

Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.

Posted by dovekbashem - 01 Apr 2010 03:17

I am 21 years old. I remember the first time I touched myself inappropriately was in grade 7, just months before my bar mitzvah. I promised myself that after my bar mitzvah I would never touch myself again. It has been 9 years! I have touched myself inappropriately, I have touched girls inappropriately and am constantly (sometimes daily) failing at my battle with the internet. I used to think I was just a healthy teenager (I was not so frum at the time) but now realize that I have an addiction. About 4 years ago, I began to learn halacha seriously and decided to become shomer negiah. It was the hardest thing I have ever done and life has been hard since then. I sometimes convince myself that the only way to maintain my shmirath negiah is by turning to the internet. I read on this website that fantasizing about various arayos is often normal for a sex addict which helps me confirm that that is what I am. I want to start dating, I want to raise a family of ovdei hashem and yirei shamayim but I don't want to lie to my wife and children about who I truly am. I want to be the eved hashem, the kadosh yid that G-d expects me to be. I want to stop falling and starting living a life of purity and purpose. I am clean now for 4 days. I am embarrassed by how proud that makes me but it is at least a start... I only hope my strength continues.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.

Posted by frumfiend - 26 Nov 2010 10:50

reb dovek your honesty is so refreshing. Daven to hashem tp lead you on the right path. I also love porn. I know what you are feeling. The only problem is he doesnt let only a little. You will be right back to spending hours a day with him. Torturing yourself to check out every girl on the street while making believe they dont see you.

You will also feel like the greatest loser one you give in. The yh wont let you enjoy the fall because he hates you.

hatzlacha if you decide to fight the agony will probaly be over in a day. You will then feel even better than before.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.

Posted by silentbattle - 26 Nov 2010 12:21

Sometimes it doesn't help to remember that this is garbage...but remember this - as much fun

as it may seem when the y"ח makes his sales pitch, it will destroy your life on many different levels.

And remember that you don't really want it - it's the y"ח, speaking in your voice, pretending to be you, saying, "I *need* this, I can't live without this!"

The sad part is, we fall for it, and we believe that that voice *is* us!

And like kedusha said, this is the time to grow! And it's a beautiful thing when you realize that you can survive, and even be happy without this thing!

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 26 Nov 2010 15:58

Dovek,

what you are facing is tough, no doubt about it. you can't find the voice who says 'don't do it' even though in the past you had found it and used it so boldly. so you say "i want this". we all have this voice and we all feel like we want porn and acting out because of the relief and pleasure we expect to receive. and when that voice starts up it is just about impossible to argue with it. it will shout you down. and bring lomdus and proofs. and if we start arguing with it we are toast. the argument itself will wear us down and weaken us. finally in exasperation we give in just to get over with it.

if you can step away from the heat of the moment and look at it as if you are a bystander you will see that it is the Yetzer Hara speaking. what is the Yetzer Hara? it is an Inclination to Evil. we all have inside us an urge to self-destruct. you don't have to think of it in terms of cosmic battles between good and evil. it is a microcosmic battle inside you. this urge is insidious and dresses itself up like your friend. he says that you don't want pain and you desperately need some comfort so do this and that and you will feel better.

experience tells you that he is dead wrong. you will not feel better. you will feel despondent and desperate if you go for the drug he recommends. it will push you down and down and will never stop unless you stop it.

take a moment and talk to Hashem. ask him to help you choose what's right. tell how hard it is and how you feel it is beyond your capabilities.

whatever happens keep in touch here and keep talking to Hashem.

we are all rooting for you

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by Kedusha - 26 Nov 2010 16:14

Dear Dovek,

I hope you're doing well.

To be honest, if I could look at porn and act out, while being able to maintain my self confidence, look people in the eye, and have Simchas Hachaim, I would do it. The fact that it's an aveira would not be enough to deter me. However, I know from experience that if I, c"v, do these things, I'll fall apart, and every aspect of my life will be tainted by the guilt of living a double life. This motivates me to stay clean, even when it's difficult (as it's been a number of times this week).

What's interesting is, if the y"h could make me feel good about myself after acting out, there would be little to stop me from doing it as often as possible. But, the RBS"O, in his great kindness and fairness, did not give the y"h that power.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by dovekbashem - 26 Nov 2010 17:35

Thank you all so much for your help.

I'm literally on the verge here. Not refraining from visuals - actually seeing them. Not restraining myself from touching - actually touching. But I have not let myself be shofech. This is killing me. It is so difficult. It is a struggle between my mind and my body and, even worse, between one part of my brain and the other!

