

Beginning to (e)merge

Posted by minhamayim - 24 Jul 2024 21:00

Hi! I am so happy and relieved to be here. If I may, I'd like to share my painful story.

I grew up in a sheltered Torah home. My father is a mechanech known for his passion in fighting the internet and the nisyonos hador. Ever since I can remember I've always been consumed with sexual curiosity. It started with hijacking woman's clothing catalogs I found in the mailbox, discovering masturbation, fantasizing about pretty much any attractive female I knew including family members, and more. Throughout my years in mesivta I would occasionally purchase or rent movies, and even had some opportunities to watch porn. I used to have streaks where I would abstain from being motzi zerah. Sometimes it lasted a few days sometimes even weeks. But they never lasted very long.

As all this was happening I was very busy portraying myself as a serious bachur and trying desperately to learn and get better at learning. BH, even with all my daydreaming and fantasizing I was able to block out the guilt and shame and throw myself into my learning enough that I made it through my yeshiva years. In fact, I was so deeply troubled about my identity and so desperately wanted to be considered a "good guy" in learning and yiras shamayim, I would join "extracurricular" shiurim and sedarim staying in the beis medrash till late at night. Although this definitely helped my overall shteiging, the truth is that I was way behind and should have been honest about where I needed to focus.

I found myself extremely confused as to who I was and what I really wanted. On the one hand, I was a bachur with big ??????. I was zoche to learn in yeshivos where I witnessed true gadlos b'torah. I craved it. The genuine ahavas hatorah and meyushavkeit that I saw in my Rosh yeshiva, rebbeim, and older bachurim was something I knew I needed. On the other hand, how could I throw myself entirely into achieving that goal when I knew that I wouldn't be able to? When I knew I would fall again and again. When I knew it just wouldn't be real.

BH I became more serious in beis medrash and was even one of the few in my shiur to get into THAT yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael. But there things got worse. The hustle and bustle of the geula neighborhood and the nisyonos it presents is something that I'm sure is all too familiar to many of you. I found myself deliberately getting on to packed buses (vhameivin yavin), taking late night walks in neighborhoods I should never have entered, pretending to be preoccupied with an important phone call, and just generally consumed with sexual fantasies. And then I discovered those free chat lines. And those unfiltered computer kiosks. I found myself again going to sleep late, sometimes entirely missing first seder. All the while continuing to prop up my image as a chashuva Ben torah. The double life continued and deepened.

I continued on to BMG and got engaged soon after to a wonderful bas talmid chachom. Like many, I clung to the desperate hope that shidduchim, engagement, and marriage would help me solve my problem. But in between my "streaks" I was still busy with chat lines, porn, and masturbation. Davening was always a bizarre fluctuation of intensity, tears, and disinterest. In halacha I was sometimes meticulous and sometimes lax. I would be proud yet disturbed whenever complimented on my learning achievements, hashkafic sincerity, or general intelligence.

During my engagement and after my marriage it became clear that I had an issue seemingly not connected to any of this, that severely affected my shalom bayis. I was, and still am, very determined to make my marriage work, and I know the issue is mine. I went to therapy for 3 years for it. I spent lots of money, tried different therapists with different modalities, all the while really trying to make things work. It helped a little, but things were really not simple. I have to give a shout out to my wife for being the trooper, for bearing with me, for seeing the good in me and the possibility for me to heal and our marriage to blossom.

All this time, freshly married, struggling with my marriage and much inner turmoil, I felt lonely and isolated. I didn't know what HaShem wanted from me. I cried, I ignored and moved on, cried again and ignored some more. Over the past year things got to the point that I sadly moved on from just porn, masturbation and chat lines.

And then...

2 weeks ago, Hashem in His overabundant mercy rescued me, and I stumbled upon this precious website. Out of desperation I sent a couple partner requests. IWLR emailed me within a few hours. To make a long story short, it turns out that we knew each other very very well. I will forever be makir tov to him for introducing me to the possibility of recovery. I've been in touch with Harav Hatzadik HHM over the past week and my life has changed. I'm finally able to address what I've known all along. That this dark hidden part of me has directly and INDIRECTLY seeped into every aspect of my life.

I have no words to thank everyone who's posts I've read and who I've spoken to over the past week. The power of being able to share, be vulnerable, and come clean, with those whom you know will accept you, is indescribable. 3 years of therapy and I never shared this! I even managed to convince myself that it wasn't related to what I was there for. I am more connected

with myself than ever and my marriage has changed because of that. Everything in my life is different than just two weeks ago.

I have a long way to go, but finally I feel ready and equipped to fight this battle. I look forward to continuing to grow the friendships I have created, and to live a pure, authentic life together forever.

Your friend,

MinHamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 08 Aug 2024 23:41

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Bh I arrived safely. The word ????? in ????? ??? has a deeper meaning to me now. (As do the words ??? ???? ????)

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 08 Aug 2024 23:55

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Bh I arrived safely. The word ????? in ????? ??? has a deeper meaning to me now. (As do the words ??? ???? ????)

