

my story, any chizuk appreciated

Posted by aryehtahor - 22 Jan 2010 16:49

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I feel that the time is overdue for me to write my story to someone and try to get as much help as possible.

First, I should emphasize that I did not grow up in a religious house or part of a religious community at all. I have only recently become a Baal Teshuva.

I was introduced to pornography magazines at a young age, perhaps 10. I had a friend who had movie channels that showed smut late at night and we would watch together when I would sleep over. When people started to have internet at home, I remember going over to another friend's house to look together from time to time. But it didn't become an addiction until later, although when I cannot say. In fact, my inability to remember most of the development of this highly destructive habit is astounding. It is as if all those hours I spent looking at pornography went into a black hole and got deleted from my memory and consciousness. How do I know it happened? Because today I am struggling more than ever to stop my addiction to internet pornography.

About 3 years ago, my loneliness and obsession with lust and frustration at not being able to "pick up" someone overcame me and I had an involvement with a prostitute. This experience was totally revolting to me and I am ashamed to this day. After that I had a girlfriend but I continued looking at pornography and regarding her as an object. As a result, our sexual relations were anything but intimate for me. They were filled with numbness and frustration. It was a strange situation of feeling a strong need for having relations but during the actual act, not feeling any emotion or real pleasure. This must have been the effect of the pornography on my mind.

I should also add that this girlfriend enjoyed deviant sexual practices, some involving violence. There was one instance, which I am even more ashamed of than the prostitute and which I haven't told anyone in the world until now, that occurred that I think is also related to the pornography and the concept of women as objects. I was angry at this girlfriend for some trivial reason and the deviant sexual practice and my raw anger crossed wires in my mind and somehow made me believe that it was OK to be violent towards her. I don't know if, in my perverted mind, I thought she would enjoy being assaulted physically, or if I thought it was all some sort of sexual drama, but I hurt her physically. This has to have been the absolute low-point in my life. You must understand that this was totally antithetical to all my beliefs and natural instincts, and completely uncharacteristic of me and of the environment I come from. I just need to get it off my chest, because it's hard to bear the secret alone. We continued to be

together for another 2 years before breaking up. No violence ever occurred again between us.

Before being exposed to Judaism, I sensed that pornography was destructive and that I needed to stop but I lacked the strength and determination. I knew that it was disgusting, anti-social, and that it was an addiction that would wreck my future family. I have improved a lot B'H with the help of a Rabbi and the Torah that I've studied, but I still have lapses and get sucked in. Sometimes 2 or 3 or 4 hours go by and I am stuck to the computer destroying my mind and my soul. Even if you forget all the spiritual damage, what a waste of time! However, whereas I used to masturbate very frequently, I have sworn off it and have stopped completely with only 2 lapses in the last 6 months. But it's not enough. My goal is: no pornography and no masturbation. I firmly believe that the only way to really control the yetzer hara is through learning Torah. Hashem created the Yetzer Hara and He created Torah as the antidote. All the terrible things we do can be for the good if we do sincere Teshuva, make a Cheshbon with ourselves, and resolve to never do these things again AND KEEP OUR WORD.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 22 Jan 2010 16:54

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You are a brave person Reb AT for admitting this. It is the first step but I am sure this wasn't easy for you. Chazal (the sages) say "Kol Haschalos Kashos", all beginnings are difficult. You have surely passed the beginning so the rest can only get easier as long as you stay with us. Keep posting and you will see the attitude change necesseray to beating this.

Have a great Shabbos

-Yiddle

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by silentbattle - 22 Jan 2010 17:26

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Welcome, Reb Aryeh!

Glad to have with you with us. I can see how being violent would make you feel ashamed, as that's clearly not the kind of person you are. I would mention, though, that "deviant" is a very judgmental word - if someone enjoys something, then that can be a good thing, even if most other people don't.

However, your experience points out one of the dangers of such a lifestyle - it can be difficult to draw the line between what one enjoys, and when someone is truly angry and wants to hurt the other.