You guys have given me some perspective. I am scared to take a deep breath and say I know that I won't act out... because then I will feel like even more of a failure if I do... but I am definitely going to try. I prayed last night for Hashem to remind me of why I want to be clean and why I want to be close to him because right now I'm having a really hard time remembering. A few weeks ago I posted about how lucky we are to be Jews and now I find myself so jealous of all the people I see and hear about who just give in and don't live with this struggle.

I really hope I pull through this. I really hope Hashem reminds me soon why I actually want to be clean.... I really hope he reminds me when I am still clean and not because I have fallen.

Hatzlocha to all. This is a painful struggle and I feel a little bit lost and confused.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by dovekbashem - 26 Nov 2010 19:28

I went for a drive to gain some clarity... which means you are all about to hear me rant.

In a standard mach' rashi / tosfos it is often surprising at first when they take such different views on one halacha - see krias shema (brachos 2b) or tefillin (menachos 62a) for some examples. How do we understand how two gedolim, from the same world of torah, can come to

such opposite conclusions? The answer is always that they are simply approaching the halacha from different perspectives, emphasizing on different aspects of the din.

L-Havdil elef alfei havdalos, I have decided to ask the same question about the mach' in my mind. How can it be that one part of me so badly wants to act out and give in (over and over and over again) and the other part of me is so horrified by the idea? The answer must be - different perspectives and that different parts of me are emphasizing different things.

The mach' in my mind is between the half of me that focuses on action and the half of me that focuses on being. The part of me that wants to act out doesn't think that it will be enjoyable and simply amazing - it KNOWS that it will be enjoyable and amazing. But there is another part of me that does not focus its desires on action at all. It desires that I BE a certain kind of person and that I have a certain type of identity. In other words, it is a mach' between what I DO and what I AM... and unfortunately, doing shtus like p** and m** completely contradicts who I want to BE, or who I hope I AM.

So which one do I choose, who do I listen to? Do I care more about what I DO and how much I enjoy it or should I care more about who I AM and how I identify myself? I really had to think about this.. it wasn't so obvious to me at first. After all, if I really do enjoy acting out (which I think I do, if I remember correctly) then why not just keep acting out and keep enjoying myself? Finally, it hit me - if that is what I do, then that IS who I am. Hashem commands us in mitzvos because only by ACTING a certain way, can we become a certain person. We are, whether we like it or not, defined by what we DO.

So.. when I am on my deathbed (whenever that day should come) do I simply want to be "The ma**bater"? Do I want to have defined myself as someone who is engrossed in self-pleasure? When I go up to Shomayim, do I want Hashem to say "Welcome home "dude who immersed himself in shtus" or do I want Hashem to say "Welcome home Dovekbashem"?

I may be an addict and a little confused at times but, Baruch Hashem, I'm not that stupid. Now that I get this machlokes, I think I am ra-oui to pasken... and I pasken like the tzad who looks at who I AM and who I want to BE. This tzad has ra-ayahs all over shas and seems pretty well backed up by achronim and rishonim. The other tzad has the yezter harah on his side... who - by the way - isn't even a rishon!

Have a good shabbos to all. Thank you for forcing me to get some clarity on this issue. This week saw many ups and downs... and hayom yom 24.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by mnman415 - 26 Nov 2010 19:58

thats an awesome insight on the real essence of the yetzer harah vs yetzer tov!

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by jewinpain - 28 Nov 2010 00:26

Good week Reb dovek, go back 25 days plz and try to remember what made you stop than, obviously there was some reason for it, so I can promise u that by going back that route u will than have again the urge to start ur battle again (if u will be lucky) so why postpone everything for another month, I have felt that way many times and I just know that looking brings to touching and touching brings to act out, so plz don't think u can walk on such a thin line cuz we can not, plz reinforce ur brain and don't make so much thought about it, all this lomdos is not for now, now u need to be rigid w/o any understanding, cuz ur mind is not up to that @ the moment, use those tactics u used last month to keep ur self busy and away from triggers, u will pull this through and u will be happy u did, it will get easier over time,

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by Stuart - 28 Nov 2010 02:12

DB, I would like to share with you a story I heard over Shabbos. Please don't think I'm singling you out. This is a nice message for all of us with these struggles.

