

Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light

Posted by benporasyosef - 11 Mar 2025 18:09

It all started with a Lego rocketship. More specifically, the Lego rocketship my grandmother bought me for my seventh birthday. That's the earliest memory I have of playing with my private part. I would lay in bed with my hands under my body and fantasize about being that Lego rocketship. For some reason the flames always seemed to come out from my private area, and my hands mimicked the oscillating motion of the flames dancing from side to side.

In fourth grade my parents told me that my teacher had reported seeing me touching myself in my private area (on top of my clothes) under my desk. I knew then that what I was doing was weird, but had no clue of the activity it referenced and why it was so wrong. I didn't like the feeling of being caught, so I started to become more secretive and careful whenever playing "my rocketship game."

In sixth grade a well meaning friend asked me if I knew how babies were made. "Yeah," I immediately replied, "I always wondered how non Jews could think there's no G-d. Don't they know that Hashem miraculously makes only married women become pregnant?!" My friend laughed, and then made some motion with his finger and a loop made by the fingers of his other hand before walking away. I had the feeling that I was missing something, but was too shy to ask my parents. So I Googled it. What I read after that Google search was still confusing to me, so I turned to Google Images for extra clarity.

I don't remember exactly when I put the two together, but I do remember lying on my bed touching myself and suddenly being struck with the epiphany that the pleasure I felt from touching myself was what was being described by Google. I combined the two - touching myself and searching Google Images - and soon experienced my first time ejaculating.

For years I continued masturbating without giving it any thought other than avoiding getting caught. Eventually I got a smartphone. While it didn't have a browser it did have YouTube, and that only entrenched me further.

At some point early in High School I heard a couple shovavim shiurim and figured out

that it's assur to masturbate. By then the few times I'd gotten caught had trained me into a pathological liar. The restrictions on computers in my house trained me how to bypass filters. In other words, I was a skilled masturbater: skilled at finding content and skilled at hiding my actions. Now I had to stop all of that? Give up and forget about all those hard earned skills? What about the escape, the content, and the high that I got from masturbation?

Unfortunately I didn't have a Rebbe then who I could talk to about these issues. I began to feel a whole new, much deeper, kind of shame from struggling with these temptations. Around Elul and before Yom Kippur I'd make an annual pledge to quit, which was usually broken already before Sukkos. I just didn't care enough to seriously try to quit. All I had motivating me to stop were negative feelings like shame, guilt, and a little fear of divine retribution.

When I got to beis medrash I started giving a little more thought towards permanently quitting. What was once a bad habit or guilty pleasure became a struggle, a battle, and the source of a lot of self hate and depression. Second year is when things got serious.

I don't remember how it came up, but a friend of mine and I discovered each other's struggles. It was the first time I opened up to someone else about my secret past. Our Rebbe then was a very intimidating and intense person, and for some reason we decided to go talk to him about our problem. That conversation lasted over an hour, and answering his question of "why are you here" was one of the hardest things I've done.

My friend immediately quit, but for me it still didn't click. I flirted with week-long streaks until Chanukah when I decided to make a new push. I had found an incentive program offering \$500 for 100 days clean, and that was enough motivation to get me to stay clean for a long time. However, I still wasn't really into quitting.

I still watched inappropriate videos on YouTube, and even saw pornography for the first time when I was home for bein hazmanim. I knew where my line was that I could watch these things without technically breaking my streak.

After 185 days "technically clean" a promotional email for a reality TV series sent me back to day one. Years of shame and negative self talk caught up with me and I entered a dark depression. That night I called the suicidal hotline and some random lady reassured

me that Jesus would forgive me for my sins, so I stayed alive. I began to accept that I could never change. Why keep fighting a losing battle? Surely “Jesus” would forgive me when I eventually came around and did teshuva. I found myself researching prostitution options and outside clubs. My learning and self esteem were in shambles.

