

Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life

Posted by vekiveisilo - 18 Aug 2024 22:56

Dear rabboisai, achai v'reyai, chavrei GYE hakedoshim,

I'm a relatively new member here at GYE and I would like to share my story, something I've thought about doing for a while now but hesitated because I questioned whether there is a to'eles in it. But I think that for a few reasons it makes sense to do it. Firstly, to hopefully make some new chaverim, which is always very helpful!! Secondly, to acknowledge those who have helped me so far (you know who you are)! Also to have a place to post further developments in my journey. And I have an upcoming challenge which I definitely could use some moral support in, and I think sharing it will go a long way toward that. Anyways, after all the hakdamos, here goes:

My experience started as a young boy of 12 years old. I used to follow the news avidly on the frum news sites from the computer at home (which was filtered, just not quite enough), and one day I followed a link on one of them which took me to the original article on a secular site, where I saw on the side of the page a decidedly inappropriate image. That was the beginning of the end... I started going back to that site hoping to see more, and then moved on to other sites, venturing further and further into the web of shmutz. I was petrified of getting caught, and I was a very ernste kid, so it took some time, but eventually I was completely hooked. (At that point I wasn't watching actual pornography - that was a red line by me, mainly because of a rather distorted logic that anything the outside world considered okay couldn't be so bad, but if they already considered it wrong then it was takeh shameful and I wouldn't do that - but everything up to that point.) I would use every opportunity I had when no one was looking to follow my new pastime. Along with this I also (discovered and) started to struggle terribly with masturbation.

(A side he'ara: I've heard from many people an attitude that it's close to futile to protect children from the dangers of technology, because "if a kid is looking for it, there are ways he'll be able to get it anyways", as if there are in the world two categories of children, those who are innocent angels and those who are just bad kids looking for evil. I think this is probably pashut, but my experience was completely otherwise. (Aside from the many inherent technical difficulties with the above argument, but that's a different discussion.) I had, before stumbling into shmutz online, already begun to notice improper images in the street and elsewhere, and to desire them. And I knew that the internet was a place one could access such material (this was about a year after the Citi Field internet asifah) and that our home computer was not sufficiently protected from that. But never did I even consider going down that road - that was simply something one didn't do; that was for "bad people", not for a good kid like me. Until I actually encountered it, and that a) enticed me to look for more, and b) took away the stigma of it to a large extent. So while there might be some children who do have in their nature a strong inclination for lust and that leads them to seek out such opportunities, I would imagine that most are like me. If anyone has thoughts on this inyan, please share with me.) This situation continued and worsened for over two years.

When it came time for me to enter mesivta, my parents chose for me a yeshiva in a different

city. This proved to be my yeshuah. I remember that last night before I left home, I sat down and binged on all of my "favorites" - I couldn't imagine going an entire Elul zman - forty days! - without access. But Hashem had rachmanus on me. Going to yeshiva, and especially that first Elul/Yamim Noraim in a yeshiva environment, was absolutely life changing. In addition, the mashgiach chose for some reason to devote one of his shmuessen that zman to the subject of the internet and its dangers. Not that I needed him to tell me that, I knew it quite well already, but somehow it still made a roshem. I came home with a firm resolve to not use the internet at all, and it actually worked! Over that year, this resolve sometimes wavered, and I would think to myself, "Okay, next time I'm home I'll just give in and watch," but b'chasdei Hashem whenever I was home I pulled through. I still struggled heavily with masturbation, though, but I was sure that as far as my internet problem was concerned, it was a thing of the past. When I was in 10th and 11th grade, I opened up to my rebbeim about my past and present struggles. They were, baruch Hashem, unbelievably understanding, compassionate, and very helpful in guiding me both in dealing with the guilt over my previous mistakes as well as improving my actions going forward, and I managed to acquire some level of control over my behavior.

