort of the same point just from the opposite angle) is that I have recently made 3 friends here on GYE who know all about my deep dark secrets. I have shmoozed with them on the phone, and I have even met 2 of them in person. My feelings towards them is that although I don't really know them much, the fact that they know my vulnerable and secret side of me makes me feel so much more comfortable even with random shmoozing than it does when I'm shmoozing with guys I've known for years. We share a common secret and I have nothing to hide from them.

Not sure what the eitza is, but you're always welcome to come visit me in the Yoshon!

Very well said . I have friends here for 6 months that I am closer too & more comfortable with, than the friends I've had for 20+ years.

When you share the depths of your Neshama with someone else , & he with you it creates a closeness that is not easily replicated.

Reb Shimon Schwab in his Sefer ????? ??? ??????? brings a beautiful vort from Reb Chaim Forshlager. The ????? says "????? ????? ?? ??? ?????? ??? ????? ?????? ????? ?????? ??? ????? Why is it relevant for the ????? to make mention now when ????? sends ????? with the ??? ?????? that he was "?????" his friend? He answers that the ????? is teaching us here that the ??? of a true friend is someone that we can feel comfortable sharing our deepest secrets and vulnerabilities in order to help each other as was by ????? and ?????.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by Crabapple18 - 09 Nov 2023 23:19

[HeChochma wrote on 09 Nov 2023 14:31:](#)

[bright wrote on Unknown:](#)

Move out of town.

Working on that. My wife doesn't really want to :-(

"Wherever I go, I go too."

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by chaimoigen - 09 Nov 2023 23:52

Coming late to the party.

Loneliness. Yeah, do I know all about it.... [Sometimes I think I am Father Mckenzie....]

I find that fellows with a developed, rich, and complex internal landscape tend to feel very lonely...

.....So much you can't share. So much you deal with all alone, in your head...

Helping other people makes a difference, I find. Though it doesn't remove the problem. You connect to others in a genuine place when you help them, especially if you go out of your comfort zone to do it. When you feel that connection, you know you are not alone. It's something.

Also - you can discuss something meaningful with someone, even if you don't bare your soul. Someone in Shul that you get into the habit of sharing something you find meaningful with. Then the vort leads to a discussion that isn't "hock"... Some toichen.. you feel understood. Small connections are good. They can assuage the empty feeling of hollow lonesomeness, sometimes...

The main idea is that it's not all or nothing-at-all.

Although a friend-like connection isn't a full, true friendship, nevertheless it **is** something of

If it happens a few times it can even be somewhat habit-forming.

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meaning. During such a conversation, for a few minutes, one can feel that he actually has a life

Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by bright - 10 Nov 2023 13:57

[Until you feel anti-social](#)
[HeChocoma wrote on 09 Nov 2023 14:31:](#)

[bright wrote on 08 Nov 2023 19:37:](#)

Perhaps more importantly - I feel like I don't have any friends.

Plenty of acquaintances to be fair - but friends - people I talk to regularly or share even a mashehu of vulnerability - noop.

There's tons of people that I am similar to me in the most external way - yungeleit in lakewood yada yada. But to connect in more than a small-talkish way - socially off isn't it?! And like if I have emotions - forget it!

That's how it feels to me - anyone else relate or have some thoughts about navigating this?

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Whats she afraid of? Not having her parents?

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by Markz - 10 Nov 2023 14:22

[bright wrote on 08 Nov 2023 19:37:](#)

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The header says "you can run but you can't hide".

Changing location is not the solution

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 10 Nov 2023 17:02

Even later to the party...

I relate so strongly to this. I also have many acquaintances but no real close friends. I've always been a loner and non-social. It doesn't help that I have this huge secret to hide, and it's a vicious cycle because the desperate need for connection that I don't know how to make is what fuels my fantasies.

What has somewhat helped is getting involved in learning with others. I've joined Chaburas and arranged to learn bechavrusa with a few people. Connecting over a sefer (besides for the spiritual benefits) is a great way to start building a relationship with someone.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by bright - 10 Nov 2023 20:06

[Markz wrote on 10 Nov 2023 14:22:](#)

[bright wrote on 08 Nov 2023 19:37:](#)

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Unsure if your serious, unsure if i was either.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 12 Nov 2023 13:42

[chaimoigen wrote on 09 Nov 2023 23:52:](#)

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I have noticed this since I started talking to others on GYE and trying to listen to others' struggles and encourage them too. I will say that it helps with connection when I help from a place of relating to them and their struggle - but if I play the role of oracle, above and beyond them, offering advice, I feel even more lonely up there in the ivory tower. Good thing is I don't usually have to worry about that - I'm only like two weeks clean altogether!

Also - you can discuss something meaningful with someone, even if you don't bare your soul. Someone in Shul that you get into the habit of sharing something you find meaningful with. Then the vort leads to a discussion that isn't "hock"... Some toichen.. you feel understood. Small connections are good. They can assuage the empty feeling of hollow lonesomeness, sometimes...

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If it happens a few times it can even be somewhat habit-forming.

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.....Until you feel anti-social

Thank you for this eitzah. I am going to try this. It will probably take a few tries until I find somebody who I enjoy talking to but it's an excellent idea. The wonderful thing on GYE is that you can post-stalk people - and then you know beforehand whose approach to life you respect and in which topics you might be able to get a meaningful conversation. Alas, in the real world it's all trial and error.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by redfaced - 12 Nov 2023 13:46

[HeChochma wrote on 12 Nov 2023 13:42:](#)

[chaimoigen wrote on 09 Nov 2023 23:52:](#)

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There is quite the nice selection of pretty awesome people that hang out here.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 12 Nov 2023 15:48

Indeed.

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Re: I Can Run But I Can't Hide

Posted by HeChochma - 20 Nov 2023 14:05

In honor of my almost four weeks clean, I composed a little poem about the difficulties and the growing pains of leaving the safe and comfortable embrace of porn, masturbation and lust and embarking on a journey into the unknown in search of a better, holier, more peaceful life.

Big thank you to Chaim O for pointing out that once GYE is anonymous anyway, I can express my poetic side without running the risk of being tossed in the loony bin. He did mention that HHM may start poking fun at me, but I figured, nothing to lose, he does that anyway ;-). Shkoach to foolie for his pithy input, as always.

>

To carry it all is to be alone as the silent moon, staring

To let go is to freefall, to spiral down, to catch my heart in my throat, fearing.

To share is to express, yet in words too faint to bear the heart they ride upon.

To conceal is to hold deeply, purely, the self, unknown; to polish facades to pride upon.

To hope is to stumble blindly away from the path long-known.

To settle is to sink, stagnant, complacent, into endless slumber, gone.

To feel is to anger at the injustice of it all, to need, to want, to hope, defenseless, exposed inside.

To numb is to cower in a fortress of fear, safely shackled by Mr. Hyde.

To battle is to struggle for connection when emptiness howls, deafeningly.

To break free is to cherish every victory, to fight passion with passion, to monster-truck eternally.

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