I switched Yeshivas for third year and was ready for a clean slate and a fresh attempt to change. I got rid of my smartphone, stopped listening to non Jewish music, and jumped into my learning. I discovered a talent and love for learning which I never knew I had. Things were looking up, until I realized my “kosher dumb phone” had an unfiltered browser on it. I immediately went to get it filtered, but the filter company said my phone model was the only type they couldn’t filter. How convenient. Pornography that night. Masturbation the night after.

All the high flying feelings and motivation disappeared, replaced by depression, insecurity, and overwhelming urges. When Rosh Hashana came around I cleaned up and even got rid of my “kosher” phone in place of my smartphone. At least I couldn’t watch porn on it. I got back into my learning and managed to proactively be clean through Yom Kippur and Sukkos.

On the last day of bein hazmanim I fell again. Coming back for winter zman I knew something had to change. My devices were well filtered, but the images and videos etched into my mind were more than enough for me to continue to act out. I was getting desperate and anxious about my continued struggle, but had nowhere to turn.

I heard about GYE through the Meaningful People Podcast and decided to check it out. I signed up for a mentor and started watching the videos to learn about the different tools. Admitting and opening up that I need help from someone else showed myself a commitment for real change, and that was a big motivation to try harder to break free. I made it 34 days clean - like really clean - and then found myself on a Motzei Shabbos outside a strip club.

The urges were too strong. I figured I'd at least make it "worth it" and was looking to hire a prostitute. I was back at the club the next night and this time went in and got a quick look around before I was kicked out for being under 21. I drove to a different club and a dancer happened to be outside taking a smoking break. I actually got out of my car and walked towards her, only to find she had already gone back inside. I was sitting in the parking lot waiting to hire a sex worker when I got a call from my GYE mentor. He got me out of there fast. We had a long conversation and he convinced me against sexual

interactions with other people. But those urges just kept getting stronger.

I realized that my strongest response against acting out was the argument that it just wasn't worth it. The counter argument though was all my fantasies and the drive to take my sexual activity to the next level. So I decided to make a compromise with my yetzer harah (don't try this at home). My red line was physically touching a woman sexually. I had done everything up to that level and could therefore argue that those actions weren't worth it. Well... almost everything.

A week after visiting the strip club I used my new credit card for a sex talk-line and had "one last go." That was the deal: I gave in to that fantasy but had now done everything imaginable short of physically interacting with another person, and so "now I could stop myself" by saying it just isn't worth it.

After I hung up I spent two hours in my car filling out the entire GYE Three Circles program. I remember the desperation in her voice to keep me (paying) on the phone as I was hanging up, and I actually internalized for the first time what I always knew intellectually: that the porn actresses, prostitutes, and phone sex workers only wanted my money. The fantasies were all based on an illusion.

That following Sunday was the first day of shovavim. The images and sounds from the strip clubs and the talk-line made that next week very hard, but I persevered. The next 30 days were a lot of "white knuckling" and wishing I was allowed to give in.

Eventually I got around to reading The Battle of The Generation by Hillel S, and it was a big help. However, as he himself writes in the book, old habits which are decades old don't die from reading a couple pages. The images and urges kept coming at me and at times I felt like I would explode.

The past 57 days have been a rollercoaster, and I'm trying my best to keep holding on. Sometimes I feel clean internally with no desire to pursue my urges. Other days all I can think about are my fantasies and how to realize them. It's been a long journey, but I'm slowly seeing positive change within me.

I don't know what the fight has in store tomorrow, but I know that it's worth it to keep fighting.

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by Muttel - 11 Mar 2025 18:23

Wow, what brutal honesty in this story!

Your story is like so many of hours here with varying details. The good news is that GYE represents **hope**. Hope to break free from the menace of lust. Hope to live a life of victory and purity.

If I can be so bold as to recommend you reach out to Hashem Help Me (michelgelner@gmail.com). He's helped hundreds (thousands?), me included.

Stick around, learn the ropes, and get to know the warmest group of friends out there!

Here's wishing you much luck for sustained success!!

