

Really Trying

Posted by imreallytrying - 20 Dec 2024 23:10

Hi Everyone,

First of all, I want to say how much I'm in awe of all you who post here on GYE and are actively working on this struggle. I've been coming here on and off for a while, and to see everyone sharing, learning, and growing is so amazing. I'm truly humbled by all of you and hope to stay around and learn how to win this battle. For me, just opening up about my struggles is not going to be easy (I have lots of shame), but I'm sure whatever I'm about to share has been said and heard before.

I'm from a Jewish non-observant home and became a BT when I was 19. My father was niftar when I was young, and I have few memories of him. I was a very sensitive, anxious kid growing up, naturally shy, and didn't do well socially. I discovered mb from around age 11, and not long after p**n. Soon, I was doing it at least twice a day if not more. As I entered adolescence, I found I was physically attracted to guys, but not at all or very little to girls. I never acted on these feelings. Instead, I had a lot of shame and confusion about these feelings and without a male role model in my life, couldn't talk to anyone about it. It was a very sad and difficult time for me. I felt I was different from other boys. They would always talk about how hot certain girls were, etc. and I couldn't understand what they meant. As a result, I felt less than and intimidated by boys since they were "normal", and I was "not normal". After graduating high school, I was pretty confused about a lot of things in life.

Then, through total hashgachō, I met a loving, warm orthodox family in our neighborhood, and I was introduced to real Yiddishkeit. It offered me connection, structure, warmth, acceptance, and most of all, a path in life. I really took to it, and it wasn't long before I began to keep Shabbos. Being a BT, I felt like I had a lot to learn and many years to make up for. I enrolled in yeshiva full-time and eventually spent a few years learning full-time in Eretz Yisrael too.

As I was becoming more observant, I learned that mb and p**n were asur and began to try to stop. Being in yeshiva full-time I was able to stop looking at p**n completely, and when I turned 20, I wanted to stop mb as well. It was a very tough struggle for me, but somehow between ages 20 and 24 when I got married, I only fell 3 times. Although I was very proud of this accomplishment, I had a lot of other issues to deal with. First of all, I was constantly plagued by all kinds of images from my adolescence, especially those of guys I was so attracted to. These thoughts would torture me day and night without end and would pop into my head at the worst possible times, like during learning and davening, or when I would be doing a mitzvah. The fear of these thoughts caused me to think them and so controlling them was impossible.

Aside from this, certain guys in yeshiva would trigger me instantly just by looking at them, so I had to always “guard my eyes” and look away. I guess this is how I kept shmiras enayim, because staring at an immodestly dressed girl did zero to me. I had so many issues to deal with. Going to the mikvah was like walking into a minefield, in fact, simply seeing a guy getting dressed or undressed in my dorm room was problematic. I had to constantly be vigilant not to get triggered, and that weighed heavily on me. Despite all these challenges, I wanted to get married and have a family. I wanted to make up for my past and build for myself what I never had growing up.

As I started to date, I noticed girls liked my good middos and sweet, easy-going personality. I was no alpha male, if anything I was a beta male - but I noticed girls could be attracted to me, and that gave me a boost. Soon after, I met my wife, and we became engaged. I knew she was very pretty and was confident she would be a wonderful wife and mother. Although I admit I wasn't physically attracted to her, I loved her personality. When the wedding night finally came, things began to get a bit complicated. She saw me shaking like a leaf and tried her best to be reassuring and understanding. I told her in all honesty that I wanted to give this a try, but didn't know if it would work. We lived together about a week until I was finally able to consummate our marriage. Things have improved since then, but bottom line, the expression of love and intimacy with my wife comes from an emotional attraction I have for her rather than a physical attraction. Today, Baruch Hashem our marriage is a solid success, and we have kids too - but I'm still a piece of work because of all my physical attractions that pull me in different directions.

For a number of years after we were married, I was able to continue to control myself and stayed out of harm's way, but my SSA never improved. The ugly, intrusive thoughts from my past were less frequent, but they could still pop up from time to time. I could still get triggered from just seeing certain guys, so I had to be very careful never to stare. These attractions weren't easy to manage because they came with feelings of shame. I was ashamed I was attracted to other guys and believed something must be wrong with me. Since I was naturally intimidated by successful men, entering the working world became a whole new challenge for me when my boss was a man. I lost a number of jobs simply because I believed my boss thought I was incompetent.

As time went on, this internal battle was slowly wearing me down. One day, I had to find a file saved on a work associate's computer and discovered he didn't have a filter. The weight of everything I was carrying at that moment was overwhelming, and I looked at gay p**n. That was the beginning of a downward spiral that I have yet to recover from. So, I've come today to share my story and to admit to all of you that I've lost this battle so many times and feel powerless over it. I want to stop but have no confidence I'll be able to. I also want to say that I

feel different and scared, and this is also a challenge for me, but I hope you'll accept me anyways and help me improve. Sorry for the long post and thank you for listening.

