

Sick and tired

Posted by iwantlife - 16 Feb 2024 20:28

Hi everyone! I've been lurking on the forums for a few weeks now, but I think it's time for me to finally post here. I was inspired by many of your stories here, nodding my head when I felt like I was reading about my own struggle, and shaking it as I read things that made my story pale in comparison. I've held off writing anything publicly, for I have a deep (perhaps unreasonable) fear of being identified. Ultimately though, I think posting here will help me, so here goes.

I'm in my thirties, B"H happily married with a few kids. I learned in the standard yeshivish yeshivas, then in kollel for around 10 years before leaving to go to work. Since I was around 12, when there was internet w/o filters, I've struggled with P & M. My go-to method for the past 20 years always involved heavy reliance on filters, which usually meant I was clean till I found a weak link (there always is one), or got my hands on an unfiltered device. This lead to a lot of despair, which lead to more watching.. you know the drill. Years of watching with no end in sight. Recently, I became aware of the **habit** aspect of watching P, and started to notice my triggers. It's almost always a way to escape stress, and could be something as 'stressful' as not getting enough sleep the night before.

Then I found GYE. I started the Flight to Freedom, only watched the videos w/o doing the work, which initially helped, then led to complacency, then a fall. So I went back to the beginning, and I'm determined to do the program properly. I'm hoping to get chizzuk from fellow GYERs this time around as well. I also would love to get some input on the best way to approach filters. If all devices were filtered and filters were foolproof, I wouldn't be posting here today. My job, (like most in 2024) has me using a computer for many hours of the day. Although I have a good filter (Gentech) as well as accountability (Webchaver), while they slow me down, If I'm determined I can get around both of them. That leaves me with a speed bump at best. Which means I need to work on myself so that slowing myself down does the trick? I'm a bit lost, and would love to hear your thoughts.

Though my story is pretty standard, and many of you here have climbed much taller mountains, for me this is my Everest, and still feels insurmountable. One thing I know though (and I must've told myself this 1000 times), I'm sick and tired of falling, and I want life!

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by eerie - 13 Nov 2024 18:42

Dear iwantlife, MAZAL TOV!!!! Keep up the amazing work, and keep spreading your warmth!

I hope all will forgive me, but not every unwinding is the posture of pornography. ????? ???? is a concept that chazal condoned for the guy who wants to do the 48 kinyanei HaTorah!!! Reb IWL,

To the OP, are you an avid reader? Or will sharing some titles that blew me away be helpful?

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by odyossefchai - 13 Nov 2024 18:54

you are holding in a great place, and no need to apologize for wanting to relax

[wantingbetter wrote on 13 Nov 2024 16:43:](#)

[odyossefchai wrote on 13 Nov 2024 11:11:](#)

Get into cooking and baking.

I'm a sourdough geek/nerd. (And a geek/nerd in just about everything else!!!)

Great for relaxing the brain!

Try laughing at me with a fresh monster sized piece of sourdough in your mouth! That'll teach ya!

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by iwantlife - 13 Nov 2024 19:26

I love to read. Share away! I'm sure others could benefit as well.

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by wantingbetter - 13 Nov 2024 19:37

[odyossefchai wrote on 13 Nov 2024 18:54:](#)

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Try laughing at me with a fresh monster sized piece of sourdough in your mouth! That'll teach ya!

it could be relaxing..... to be unconscious... DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME! or in your office....

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by chosemyshem - 13 Nov 2024 22:25

[iwantlife wrote on 13 Nov 2024 04:21:](#)

Reading and podcasts. I should consider that. Both screen-free options! I do find though that the self-help / marriage books, though I find them fascinating, still fall into the category of "work" books more than relaxation books, if you know what I mean. So when I want to be "entertained", I don't turn to those. Those get read when I make a set time, a seder, to read them...

Late to this great convo, but I strongly relate to this point.