Muttel

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by lamaazavtuni - 11 Mar 2025 19:38

wow wow welcome to the only ppl in th world that could really understand you, cause weve been there done that\are there still doing it. you sound like a great guy looking forward to get to know more about you. hatslacha and yes a good first step is to reach out to michelgelner like muttel said hes usually the first person ppl reach out to for help and he can

direct you were to go. wishing you the best of luck and please keep us posted

=====

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by cleanmendy - 11 Mar 2025 20:19

Unbelievable!

You bared it all, must've felt great!!

Its so good to see another holy yid that has found the way to freedom.

Sounds like you have a mentor to reach out to. The fact that you called him outside a club is mind boggling, your perseverance is mamash inspiring!

Thank you for posting!

Hatzlacha

=====

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by eerie - 11 Mar 2025 20:34

Wow. Sounds like you have been through a lot, and you're winning! My friend, stick around, post, get to know the oilam. Connecting to the boys is the way out. We are here for you, we care about you, we want to hear from you, we want to see you succeed, and we'll do anything

Hold on tight, you are a different type of rocket and you're about to take off, reaching ever higher heights!

=====

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by time2win - 11 Mar 2025 23:26

@benporasyosef, welcome to the chabura of fighters! Wishing you much hatzlacha and simcha in your journey to sobriety.

all the best,

Time2Win

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by amevakesh - 12 Mar 2025 00:29

Welcome brother to the forums! Pretty impressive first post. You've come a long way and seem committed to this fight for the long term. Yes, there may be bumps on the road, but demonstrated that you've got what it takes to overcome any hurdle. You've already reached out and that's a huge first step, but there's so much more to be gained from reaching out for a few more. There are many wise people that will be glad to be your friend and hold your hand when things get shake. You're well on your way to graduating from being "little rocket man" who's consumed with his "little rocket", to "BIG ROCKET MAN" who's flying his space ship against the gravitational pull of lust, toward outer space where you will break free from the pull of all these unwanted desires. There's only one way to do it, and that is to "FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!!". The good people here will teach you how to do it best by fighting smarter not harder. Stick around, and keep on posting. Looking forward to hearing more from you! Hatzlacha on your journey!

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by proudyungerman - 12 Mar 2025 02:41

Welcome to the warmest family in the world!

Here you will find true care, concern, and warmth.

Here you will learn that you CAN break free!

There are many tools here to help you in this fight. Some of them you may be familiar with, some may be new.

There is the F2F Program, the [Vaad Program](#) (click [here](#) for an explanation of what the vaad is), and the book [The Battle of the Generation](#) - many have found this very helpful in reframin' the struggle, as you mentioned.

Posting is a great way to connect, learn, and grow also.

There is also an extremely powerful tool of accountability, friends, and mentors, as has been mentioned, that has helped hundreds - myself included.

HHM - Hashem Help Me - is the mentor-in-chief around here. He's reachable at michelgelner@gmail.com.

Some of the other great guys here are Eerie - 1gimpelovitz@gmail.com, Muttel - muttel15@gmail.com, Reb Akiva - mevakesh247@gmail.com iwantlife - iwantlifegye@proton.me minhamayim - minhamayim1@gmail.com amevakesh - amevakesh23@gmail.com

Keep postin', you'll see, the oilam is here for you.

Lookin' forward to seeing great things from you!

And don't forget, as always, KOMT!!

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by jollylemur95 - 12 Mar 2025 03:52

Welcome friend!

I see no purpose in saying reach out to people as you seem to know that already, in addition to

hearing that from so many of the greats who have already responded.

The only thing I can possibly add is that you are so NORMAL. The feelings you express and the struggles you experienced are shared by many.

They have cleaned up **And so can you!!!**

Wishing all the best in your journey and please keep us posted.

Warning: Spoiler!

I look forward to reading more of your deep and real posts.

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by jonthen123 - 12 Mar 2025 04:36

wow ,wow the story is amazing story we have lot to learn form you, its amazing were you or today keep fighting and reaching out to the legends here .

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by benporasyosef - 13 Mar 2025 21:01

(I wanted to finish up and post my introductory post first, but this I feel is my main one. I haven't

gotten a chance to post this until now. It's really five days old. I wrote it in the moment.)