We've all done things that we're ashamed of - but the point is that we're growing, and we're improving. We're becoming different people from the people that we were.

We sometimes slip, sometimes fall - but hopefully we improve, and we serve hashem one day at a time. That's our job in this world, after all - to serve hashem every minute of our lives, as best we can in that minute. Who know's what will happen a minute from now, and hour, tomorrow? We live now.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by Kollel Guy - 23 Jan 2010 18:26

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Dear R' Aryeh,

Welcome to our community!!

It's great to see yet another Jew determined to go through whatever it takes to do the ratzon H-shem, and eradicate from his life - anything which goes against it. You seem to be a very serious Jew, who is truly searching for the way to purity.

Always remember: "Yagata u'matzasa - taamin". The Torah promises us, if we make a serious and dedicated effort to fulfill any part of the Torah - we WILL succeed!

Well, you must have tried hard enough in the past, because H-shem sent you to the right place. Many many Jews - just like you, slightly different than you, and very different than you, have all finally found a way to end this terrible part of their lives, and with the help of H-shem, you will also. This site and some Emunah - have the power to free you from this prison.

I personally can relate to your story, since my nesayon is strictly viewing things which I shouldn't, and not ZL.

I was introduced to pornography magazines at a young age, perhaps 10.  
Same here.

I sensed that pornography was destructive and that I needed to stop but I lacked the strength and determination

I think EVERY person here can relate to this **very** well.

but I still have lapses and get sucked in  
Yeah, welcome to the party.

Sometimes 2 or 3 or 4 hours go by and I am stuck to the computer destroying my mind and my soul.  
Yup, that's me too.

But it's not enough. My goal is: no pornography and no masturbation.  
Yes, that is the common goal here. However there is one very important and vital goal which is missing. Aryeh needs to realize who he really is, and what he truly wants, and where these thoughts and considerations to repeatedly do things which hurt him and make him sad come from. Stopping is not the only problem here. There's also **why you are stuck now** which you need to understand if you really want to get free.

Everyone in the world has:

1)Problems

2)Things they are ashamed of

3)Things they need to overcome

You my dear friend, are no different.

However, unlike most people you have a certain advantage. That you were given the ability to recognize who creates the possibility for these things to exist, and who creates along with them - the possibility and option to deal with them, and solve them.

I could go on and on, but I think you'll gain a lot more if you look around the site and see first hand how similar you are to the others here, and see what helps everyone.

Get yourself on the 90 day chart, and read through those handbooks. Guard should be here soon to link them for you.

Welcome aboard and Hatzlacha Rabbah!!!

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by the.guard - 23 Jan 2010 21:08

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Hi Aryeh Tahor,

I got your story by e-mail and put it up on our site. I also sent you the welcoming "package" with

Thanks for joining us here on the forum.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by aryehthor - 24 Jan 2010 04:58

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This is such an amazingly warm community. Thanks for all your replies.

After quite a while being clean and having occasionally read articles on this site, I had a serious lapse which finally convinced me that I need to be more active and actually post something and engage with people. I think having taken that step, I am much more likely to stay clean.

So thanks for the kind responses and Hashem should help us all to become and remain clean! I will keep you posted.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 24 Jan 2010 05:02

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Thats great Aryeh,

Stay with us here on the forum by posting and you'll be on the right track in no time.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by aryehthor - 24 Jan 2010 05:26

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Oh, some other stuff I wanted to point out about my situation and see if there is any advice to be had:

I happen to be in an environment in which I see very non-tznius women literally everywhere.

This state of affairs will only be another year but until then there isn't really anything I can do about it except...not look. When I leave this environment, my need for pornography goes way down. The things I see during the day affect me when I'm on my own. But not looking is really hard. Any tips on that? It's kind of like being really hungry and knowing that in the next room are all sorts of delicacies that you love that are there for you but you don't even go to see what they are, let alone eat any...