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 09 Aug 2024 00:39

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Bh I arrived safely. The word ????? in ????? ??? has a deeper meaning to me now. (As do the words ??? ???? ???)

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 09 Aug 2024 02:32

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Bh I arrived safely. The word ????? in ????? ??? has a deeper meaning to me now. (As do the words ??? ???? ???)

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 09 Aug 2024 04:37

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Bh I arrived safely. The word ????? in ????? ??? has a deeper meaning to me now. (As do the)

Thank you to all who called texted or emailed over the course of the day.

I'd like to share something a bit personal.

I got a chance to put my head down and rest on the plane today for a few minutes. I started thinking about how different this trip was from any other one I'd taken. I remembered how sometimes over the years as I would be indulging in the sights around me, I would see other frum men being careful to look down or squinting because they took their glasses off. I remembered how jealous I was of their ????? ???. How I would painfully think to myself that I would never be able to be like them.

I found my eyes getting wet as I realized that all that has changed.

This time it was me. This time I was the one watching my eyes. This time I was the one who b'davka wore glasses not contacts so I could take them off walking through the airport. I felt so calm. So clean. So pure.

Unbeknownst to my wife sitting right next to me, I started to sob silently thinking about how much support I have here and reflecting on how much my life has changed in the past four weeks.

May ?????? guide me, all of us, and all of ??? ?????? to withstand all of our ???????? and become closer and closer to Him.

Minhamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by yiftach - 09 Aug 2024 06:06

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Sometimes the struggle feels like it can't be conquered; it's just too much for us. However, when we acknowledge the accomplishments we've achieved, it takes so much weight off our shoulders.

When we want to measure success, it doesn't have to be black and white. It should be based on our past experiences - how did we go through them once upon a time and how do we go through them now.

You're soaring, buddy – keep it up. Measuring yourself based on your past experiences allows you to feel the change you've gone through. Let yourself feel it. It'll beH take you to heights you've never imagined!

- Yiftach'l

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by chaimoigen - 09 Aug 2024 07:21

I haven't been here as much as I have wanted the past few weeks. So although we've made each others acquaintance on the phone, I missed this masterpiece of a thread.

Here's a warm hand, friend.

You've discovered hope, and the taste of freedom. The door opening in the brick wall, and the discovery that the deep Yiyush you hadn't even known was there, no longer has to be.

Those tears you've described can wash off years of encrusted callouses from your heart. And they can open new doors... I remember sobbing in my car, after I was here about 20 days. Feeling sadness, compassion, and regret for many years of suffering... those feelings mixing with the exhilarating feeling of relief and hope...

Hang on to this precious chance, Chaver- miracles are happening in this precious place...

And I suspect that you will have the chance to help others find their miracle, too...

Your username inspires me to share an amazing vort.

Basya called him Moshe because ??? ??????????. Frekt Rav Yaakov Galinsky zl, his name ought to be ?????- Mashui- "The one who was Schleppe". Why "Moshe" - which translates as "One who schlepps?!?"

The answer, says Rav Yankle zl - If this child was miraculously saved from the watery grave- She knew that **it had to mean** that he was destined **to be the one who would rescue others** from drowning and destruction. And Moshe Rabbeinu went on to do...

Kein Yehi Ratzon, Chaver,

Warmly,

Chaim Oigen

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 09 Aug 2024 13:14

Reb CO,

Thank you for your kind and warm words. No gye thread is complete until it has been graced with your honorable presence. Now i really feel part of this.

May I be zoche that your words come true and that I one day can follow your lead as I transition from being a seasoned shleppee to an active shleppeer...

Minhamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by iwannalivereal - 09 Aug 2024 14:12

Thanks for sharing!

That's gotta be one of the most powerful feelings - being able to do something that you never thought was possible in your lifetime. Something that was so totally out of your hands, and now finally feeling some freedom, and feeling some control.

Keep up all the great work!

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by eerie - 09 Aug 2024 20:37

Reb Minhamayim, you got some of my tears to come join yours. Reading about you on the airplane, it just blew me away. You are amazing! To watch you come and fire away! My friend, keep up the amazing work!

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 14 Aug 2024 16:14

Hi

About to leave to the airport for my return trip. I once again pledge to report back here later.

Thanks

MinHamayim

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by yiftach - 14 Aug 2024 20:04

[minhamayim wrote on 14 Aug 2024 16:14:](#)

Hi

About to leave to the airport for my return trip. I once again pledge to report back here later.

Thanks

MinHamayim

We'll be waiting for you on the other side!

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by 138eagle - 14 Aug 2024 20:38

I cannot believe that I missed this here!!

I am here only a bit longer than you, but due to only getting started to real talking to people in the last 3 weeks or so, I feel that I am kind of here the same time as you. I can relate to your pains and struggles of living the double life. B"H we are here to beat tahis together.

Keep Flying!

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Re: Beginning to (e)merge
Posted by minhamayim - 15 Aug 2024 03:49

After a long and arduous, emotionally and physically draining journey, I'm happy to report back here spiritually unscathed. Thanks for your support!

MinHamayim

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