

the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 05 Aug 2009 15:07

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My username is Eden, i am 21 years old, and my goal is to be clean from pornography.

I started looking at pornography when i was young, but how young i am not sure. I remember being amazed by the feelings pornography would instill within me, it's hard to describe it, needless to say i liked it.

I'm also not sure of how often i indulged back then, perhaps weekly perhaps more. I am from more modern orthodox upbringing and i had access to the internet. Despite being relatively unconnected to Torah ideals, at times i realized pornography's destructiveness and i would vow to stop, sometimes just to prove i was i control. I was never successful in breaking the habit and it continued, sights that used to mystify me became unstimulated and i needed to look at more and more vulgar and decadent scenes to fulfill the aching need.

I did not like my yeshiva high school and eventually left for public school. I was a little happier at that time, partly because no one was forcing observancy down my throat. I was able to find some productive hobbies and managed to graduate, i still looked at pornography regularly.

My story turns up as i spent my next year in yeshiva and gradually started to develop a connection with g-d. I stopped looking at pornography for a whole year, "out of sight out of mind". I then found a yeshiva more suited for me, and studied there for another clean year. Then over one bein hazmanim i had access to the internet through a friends laptop. Things went downhill from there and i spent much time in guilt, pangs of lust and escapism, and despair.

I am grateful to hashem that i was provided necessary mentors and friends to take control, begin to address my issues by reading books on compassion, productive cognition, and acceptance. I began to hold out for a while then relapse, i cut myself off from my sources of addiction only to find more thrust in my life.

I came back to America knowing that i was on shaky footing, i informed my parents and they agreed to "clean up" the house. The concern was that i have 3 brothers that also live here and they use the internet, and my father needed the internet for work. Therefore there was only so much they could do and i began to fall into pornography usage.

My Situation.

I have an effective internet filter, yet i can manipulate the circumstances to use my dad's work

laptop for unfiltered internet access, that will change this afternoon BH". Even though the filter is effective i can still waste alot of time on the internet with nonpornographic activities. I'm recieving the chizzuk email, and i'm bh" starting an email correspondence with a fellow struggler. I hope to join a weekly phone conference yet i have not attended one yet. BH" this thursday...

This is Day 1... I hope to keep a daily update of my progress.

G-d, Please help me keep this up, and guide me towards the paths of pleasantness and peace.

Thank you for reading,

Eden

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Kedusha - 05 Aug 2009 15:45

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Dear Eden,

You've come to the right place. You've had some significant periods of cleanliness in the past, so you know the wonderful feeling - the **Gan Eden**, if you will, that cleanliness brings. That good feeling is long lasting, unlike the pleasure of lust, which leads to days (at least) of emotional anguish.

Stick around and keep us posted of your progress. Hatzlacha!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Tev - 06 Aug 2009 03:22

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Welcome Tzadik!

I'm in the same boat as you... 21 yrs old and struggling to stay clean and upright in this crazy world.

I wish you much success in fighting the yetzer hara . Take 1 day at a time, and I'm sure you'll be successful. Success doesn't mean not falling, rather success is if you do fall you can get back up afterwards.

Everyone has downs the test to see who is strong is the one who fights his negative feelings and gets up .

Good luck and keep us posted!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by kutan - 06 Aug 2009 03:35

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Eden,

Another special neshama! Thanks for joining.

Take one day at a time... be determined to be clean for this day only.

Sounds fake, but it's REAL.

The real world (these days, at least) is FAKE.

illusion.

leads to

delusion.

And if a fall occurs, get up and start again.

Our most popular member here is named 7Up.... and 7 is just a number that represents this physical world... meaning 1000 times up, if needed.

Are you signed up for the daily emails? They are the highlight of my day!

humble and happy,

Kutan

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by the.guard - 06 Aug 2009 22:27

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Dear Eden,

Welcome to our community, once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up, up, up!

I selected a picture for you based on your name "Eden" - just to show you my love for you! :D

And  
that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. I cannot answer you in one short e-mail, so I implore you, if you value your life in this world and the next, at least do at least this for yourself.  
**You're worth it.**

It is great that you joined the daily chizuk e-mails. Make sure to read them each day. They can be like a life-line!

And please **DO** join one of our on-line groups. See [this page](#) for all the options.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Make sure to read them, they contain a wealth of information on beating this addiction! And I'd love to hear your feedback on them...

*Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole*

*handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...*

**Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.**

**1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)**

*This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!*

**2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)**

*The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...*

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Noorah BAmram - 07 Aug 2009 04:15

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Welcome dear brother,

Warmest shalom alichem you a hidden tzadik who goes by the name Eden.

I firmly believe that merely being a member of the forum grants an especial measure of Divine

assistance in our quest for Kedusha and spiritual purity!

It has done it for me!!

Welcome aboard!!