=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by stopsurvivingstartliving - 21 Dec 2024 17:29

Welcome to the warmest most non judgmental family in the world (yes, even toward you in your situation!). What a brave move you took to make this post.

So sorry to hear that your struggling with SSA. It is very painful to feel you are different.

Please don't judge yourself for the situation your in, as you did not put it upon yourself.

I would mention that there are therapist that specialize in this Inyan. Maybe consider going to one. Weather you go or not make sure to make some friends here. The Oilam here are very special and have open ears for there fellow brothers.

Hatzlacha Raba!

=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by jollylemur95 - 22 Dec 2024 04:28

Welcome!

I am in awe of your strength and courage!

How you have come to where you are today is simply off the charts!

Practically speaking, I unfortunately do not have the answers. I am still on my journey.

The only thing I can say is that reading your post and all you have accomplished, I have no doubt that you have what it takes to break free!

Speak to the big people here and you will be"n have much hatzlacha!

Please keep us posted! You are an inspiration!!

=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by imreallytrying - 22 Dec 2024 05:28

Thanks everyone for your responses. I just wanted to add that posting my story has really helped lift a burden off me. I've been living in darkness, hiding, and carrying all this inside me for years. No one knows of my struggles. On the outside, I'm a ben Torah, a nice, easy-going, unassuming guy who tries to provide for his family and be kovea eitim. I work on my middos, Shmiras Halashon, and I'm a good husband and father. And at the same time, I somehow have this shameful weakness that can cause me to look at and do bad stuff... It's pretty shocking, really.

All the things I did as a bochur to control myself in this inyan don't work any longer. It was sheer willpower back then - so where is my willpower now? I guess one big difference is that I'm not learning full-time like I was then - but whatever the reasons are, I need a lot help now. See that man drowning when you first come to guardyoureyes.com? That's me!

=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by rebakiva - 22 Dec 2024 05:43

Welcome R' Imreallytrying to the greatest family in the world, a family where healing is a reality, hope, warmth, and support is top priority, and where you'll feel everyone's love for you.

I also used to be "that drowning man", and really didn't believe there's a way out, but little did I

know, how fast it is achievable, there's the f2f program, the vaad {PY links please} and mostly, there's the accountability program, that's not just about accountability, but about making some really close friends who will hold your hand and walk you through the process, who will give you an open ear to vent to about anything and everything, and you'll feel their warmth and love.

Start off with the mentor in chief, HHM at micheelgelner@gmail.com, or EERIE at 1gimpelovitz@gmail.com, MUTTEL at muttel15@gmail.com, PY at proudyungerman@gmail.com, I'm also available, my contact info are below in my signature.

KOMT!!! And keep us posted.

With love Akiva

=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by eerie - 22 Dec 2024 07:20

Wow, wow, wow. What a story. My friend, you are made of really special stuff. The distance you have travelled, the mountains you have climbed, I stand in awe.

My friend, I'm sorry for the pain you have unfortunately been carrying around with you for so long. My heart goes out for you. My friend, we each have our challenges, and in that we are the same, though our challenges may take on different forms. You have been given a truly difficult challenge, but you should not let determine how you view yourself, nor feel shame. That's the way Hashem made you! You are an amazing warrior, you should be super proud of yourself!

The friends here are ready to help, and help they can

One word of caution:

As you make friends here, be sure they are not posing a challenge to you. Create friendships in a way or with the people that will help you and not make you new tests.

You have done amazing things in your life, and you will surely find the way past your current difficulties! Keep trucking!

=====

====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by livingagain - 22 Dec 2024 18:37

[imreallytrying wrote on 20 Dec 2024 23:10:](#)

Hi Everyone,

First of all, I want to say how much I'm in awe of all you who post here on GYE and are actively working on this struggle. I've been coming here on and off for a while, and to see everyone sharing, learning, and growing is so amazing. I'm truly humbled by all of you and hope to stay around and learn how to win this battle. For me, just opening up about my struggles is not going to be easy (I have lots of shame), but I'm sure whatever I'm about to share has been said and heard before.

I'm from a Jewish non-observant home and became a BT when I was 19. My father was niftar when I was young, and I have few memories of him. I was a very sensitive, anxious kid growing up, naturally shy, and didn't do well socially. I discovered mb from around age 11, and not long after p**n. Soon, I was doing it at least twice a day if not more. As I entered adolescence, I found I was physically attracted to guys, but not at all or very little to girls. I never acted on these feelings. Instead, I had a lot of shame and confusion about these feelings and without a male role model in my life, couldn't talk to anyone about it. It was a very sad and difficult time for me. I felt I was different from other boys. They would always talk about how hot certain girls were, etc. and I couldn't understand what they meant. As a result, I felt less than and intimidated by boys since they were "normal", and I was "not normal". After graduating high school, I was pretty confused about a lot of things in life.