There was a family in Cleveland that was experiencing one tzara after another, and had no idea why. They went to the then Rosh Yeshiva of Telz, Rav Elya Meir Bloch z"l to relate their troubles, and asked if he could figure out what's happening. The RY asked them to recount everything that happened since the misfortunes started. They related it all and then they mentioned that the family inherited a sefer torah from a deceased relative. The RY asked where is the sefer torah now? They answered that they keep it in their living room. Rav Elya Meir then asked if there is anything in the living room that could possibly be a bizayon to the

sefer torah? "Oh we also have a television there", the family replied. "Now we know the reason for the tzara, you can't have a television in the same room as a sefer torah", the RY said.

The end of the story is probably not what you're thinking. The family decided to sell the sefer torah and keep the television!

Granted this narrative is not going to necessarily "make or break" us, or be a turning point for us, but when faced with two obvious choices, please make the right one.

Uvecharta Lechaim leman techieh! Hatzlacha.!

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by Kedusha - 28 Nov 2010 02:14

Continued Hatzlacha!

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by silentbattle - 28 Nov 2010 07:28

It's great to hear that you're working through this, and trying to get clarity, and staying clean.

I would add one more point, if you don't mind. This is something I've discovered about myself in these struggles.

Yes, there's a part of us that whispers in our mind that it **knows** that giving in will bring us unbelievable pleasure, it will feel great, wonderful better than anything else.

And it's lying.

That's the funny part - overall, you know that giving in will 1) make you feel far more miserable over the long-term (and by long-term, I mean within about 10 minutes). And 2), it will make you lose out on the wonderful, amazing, beautiful feeling that you *already* have **right now**, of being clean!

But somehow, we buy into the lie that giving in will make us feel better.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by Kedusha - 28 Nov 2010 15:21

Good point, SB.

As I think I've said before, if the y"ch could make us feel good about ourselves afterwards, we'd be real goners, because we'd have zero motivation to stop (the afterlife just wouldn't cut it for most of us). Boruch Hashem, the y"ch simply does not have that power. He can try to trick us into thinking that we won't feel bad next time, but he can't take away the inevitable pain that follows acting out. Which is a Bracha, because the pain and tears provide great motivation for us to take the steps needed to change.

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by dovekbashem - 28 Nov 2010 17:26

I keep going to my favorite place to go for visual stimulation... and I keep touching. But I also keep holding myself back from being shofech zera because I will feel bad and will have to start my streak from day 1. I have been doing this since tuesday! And I really cannot believe I have not been shofech yet (I am proud of myself in a weird way).

I know that without being shofech, this desire for the visual and the touching will only continue and increase and I know that if I am shofech zerah today I can put an end (at least take a break from) this urge to seek out the visual. That makes me think that I should actually do it - for my own good and, in a weird sense, l-shem shamayim.

1. Is this just the yetzer harah talking or do I really have a point?

2. If I am shofech for this purpose... without any more visual, do I really have to start all over from day 1??

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Re: Needing Help. Trying to stay strong.
Posted by dovekbashem - 29 Nov 2010 01:04

Friends,

I hate to say it but I really let you down - and I let myself down too. I was doing really well. I even saw the end in sight - I was starting to think that I can actually live life without this and get out of this mess. I got cocky... and I fell. Not the fall that I've been describing from last week. I really fell... and twice. I don't want to start from 1 again, I really like my name on the 90 day chart and I would hate to take it down. Today was day 26. I really feel like there is no end to this. To start again from day 1 is to admit how far I am from my goal of being clean. I can't even imagine what my future is going to look like, what my life is going to look like. I feel like it's over... like I have nothing to live for because it is all reduced to my stupid moments of self-pleasure. I have a lot of work to do and a lot of stuff to keep on top of but I can't even do it or concentrate on it. I feel like there is no point. I am wasting my life and I can't stop. I was doing soo well. It was really going smoothly. Then, around day 23, I had this incredible urge that I hadn't had since day 1. I let myself wander but wasn't shofech. Then, I realized that it is possible for me to "wander" without being shofech and I did it again and again. Today, my theory failed me... I was shofech.

I am a shame. What am I? What am I doing here? Will I ever get married? Will I have a happy marriage? Will I have healthy relationships? Can I ever be a complete oved hashem? OR is my life nothing more than the stupid pleasures in front of my computer screen.

I don't know what to do anymore. If these two falls cannot be overlooked, then I guess we are back to day 1. I would like to be more hopeful by how far I've come (26 days) but I am more inclined to think that this is just a sign that this problem won't go away. I thought that this wasn't me and that I can outdo it and overcome it... but I'm starting to think this is just who I am...

hopeless, meaningless.

I can't describe this feeling... like there is just nothing anymore.

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