Noorah

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Post away

Re: the path to Eden

Posted by nezach - 07 Aug 2009 14:45

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Welcome Eden - The courage and dignity that you have already displayed by joining this support network is the start of many great things for you, and us all.

Make every effort to be happy each day, to relax and be very strong. I believe that every person is capable to break free and be clean on a consistent basis, with the help from Hashem.

Remember, although it takes time and patience (as its a journey), if you want to be spiritually clean and build a strong foundation - than it is your choice, responsibility and strength that will help you to succeed.

You have all of our support as we help each other!

b'Hazlacha & Shabbat Shalom

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 07 Aug 2009 16:18

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Man was i surprised to see so many replies. I'm very grateful for them; thank you all for the replies, the tips, and most of all the love.

It's revitalizing and brought much joy to my heart.

It's day 3 i guess.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 09 Aug 2009 02:29

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Looks like it's day 4,

this Shabbat, i told someone that i respected about my addiction and my recovery. It was... cathartic, he too had been through much adversity and respected my struggle.

Now more than ever i want to be free of pornography, in order to look this person in the eye with pride when i see him.  
Still clean yay

I know that this isn't lishma, but i see it as a gift; for i think that any and all tools that can be used to stay clean should be used.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Kedusha - 09 Aug 2009 02:35

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Eden,

Don't worry about Lishmah for now (if ever) - such perfectionism is often an atzas hayetzer.



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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by the.guard - 09 Aug 2009 20:13

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i told someone that i respected about my addiction and my recovery.

Excellent! This is one of the most powerful tools of recovery. See tool #9 of the GYE Handbook.

If I may suggest, you should ask this person if he can be your accountability partner to ask you how you're doing once a week, and promise yourself to tell him only the truth. This is a very powerful tool.

May Hashem be with you!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Dov - 09 Aug 2009 22:33

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[Kedusha wrote on 09 Aug 2009 02:35:](#)

Eden,

Don't worry about Lishmah for now (if ever) - such perfectionism is often an atzas hayetzer.

[Eden wrote on 09 Aug 2009 02:29:](#)

I know that this isn't lishma, but i see it as a gift; for i think that any and all tools that can be used to stay clean should be used.

Lishma? What do you think Hashem wants? He wants **you to serve Him lishma**, right?

Let's take that apart:

**You** - What's "you"? The real you, the whole you - Hashem healed the yidden at sinai *before* giving them the gilui/relationship because He wanted them *whole* - **not perfect**, just whole...He wants us mentally healthy...

**to serve Him** - our actions - *doing* the right things, not compulsive or wrong things...He wants us to be free enough to be able to *choose* to serve Him of our own free will...

**lishma** - for His sake: What evidence do you or any of us have about *whose sake* we are doing anything at all for? It stands to reason that we generally do things for our own sake...He wants us to start getting used to moving toward doing things for the sake of **others**...then move toward doing for Him. He gives us **parents** to learn what it means to be dependent and responsible; **friends** to learn what it means to be connected and faithful; a **spouse** to learn what it means to be devoted and in love; **children** to learn what it means to give up stuff and help someone grow into life while our own lives here fade into the background. Maybe then we'll be ready to finally be more dependent, responsible, connected, faithful, devoted in love, and sacrificing to Him, Yisborach? It never "*occurs*", it's a process called "the life of a yid". Yep, His system (olam) is genius, nothing short of it. But how the heck is an addict, or a person who is compulsively looking at whatever supposed to *do* this plan? Getting free from addiction is the only way for an addict to participate, and - miracle of miracles - it is actually **simple** because **the recovery itself** forms and guides the whole journey!

A brocha to you, Eden:

May you soon start to look into your *own* eyes with joy that you are Hashem's only *you*. It'll happen when the time is right. It might take a while. So? We don't give up **no matter what** on something precious.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 10 Aug 2009 23:19

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It's been longer, but in order to make keeping track easy i'm going to make this day 5 instead i guess day 7.

Thank you Hashem for keeping me clean this long.

I have a question,

I have been hearing a theme from people in recovery expressing gratitude for their falls. Could someone please explain this to me.

Thank you all for your helpful feedback. May hashem bless every aspect of your lives.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Dov - 10 Aug 2009 23:27

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Eden - for me, this gratitude could only come much, much later on, after many clean months in recovery. So why worry about it now? Still, an addict once told me that he believed it took each and every drink he ever drank, to finally force him to come to AA. Understand?

Dov

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 11 Aug 2009 14:26

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Day 6,

Dov, i appreciate your statement, i won't delve.

Things i took from the post:

That an addict might have to become aware of the damage that he causes himself in order to stop.

One might have to fall quite low in order to fully realize that he isn't in control, and that he can't trust everything he tells himself.

Yet through that fall, comes the conviction to stay clean, even when it seems like all of the voices in our heads clamor for it.

And to make the external changes and safeguards to protect oneself from... oneself. (pr the

yetzer harah inside ourself)

Comments and Critiques are welcome

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