The summer after 12th grade, I decided that the time had come to loosen my gedarim. It was getting very inconvenient to never be able to go online, and I felt sufficiently secure about my ability to control myself, so I decided I would use the internet provided someone else was in the room. This was a bad idea. Within just a few days, I fell again. And again. And again. I can't describe how devastating that was. A nisayon I had been successful with for four years, which I thought I had conquered - and now I found myself watching the same videos I had viewed so many years before. B'chasdei Hashem, though, I picked myself up after that summer, and continued as I had before. I was shortly thereafter even able to be mischazek in shmiras habris, limiting my falls to bein hazmanim only. But when I went to learn in Eretz Yisrael a few years later, I once again started struggling. Maybe because I was out in the street a lot more, and much more exposed to women, both modestly and immodestly dressed, but either way controlling my thoughts and actions became much more of a challenge. The sad result of this was that when I came home for Pesach bein hazmanim last year, I once again fell. And deeper. I now crossed the line into actual pornography. Once again, it was quite devastating. I went back to Eretz Yisrael, and didn't have the opportunity to watch, but I wasn't the same. I began to think I would have to struggle with this forever. I lost much of my cheshek for learning, for davening, for avodas Hashem - let's just say it was the worst summer zman I ever had. And though I promised myself that I wouldn't repeat my mistake, almost every bein hazmanim since then I found myself falling again. After this past Pesach, full of disappointment and despair, I came back to yeshiva (now in BMG) with a resolve to turn a new leaf. From now on I would conduct myself with kedusha and tahara! No more fantasizing and masturbating for me! But that was a pipe dream. My mind was a cesspool, full of all the junk I had just poured into it. How could I possibly maintain a clean mind, when images and scenes constantly popped into my head, beckoning me to indulge? So I would go a few days staying clean, then fall. Then feel terrible and resolve never again. I think the cycle is familiar to many.... I did not know what more I could do. (I could have maybe spoken to my rebbeim, but I didn't think it would be effective, plus I was rather embarrassed to still be struggling with this as an older bachur.) But once again, Hashem has infinite rachmanus, and He didn't abandon me.....

I walked into the coatroom one morning at the end of Iyar on my way to first seder, and I saw taped to the door was a sign - a little piece of paper that would change my life, put there by a yungerman - a tzaddik yesod olam - who needs no introduction on this forum. Suffice it to say

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by BenHashemBH - 18 Aug 2024 23:14

Kivisi,

What a beautiful first share.

Wishing you much hatzlacha as you continue your journey with the amazing brothers here on GYE.

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by iwannalivereal - 18 Aug 2024 23:34

Wow what an incredible post!

Although I've known you now for quite some time, I'm tearing up reading and living through the tremendous pain that you've been through all the years. That pain that is so incredibly familiar, and that is the story line of an incredible amount of us.

Getting to know you over the past few months, I've seen the tremendous drive you have to get out of this stuff, and to be matzliach on the highest dargah. When after just one conversation you told me you wanted to meet, I knew I was talking to a guy who really means it. This bikush and sheifa to shteig will iy"h help you grow stronger and higher!

As an aside - for all those that remember when I posted about someone taping up his own version of a haskama onto my signs in BMG (see [here](#)) it was none other than our dear friend vekiveisilo!

Looking forward to a continued friendship with you! A friendship of shteiging and a friendship of chizzuk!

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by stopsurvivingstartliving - 18 Aug 2024 23:35

Wow! Beutiful first post. Wishing you good luck going through bein hazmanim, and on the conversation you hope to have with your parents!

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by vehkam - 19 Aug 2024 01:53

Welcome to the forums. You have joined an incredible group and bezras hashem you will soon be inspiring many others too.

Looking forward to your continued success

vehkam

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by yiftach - 19 Aug 2024 03:06

Welcome to the forums dear brother!

From the first time I heard your voice, I was in awe of you. You knew what the dark web had to offer but you had the koach to say NO for so long... WOW!

Your determination and desire to be free rings so loudly every time we speak. You have so

much quality in you and I'm sure you'll be mentoring others shortly!

For now, keep on speaking to the boys. While you may think you're helping yourself, your truly helping the other side of the line as well.

I feel fortunate to call you a friend. Can't wait to meet!!!!

Yiftach'I

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by minhamayim - 19 Aug 2024 04:40

Wow! Shalom aleichem! Welcome welcome! Beautiful post!

The truth is, I'm actually newer than you to all this. I'm only little over a month old in gye years. And I was also first rescued from this deep darkness by our precious iwlr.