Which leads to the other problem which is that I have time on my hands. Even when I'm busy and I have a whole list of things to accomplish in the day and I am very methodical in doing them, I am glad to be able to relax at the end and...indulge in some internet surfing. But when I don't have a lot that I have to do, my laziness prevents me from getting up and being creative in finding something useful to do, and the internet is always there beckoning. And I've had filters but I always beat them so they are more or less useless at this point. And if I have time on my hands and I get sucked in...as I said, that could kill the whole day, or at least hours and hours.

The truth is, there are plenty of things that I like and that interest me that are healthy. But nothing else gives an immediate rush like looking at pornography. It's the instant, no-effort, mindless, stimulation that I crave. Other things, like picking up a sefer, require some measure of patience and perseverance. But I guess that's what fighting the yetzer hara is all about.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by Kollel Guy - 24 Jan 2010 06:05

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When I leave this environment, my need for pornography goes way down.  
Have you been away for a few months at a time to be able to say for certain that pn becomes less of a problem?

I would venture to say this is more like wishful thinking. I find it very common for the Y"H to push off something I need to do now, with the reasoning of "It is only a problem because of your current situation, as soon as you leave - so will the problem". Not surprisingly, almost 100% of the time, the problem would not go away with the change of scenery as I expected it would.

I think what helped me most here, was the realization (which I still have to work on) that I should only consider my **current** obligations, and not be concerned with the obligations I will or will not have with the passage of time. If I have to do something now - this is my work set up for me.

But not looking is really hard. Any tips on that?

Advice on how not to look?

Well, that's simple but not easy. I personally was not able to do it successfully until I found a sefer which gives step by step instructions on how to keep your eyes kadosh. And even after that, when I forgot to keep it up - I slipped right back.

It basically goes through a few very practical techniques everyone can use, and although he definitely was not writing for someone on a college campus or the like, it should be equally as effective.

It's called Vihaer Eineinu, check out this thread [rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=1342.0](http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=1342.0) on how to get it.

Good luck, and Keep On Trucking!

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by aryehtahor - 24 Jan 2010 15:25

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Dear Kollel Guy,

I am a college student at the moment and over vacation I went to Yeshiva. What I found is that, at least in this one instance (although I know this isn't a general rule), I was not tempted to act out while in Yeshiva, but coming back to college and seeing all the non-tznius women (college is about the worst possible environment for that), I relapsed in a big way.

But I know you're right, attitude-wise. We need to focus on the here-and-now. I've often wondered why Hashem put me, a fledgling Baal Teshuva, into such a hard environment as a completely secular college environment, before I've even gotten a grounding in Torah education. On the other hand, perhaps if I can succeed in shmiras einayim here, then I can do it anywhere.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated

Posted by silentbattle - 24 Jan 2010 16:55

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That's true - this may be a good training for later on.

I agree that you need outlets to relax and unwind - I'd recommend exercise - it makes you feel great, it lets you burn off energy, and it leaves you more energetic in the long run!

Make plans before you're faced with temptation - figure out other things to do that will relax you. Then do them!

I'm incredibly impressed that you're doing this - you rock!

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated

Posted by Dov - 24 Jan 2010 22:04

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[aryehtahor wrote on 24 Jan 2010 05:26:](#)

The truth is, there are plenty of things that I like and that interest me that are healthy. But nothing else gives an immediate rush like looking at pornography. Its the instant, no-effort, mindless, stimulation that I crave. Other things, like picking up a sefer, require some measure of patience and perseverance. But I guess that's what fighting the yetzer hara is all about.

Aryehtahor - Hi and hatzlocha on this new path you have started with Hashem's help, no doubt. I feel as you, that the rush is basically a drug, and a strong one, at that. I have not acted out in a

Anyway, thanks so much for the sharing you did above, and I have two suggestions. One is that you find some other people you can get real with and stay real with on a regular basis either on the phone or in person. For me, nothing beats being able to talk to another recovering person while I'm driving home, to work, at klunch, (I meant lunch), and whenever lust strikes (kapow).