I'm writing this post in my car from the parking lot outside Best Buy. I was next in line with the sales representative about to buy a prepaid unfiltered smartphone. After 55 days clean I reached my breaking point and had to give in.

I'm 20 years old, third year in Yeshiva, and I struggle daily with controlling my sexual drive. Today I found the strength to walk out, and I'm about to drive back to Yeshiva in time for second seder.

The last week has been especially hard for me, and that's what got me to Best Buy now. I was ready to throw in the towel and buy a smartphone to fulfill all my worst fantasies. But I walked out.

I have a younger brother in 12th grade, and I told my GYE mentor I wanted to write him a letter about dealing with this struggle for when he goes to Yeshiva next year. What I told him was only half true though: the letter was as much for myself as it was for him.

Reading the following letter gave me the strength to walk out and recommit myself to cleaning up.

"Every healthy teenage male has sexual urges. Controlling these urges is the epitome of following your intellect over your instincts. As Jews, we believe that this is the bottom line reason we were created. To use our human intellect to choose good instead of following our animalistic instincts.

Succeeding in controlling this urge requires a committed desire to change. The following ideas and strategies are good to know, but will only be truly effective with a committed desire to change. After commitment to change the next step is to work on changing your mindset.

Some people have the following mindset: “fighting an urge is a lose-lose situation. You either lose by giving in because of the guilt that follows, or you lose by holding back because you really want to give in.” That mindset is wrong and unproductive, and will hold you hostage from your potential to break free.

If a person is watching inappropriate content and hears somebody about to enter the room he has a choice. He can continue and enjoy the sexual pleasure, or he can immediately stop and save his reputation. Almost everyone would choose to stop, because the momentary pleasure is not worth the long term embarrassment.

A person needs to view this challenge as a choice between two pleasures, not two poisons. The deep feeling of swelling with pride when you beat an urge is one pleasure. The physical chemical response the brain is tricked into giving is another pleasure.

The best way to control this urge is to understand the value and significance of holding back, and to feel pride and pleasure from that accomplishment. **Even if a person manages to “white knuckle” around his red lines, he’s not cleaning up internally and therefore not dealing with the problem.** Only a desire to change and an understanding of the value of holding back will result in lasting freedom.

One last point to note is that most of the battle is in your head. During an urge your mind will present seemingly convincing, but ultimately illogical arguments. “If you broke your streak yesterday you might as well make it worth it today,” and “this urge is obviously too strong for me to actually be expected to fight back” are two common but illogical arguments.

The battle is not about streaks, incentives, or red lines. It’s a battle against lust in general and in all forms. Every day is a new day and will present new opportunities for you to actualize your purpose for being created by choosing good. **Every moment is a clean slate and a new opportunity.**

In our religion we believe that God does not ever give a challenge to someone unless they have the strength to succeed. If you feel an urge then that means God believes in your ability to succeed. He’s giving you an opportunity to choose a deeper and more fulfilling pleasure.

However, these counter arguments often mysteriously disappear from your head during an urge. Therefore, it's important to stay grounded and give yourself time to regain a coherent train of thought. One way is to speak out what your mind is telling you. You'll often find that when you hear the argument out loud its flaws immediately become apparent. Another is to (STAR) Step back, Take a few deep breaths, Ask yourself "is this what I really want," and then Respond by distracting yourself instead of trying to fight the urge head on with willpower alone.

Everyone struggles with sexual urges. It's a normal part of being a healthy male. However, as a Jew, it comes with an opportunity to feel empowered and fulfilled in a meaningful way."

While waiting in line at Best Buy I pulled out my phone and read this letter to myself. The clouds around my judgement broke and I immediately saw the foolishness of what I was about to do. Thankfully I saved myself from starting down what could have been an irreversibly dark path.

To anyone reading this, I would highly recommend writing a response to the following question: **"if your younger brother asked you how to control your sexual urges, what would you tell him?"** Would you really say it's a lost cause?