Then, through total hashgacho, I met a loving, warm orthodox family in our neighborhood, and I was introduced to real Yiddishkeit. It offered me connection, structure, warmth, acceptance, and most of all, a path in life. I really took to it, and it wasn't long before I began to keep Shabbos. Being a BT, I felt like I had a lot to learn and many years to make up for. I enrolled in yeshiva full-time and eventually spent a few years learning full-time in Eretz Yisrael too.

As I was becoming more observant, I learned that mb and p**n were asur and began to try to stop. Being in yeshiva full-time I was able to stop looking at p**n completely, and when I turned

20, I wanted to stop mb as well. It was a very tough struggle for me, but somehow between ages 20 and 24 when I got married, I only fell 3 times. Although I was very proud of this accomplishment, I had a lot of other issues to deal with. First of all, I was constantly plagued by all kinds of images from my adolescence, especially those of guys I was so attracted to. These thoughts would torture me day and night without end and would pop into my head at the worst possible times, like during learning and davening, or when I would be doing a mitzvah. The fear of these thoughts caused me to think them and so controlling them was impossible.

Aside from this, certain guys in yeshiva would trigger me instantly just by looking at them, so I had to always “guard my eyes” and look away. I guess this is how I kept shmiras enayim, because staring at an immodestly dressed girl did zero to me. I had so many issues to deal with. Going to the mikvah was like walking into a minefield, in fact, simply seeing a guy getting dressed or undressed in my dorm room was problematic. I had to constantly be vigilant not to get triggered, and that weighed heavily on me. Despite all these challenges, I wanted to get married and have a family. I wanted to make up for my past and build for myself what I never had growing up.

As I started to date, I noticed girls liked my good middos and sweet, easy-going personality. I was no alpha male, if anything I was a beta male - but I noticed girls could be attracted to me, and that gave me a boost. Soon after, I met my wife, and we became engaged. I knew she was very pretty and was confident she would be a wonderful wife and mother. Although I admit I wasn't physically attracted to her, I loved her personality. When the wedding night finally came, things began to get a bit complicated. She saw me shaking like a leaf and tried her best to be reassuring and understanding. I told her in all honesty that I wanted to give this a try, but didn't know if it would work. We lived together about a week until I was finally able to consummate our marriage. Things have improved since then, but bottom line, the expression of love and intimacy with my wife comes from an emotional attraction I have for her rather than a physical attraction. Today, Baruch Hashem our marriage is a solid success, and we have kids too - but I'm still a piece of work because of all my physical attractions that pull me in different directions.

For a number of years after we were married, I was able to continue to control myself and stayed out of harm's way, but my SSA never improved. The ugly, intrusive thoughts from my past were less frequent, but they could still pop up from time to time. I could still get triggered from just seeing certain guys, so I had to be very careful never to stare. These attractions weren't easy to manage because they came with feelings of shame. I was ashamed I was attracted to other guys and believed something must be wrong with me. Since I was naturally intimidated by successful men, entering the working world became a whole new challenge for me when my boss was a man. I lost a number of jobs simply because I believed my boss thought I was incompetent.

As time went on, this internal battle was slowly wearing me down. One day, I had to find a file saved on a work associate's computer and discovered he didn't have a filter. The weight of everything I was carrying at that moment was overwhelming, and I looked at gay p**n. That was the beginning of a downward spiral that I have yet to recover from. So, I've come today to share my story and to admit to all of you that I've lost this battle so many times and feel powerless over it. I want to stop but have no confidence I'll be able to. I also want to say that I feel different and scared, and this is also a challenge for me, but I hope you'll accept me anyways and help me improve. Sorry for the long post and thank you for listening.

You've come to the right place. There are others with ssa here. Like you said the trick is to avoid the triggers. Regular posting gives you the opportunity for support and feedback.

=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by tzaddikvikam13 - 22 Dec 2024 19:08

[imreallytrying wrote on 20 Dec 2024 23:10:](#)

Hi Everyone,

First of all, I want to say how much **I'm in awe** of all you who post here on GYE and are actively working on this struggle. I've been coming here on and off for a while, and to see everyone sharing, learning, and growing is so amazing. I'm truly humbled by all of you and hope to stay around and learn how to win this battle. For me, just opening up about my struggles is not going to be easy (I have lots of shame), but I'm sure whatever I'm about to share has been said and heard before.