If the forum is enough and it actually works for you, gezunterheit! I needed to attend SA and create a chevra of my own. I also had to work to steps, and I need to use them today, as well.

Hashem helps me keep this great life I have, and with no shame any more. Wow, what a switch, for me.

Second, if these women are really unavoidable and you are going to see them and peek at them occasionally anyway, you might as well start learning how to help them out, rather than just take from them. By that I mean daven for each one of them by name, if you know them (they are real people, with names, not objects, right? And they have the normal pains of living, tzaros, fears, dashed hopes of spouse, child, and self, and *will* have them in their futures; some will have, r"l, terrible unexpected tortures, and *all* will have to even die one day, too. Nothing negative here, mind you - this is just all a *part* of life. You can start davening for them to have peace and satisfaction in their families, their jobs, and good health. To be spared the pain of physical and mental health problems, which are devastating, r"l. To be happy with their jobs, their spouses and children, and to have Hashem's help to make the right priorities in their lives, so that they won't be terribly dissappointed with shtuyot, which - as we somewhat perverted folks know all too well - lead only to bitterness. Ask Hashem to gift them with an awareness of Him, that grows every day and every year. What greater gift *is there* than living in reality, after all?

And after you are done asking for all that for them, ask it all for your own parents, for your spouse (wherever she is right now) G-d-willing, and for your future children iy"h. No joke.

I do this exercise whenever I forget and feel like it'd be nice to use the images of women as objects. It can be a bit painful to start such a t'fillah, cuz I have to say goodbye to that nutty idea that lusting after them will really help me...it hurts like hell sometimes, I know. But in the end it actually feels better than the lusting (not kidding), and doing this a few times helps me to respect and care about those women and to lessens my focus on snatching/stealing that image ;D.

Nu. Hatzlocha with making a better life for yourself, whatever you do!

Love,

Dov

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by aryeh tahor - 24 Jan 2010 22:21

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Dear Dov,

Wow, what incredible advice. It never occurred to me to daven for the very same women that are feeding my lust. Once they actually become real people in my eyes, that could deflate the

fantasy world. After all, even the women on the internet who make a living from feeding men's lust are real people who are probably deeply unhappy and disturbed. In reality, they need help even more than we do, because they have already lost all self-respect. But yeah, it's probably easier to focus on the actual women I see daily.

Also, I think you understood something important about my addiction, and so I'm assuming it must be similar for you. Lust addiction for me is so hard to fight not because thoughts come into my head and I can't get rid of them, but rather because I *\*want\** to think about them. There's a part of me that actively *\*tries\** to think lustful thoughts because they seem to give pleasure. So it's not a matter of thoughtlessness, or lack of control. It's actively fighting a destructive desire and deciding that, although I think I want it, I really don't.

I have a feeling of genuine excitement that, being a part of this community, I actually have a good shot at finally succeeding with this.

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated  
Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 24 Jan 2010 22:59

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[aryehtahor wrote on 24 Jan 2010 22:21:](#)

Dear Dov,

Wow, what incredible advice. It never occurred to me to daven for the very same women that are feeding my lust. Once they actually become real people in my eyes, that could deflate the fantasy world. After all, even the women on the internet who make a living from feeding men's lust are real people who are probably deeply unhappy and disturbed. In reality, they need help even more than we do, because they have already lost all self-respect. But yeah, it's probably easier to focus on the actual women I see daily.

See more on this thread for this idea. Bruce wayne puts up great stories that make us realize what were really looking at. Here's the thread:

[rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=1269.0](http://rehab-my-site.com/guardureyes/forum/index.php?topic=1269.0)

-Yiddle

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Re: my story, any chizuk appreciated

Posted by silentbattle - 25 Jan 2010 05:37

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Not sure if that thread helps everyone, and I think that Reb Aryeh may be talking about regular women that he sees in the street...

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