You don't believe you're lost.

You're not lost.

You have the strength and the answers within you to control your urges and actualize your highest potential. It might take some help from a friend or mentor to bring it out, but ultimately Hashem only gave you this opportunity because you alone possess the power to succeed.

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by boardg - 13 Mar 2025 21:17

WOW!

truly inspirational.

And the best part is that you practiced what you preached

=====

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light

Posted by benporasyosef - 13 Mar 2025 22:29

That last post about Best Buy was pretty impressive right? Real ego booster. "I practice what I preach." To those still struggling who wrote me off as unrelatable, let me tell you part two.

Three days after walking out of Best Buy I walked into Target. This time I walked out with a cheap, prepaid smartphone. I had a portable WiFi hotspot in my car so I didn't even need to purchase a cellular data plan. Honestly, it was too smooth and too easy.

A quick Google search got me to a hookup website, and within five minutes I was texting with a girl twenty minutes away. I knew what I was about to do was wrong. I knew it was stupid. But I didn't care anymore. I was broken down from fighting so hard for so long. Still, my moral compass was shouting at me from deep within to shut the whole thing down.

As you know from my first post, I make compromises. I continued texting with the girl, but called one of my close friends from Yeshiva.

"Shua," I said when he picked up, "I'm a twenty minute drive away from giving in. You gotta talk me out of this."

"Get rid of that phone" was his immediate advice, after recovering from the shock of what I'd told him. "Just toss it now and drive back to Yeshiva."

I couldn't do that though. I had already made a deal with my yetzer hara. Instead I said "just keep talking to me, I'll read you what she's writing and you'll help me respond."

"Toss the phone now. Get out of there."

"C'mon man, just hang with me here."

"What's she saying?"

"She's sending me pictures. She wants to meet tonight, but says I need to complete some medical clearance form first."

"What? Why? How does that work?"

"I don't know. Never heard of it - wait, she's explaining now."

"Dude, you gotta just block the number and leave - "

"I can't believe this! It's literally a scam. She sent me a screenshot of an email from "the person who runs it himself" and it says to PayPal some random name \$100 for a two week "clearance" or \$250 for a month. It doesn't ask anything about your medical health at all!"

"Are you surprised? I'm sure whichever man was sending you those pictures and texting you is having a good laugh now. Probably thinks he's about to pocket another free \$100."

Besides the exact words of our conversation I can promise this story is completely true. My magic fix of reading myself my letter never popped into my head. Even speaking it out with a

After returning to Yeshiva I called my GYE mentor and told him everything. We had a productive discussion, and he even said I shouldn't restart my streak since I hadn't masturbated, took the initiative to call a friend, and managed to shut it all down. Later that night I drove to a lake and tossed my new smartphone for good.

That's a terrifying thought. My wife? Just a better "option" than porn stars and prostitutes?!

For that I'm going to need your help.

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by amevakesh - 13 Mar 2025 22:36

Wow! What ?????! Who knows what ?????? were averted in heaven when you were ????

?????? in Best Buy. As to what happened in Target, even if it would be considered a fall, (Doesn't sound like it was a total failure at all. Fact is you held back from most of what you intended to do) still, every bit of effort you put in to that battle until the fall, did not go to waste.

There's a famous ????? from the ???? that goes something like this. ?? ?? ??? ????? ????? ????
 ??? ????? ????? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ?????? ?????? ??????. For every second that a person restrains

himself from speaking ???? ??? he merits a reward that no ???? can comprehend. I once heard from Rav Matisyahu, who said in the name of his Rebbe Rav Elya Lopian, that the words of the Gaon are even applicable if the person ended up saying the Loshon Hora, he still receives the reward for the time that he held back.

I'm pretty confident in saying that it surely applies to this Inyan as well. Every second restrained is priceless. You're a hero, and you should be proud of yourself. KOMT!!!

=====

Re: Legos to Clubs to Rays of Light
Posted by time2win - 14 Mar 2025 00:23

These are two amazing stories of gevurah !

Inspirational.

=====