I ~~used to be~~ am a voracious reader. I probably read a significant percentage of every science fiction and fantasy novel published between say 2010-2018. Eventually, I decided to stop reading non-jewish books and shockingly pulled it off. For like a year. Then (highly correlated with my re-descent into the bowels of lust) I started reading again. But the issue was I still was sticking to not going to the library. Unsurprisingly, reading online resulted in more porn use (it's weird but unlike the internet most paper books don't have pornography one click away.) I was also reading just **really** dumb, random stuff online instead of slightly more carefully selecting what books I was reading.

I don't have a solution. It's not like I'm gonna sit and learn. I just want to turn my brain off. And I could do a hobby but my only hobbies are reading trashy novels and watching porn lol.

One thing I've tried was getting a selection of good non-fiction. But like you say, it's hard to sit down to even an engaging and well written book on e.g. personal finance when you just want to chill. If you have a genre you like (history, economics, finance, self-help, behavioral economics,

psychology, magic tricks whatever) it may help to keep a few books on the subject on hand. Used books on ebay are dirt cheap.

(Project Gutenberg has tons of free classics in pdf, but it may be smart to only use the site to download and read on an offline device. To me, Jewish novels/story books are really not an option. I've read the two good jewish biographies and everything else is good for three minutes and then I'm done with it.)

Podcasts or lectures on interesting topics may also work. I'm not into listening to things to relax though so that never worked for me.

What is currently working for me somewhat is having a limited number of pre-defined "safe" sites that I use for brainless entertainment. Chief among them is GYE. I don't have a whole ton of free time these days, so the few minutes I have to zone out can be filled with just checking gye and a kosher news site. But when I have some more time to relax it's either with learning (extremely rarely) or surfing the web (extremely dangerous).

If you want a suggestion of good non-fiction I'm happy to throw out some good titles, and I'm sure people here can recommend many more. A GYE suggested reading thread would be great. This is a genuine issue though. Thank you for raising it.

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by iwantlife - 18 Nov 2024 20:25

Hey everyone! I want to give a heads up about this post, as I know some of you will be mad at me. (sorry eerie!) I'm BH in a **very** good place, and those of you who speak with me know I'm generally an upbeat, positive, glass-half full type of guy. That being said, there was this pain inside of me that needed to come out; I cried a bit when writing this. It seems rhyme works better for this than prose.

The Road Not Taken

(h/t Robert Frost)

Two roads diverged in that house on a hill

As a boy too innocent to muster his will
A young wantlife, took the path that he shouldn't
To choose another way, he simply couldn't
This trail seemed grassy at first sight
A haven from pain, respite from the strife
Perhaps one can thrive and be here too
Maybe he could flourish, push quietly through
But as the road bent into the undergrowth
'Twas glaringly obvious he couldn't have both
And yet, what to do, with no map to turn back
The way forward unclear, over leaves trodden black.
Through the woods he pushed on, learning all day
He rose in the ranks excelling in many a way
Pushed the pain and despair to the back of his mind
Though he seemed to move freely, his spirit was in a bind
The years went by, many ?????? were learned
Yet to remember them he struggled & yearned
'This must be because my eyes I don't watch'
With no ???? for his ???? , he'd never be top-notch
This road wasn't all bad, dreary and winding
A great yeshiva, shidduch, and kollel he was finding
Yet part of him "knew" he would never succeed
Become a ???? great, no matter how hard he'd plead
This was but one factor that caused him to leave

His kollel, to that shtender he'd no longer cleave
With a heavy heart, and the beast still untamed
Iwantlife moved on, albeit slightly ashamed
This tale is told over with a deep sigh,
Sometimes he wonders, stifling a cry
Although his path has since become bright
Now to GYE and hope for greatness he can once more clutch tight
About that way untravelled, the fork in the road
He certainly wouldn't be here, writing this ode
Even though it seems true it was never a choice
Sometimes his pain needs to be given a voice

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Re: Sick and tired
Posted by simchastorah - 18 Nov 2024 20:37

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Re: Sick and tired
Posted by eerie - 19 Nov 2024 02:45

My dear friend, Iwantlife, you made me really sad. I wish I had a way to ease that pain. But even if I don't, it's good to voice your pain. It's an important thing to get what's in your heart out there. I know that there is much spoken about in the sefarim about the correlation of our choices and Hashem's plan, and there are those who say, it is my understanding that Reb Tzadok says it, that after something has been done and we do teshuva for it, it becomes revealed that the whole process was the way Hashem wanted it all along. These things are above my paygrade, and I totally understand and feel for your pain

Truth to be told, even those among us that have not consciously chosen certain different paths still have the same pain, for we think, if only.