Ive heard much about you from iwlr. He has lots of respect for you and that means something here. You'll definitely go far.

Looking forward to getting to know you!

MinHamayim

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by Muttel - 19 Aug 2024 04:57

Wow, what a first post, and what a party! I don't know you, but a friend of IWLR, is a friend of all of us here!!

As you surely know by now, you've joined a chabura of those that care for you, want you to succeed to the highest degree, and one where members will do anything for one of us is here, anything at all...

Sounds like you have a lot of kochos, both from your post and what others are saying. I can just say I wish you a ton of hatzlacha and bracha and hope to get to know you too!!

Muttel

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by Muttel - 19 Aug 2024 14:20

Ah Yekusiel, I didn't realize it was **you**!

So I **do** know you, and what a zechus it's been to get to know you!

Your refined manner, hasmada in Torah, your yiras shamayim, all with such sensitivity to others and iron clad commitment to overcome this tremendous nisayon!

Your maturity in dealing with this in a comprehensive manner and staying true to what needs to be done to stay true ??? ?????? is heartwarming!

The ????? should grant you all the energies needed to maintain your progression and ????? and with that ????? we should soon hear the joys of your personal geula together with the ultimate geula, bekarov!

With a heart overflowing with brotherly love,

Muttel

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by proudyungerman - 22 Aug 2024 15:04

Gosh, I'm missing out on everything these days!

Welcome to the family, brother!

Great to have you on board!

As was said before, a friend of IWLR is a friend of mine.

Looking forward to seeing great things from you, and maybe even having the zchus of getting to know yo!

Who knows...

KOMT!

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by eerie - 23 Aug 2024 02:05

WOW WOW WOW!!! Reb Yekusiel, absolutely beautiful first post! I see Yiftach picked up on the same thing I told you. You are amazing that you came to successes you did all on your own! And from here on in, you never need to go it alone! We are here for you in any way we can be, and we look forward to watching you grow and soar!

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by vekiveisilo - 08 Sep 2024 02:31

Thank you to everyone for your chizuk and words of support and encouragement, it really means a lot to me.

It's been bein hazmanim which in my circumstances meant I didn't have any safe access to GYE for the past couple of weeks, but baruch Hashem I'm back for the zman and it's good to be here on the forum again!

A few exciting developments I'd like to share with the oilam:

1) With a lot of siyata dishmaya and plenty of moral support from the oilam, I had a big shmooze with my father over bein hazmanim. He was BH quite supportive and understanding, and hopefully it'll lead to a safer home situation.

2) This past week I reached 90 days! Super exciting.

3) But what I'm most thankful for is having had a clean bein hazmanim. I think many many chevra here will agree that bein hazmanim always presents the most difficult of challenges, and for me it had always, almost without exception, been a time of struggling and falling, so to have been able to go through an entire bein hazmanim successfully is a huge zechus, and a big part of the credit goes to all my chaverim here who kept in touch with me over the summer and reminded me constantly what my job is and what I'm capable of accomplishing. A huge yasher koach to all of you, and looking forward to continuing to shteig together!

Yekusiel

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life

Posted by whywatch - 08 Sep 2024 04:51

Incredible post. Would love to hear how it went speaking with your parents. I would love to have an open conversation with someone, and hopefully this will give me chizuk

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life

Posted by livingagain - 22 Sep 2024 14:40

[vekiveisilo wrote on 08 Sep 2024 02:31:](#)

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Yekusiel

Congratulations on reaching the milestone. All your hard work paid off. Now that you are back in yeshiva will be a lot easier. Focus on your accomplishments and don't let that nasty yh take control.

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Re: Kivisi Hashem - The Ups and Downs of My Life
Posted by livingagain - 25 Sep 2024 12:46

Thank you to everyone for your chizuk and words of support and encouragement, it really means a lot to me.

It's been bein hazmanim which in my circumstances meant I didn't have any safe access to GYE for the past couple of weeks, but baruch Hashem I'm back for the zman and it's good to be here on the forum again!

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Yekusiel You are a real inspiration and a success story. Keep it up. I've made some progress but hope to follow in your footsteps.

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