I'm from a Jewish non-observant home and became a BT when I was 19. My father was niftar when I was young, and I have few memories of him. I was a very sensitive, anxious kid growing up, naturally shy, and didn't do well socially. I discovered mb from around age 11, and not long after p**n. Soon, I was doing it at least twice a day if not more. As I entered adolescence, I found I was physically attracted to guys, but not at all or very little to girls. I never acted on these feelings. Instead, I had a lot of shame and confusion about these feelings and without a male role model in my life, couldn't talk to anyone about it. It was a very sad and difficult time for me. I felt I was different from other boys. They would always talk about how hot certain girls were, etc. and I couldn't understand what they meant. As a result, I felt less than and intimidated by boys since they were "normal", and I was "not normal". After graduating high

school, I was pretty confused about a lot of things in life.

Then, through total hashgachō, I met a loving, warm orthodox family in our neighborhood, and I was introduced to real Yiddishkeit. It offered me connection, structure, warmth, acceptance, and most of all, a path in life. I really took to it, and it wasn't long before I began to keep Shabbos. Being a BT, I felt like I had a lot to learn and many years to make up for. I enrolled in yeshiva full-time and eventually spent a few years learning full-time in Eretz Yisrael too.

As I was becoming more observant, I learned that mb and p**n were asur and began to try to stop. Being in yeshiva full-time I was able to stop looking at p**n completely, and when I turned 20, I wanted to stop mb as well. It was a very tough struggle for me, but somehow between ages 20 and 24 when I got married, I only fell 3 times. Although I was very proud of this accomplishment, I had a lot of other issues to deal with. First of all, I was constantly plagued by all kinds of images from my adolescence, especially those of guys I was so attracted to. These thoughts would torture me day and night without end and would pop into my head at the worst possible times, like during learning and davening, or when I would be doing a mitzvah. The fear of these thoughts caused me to think them and so controlling them was impossible.

Aside from this, certain guys in yeshiva would trigger me instantly just by looking at them, so I had to always "guard my eyes" and look away. I guess this is how I kept shmiras enayim, because staring at an immodestly dressed girl did zero to me. I had so many issues to deal with. Going to the mikvah was like walking into a minefield, in fact, simply seeing a guy getting dressed or undressed in my dorm room was problematic. I had to constantly be vigilant not to get triggered, and that weighed heavily on me. Despite all these challenges, I wanted to get married and have a family. I wanted to make up for my past and build for myself what I never had growing up.

As I started to date, I noticed girls liked my good middos and sweet, easy-going personality. I was no alpha male, if anything I was a beta male - but I noticed girls could be attracted to me, and that gave me a boost. Soon after, I met my wife, and we became engaged. I knew she was very pretty and was confident she would be a wonderful wife and mother. Although I admit I wasn't physically attracted to her, I loved her personality. When the wedding night finally came, things began to get a bit complicated. She saw me shaking like a leaf and tried her best to be reassuring and understanding. I told her in all honesty that I wanted to give this a try, but didn't know if it would work. We lived together about a week until I was finally able to consummate our marriage. Things have improved since then, but bottom line, the expression of love and intimacy with my wife comes from an emotional attraction I have for her rather than a physical attraction. Today, Baruch Hashem our marriage is a solid success, and we have kids too - but I'm still a piece of work because of all my physical attractions that pull me in different directions.

For a number of years after we were married, I was able to continue to control myself and stayed out of harm's way, but my SSA never improved. The ugly, intrusive thoughts from my past were less frequent, but they could still pop up from time to time. I could still get triggered from just seeing certain guys, so I had to be very careful never to stare. These attractions weren't easy to manage because they came with feelings of shame. I was ashamed I was attracted to other guys and believed something must be wrong with me. Since I was naturally intimidated by successful men, entering the working world became a whole new challenge for me when my boss was a man. I lost a number of jobs simply because I believed my boss thought I was incompetent.

As time went on, this internal battle was slowly wearing me down. One day, I had to find a file saved on a work associate's computer and discovered he didn't have a filter. The weight of everything I was carrying at that moment was overwhelming, and I looked at gay p**n. That was the beginning of a downward spiral that I have yet to recover from. So, I've come today to share my story and to admit to all of you that I've lost this battle so many times and feel powerless over it. I want to stop but have no confidence I'll be able to. I also want to say that I feel different and scared, and this is also a challenge for me, but I hope you'll accept me anyways and help me improve. Sorry for the long post and thank you for listening.

I'm in awe.

=====
=====

Re: Really Trying

Posted by soulwork - 22 Dec 2024 19:10

I'm gonna be 100% honest gye is extremely helpful I also think therapy would help you it sounds like there are some really deep rooted pain making this issue a whole lot worse

=====
=====