If only I hadn't chosen that friend

If only I hadn't gone there

If only I had had the strength to say no

If only I had asked an adult for help

If only I had not gotten that device

If only someone could have taught me

If only I would have filtered my laptop

If only.....

And these thoughts are painful. They sometimes haunt us. They sometimes haunt me

If I can share what I tell myself during those moments.

We have no idea what our mission on this world was meant to be had we not messed up. And perhaps we will never know. But we are still here. And that means that we have a job. We may have a different mission, but we have a mission nonetheless. And for many of us it is davka through these challenges and the subsequent growth that we received a new mission. For us to focus on the old mission, be it that the old mission was aborted due to our poor choices, but we now have a new mission! And to focus on the old mission is the YH's way of getting us to not give our new mission all we've got. There's no doubt in my mind that giving your new mission in life all you've got is part of the tikkun for messing up the old mission. You are thereby telling Hashem: "Hashem, I'm a soldier in your army. I messed up on the old mission. But you still gave me another mission. Perhaps a mission with even greater stakes, perhaps a mission of even greater importance. I have no idea. But Hashem, I want you to know, I am not deserting the army! I will give this mission every ounce of strength I have!"

And if I may add:

If only you wouldn't have struggled with masturbation...you wouldn't gain the knowledge of how to teach self-control

If only you had put a filter.....you wouldn't be able to share such empathy with the struggling brothers

If only you wouldn't have had that device....you would not be gaining and sharing true, meaningful friendships that will carry over to the other parts of your life, and the other parts of so many people's lives.

My dear friend, it's ok to feel the pain. After all is said and done, it's painful. I feel your pain, and I feel my pain. Yes, it's ok to feel the the pain, to express the pain.

And it's obligatory to feel the beauty of the new mission. A soldier that's given a mission shouldn't stop. He should be proud of the trust his Master has in him, be proud to have an important role in his Master's world, and sing and dance for the blessings his Master bestowed upon him in His infinite mercy.

In true friendship,

With tears in my eyes,

Eerie

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by chaimoigen - 19 Nov 2024 03:55

[iwantlife wrote on 18 Nov 2024 20:25:](#)

Hey everyone! I want to give a heads up about this post, as I know some of you will be mad at me. (sorry eerie!) I'm BH in a **very** good place, and those of you who speak with me know I'm generally an upbeat, positive, glass-half full type of guy. That being said, there was this pain inside of me that needed to come out; I cried a bit when writing this. It seems rhyme works better for this than prose.

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Wish I could give 5 Karmas for this.

Yeah, tell me about it. I hope you saw my "Who are the Heroes" post on Chaim's Oigen. I've written a lot about feelings like this on my thread, but not as eloquently.

Limaaseh: Hakadosh BH has a plan for you **today** that's *lichatchilla*, in which you have the opportunity to accomplish and achieve Gadlus. ya, "*and miles to go before I sleep*". (I love Frost)

But wistfulness abounds....

Here's a hand, from a fellow sufferer,

Chaim

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by iwantlife - 19 Nov 2024 04:29

Thanks R' Chaim. TBH I think it was that exact post about your heroes that was ?????? this one; while these are some very old feelings, something about the contrast you drew brought it out.

As for Frost, I should get to know more of his work, I only know a few of his poems but that one really struck a chord.. Hey! Maybe this answers my 'spare time' question... R' Chaim you're brilliant!!!

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by yiftach - 19 Nov 2024 07:53

Did you listen to Rabbi Shmeltzer on Vayemaein recently (I believe it was Friday)?! He addresses these feeling with a beautiful and fresh perspective.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Sick and tired

Posted by chaimoigen - 19 Nov 2024 11:58

[yiftach wrote on 19 Nov 2024 07:53:](#)

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