

the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 05 Aug 2009 15:07

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 Someone - 26 Aug 2009 20:16

Eden, another beautiful story - should I say poem? More fitting for sure. You say a friend came over and you watched a movie - a very familiar setting. I understand you fully - it is incredibly hard to balance between friends - and doing the right thing. The struggle is there - but maybe ultimately your friends will appreciate and respect it when you say what you have/want to do? And if not, they might not be such true friends after all.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 31 Aug 2009 19:55

You can imagine how hard this is to write.

I had a fall.

I'm ready to start over, i think, i hope.

I write about the sorrow, hopelessness, and self contempt one feels when one falls,
It's a whole other story when your feeling it.

After finding no SLA conferences in my area, and realizing that i need more help, i think it's time to get a counselor.

My goal is to contact insurance to get a counselor today.

More to come, g-d please help me.

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Re: the path to Eden
Posted by bardichev - 31 Aug 2009 19:58

DONT LOOK WHERE YOU FELL...

..LOOK WHERE YOU SLIPPED

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Re: the path to Eden
Posted by nezach - 31 Aug 2009 20:12

Eden, I have just read your recent posts and would like to provide my thoughts and suggestions, which may be of help based on my own experiences:

1. Even though you get back on two feet ready to fight over again, you have to work out why you continue to slip up.
2. Once you have this awareness, admit them to Hashem.
3. Build fences. Really strong fences.

I could give you so many more suggestions, but lets start with the above. Again, this is from

personal experience. I have had to learn the hard way despite continuously wanting to fight and be successful.

Sometimes we are not meant to be successful in a specific test - (but we should only confess this after a slip, Hashem y'Rachem).

I kept instructing myself to be strong and determined. The truth is I did not fully understand nor appreciate what this meant, despite enormous persistence in 'getting back up'. Remember, it is not us that is fighting, it is Hashem who is saving and protecting. My friends, we will all see the personal geula really soon but please be true and kind to ourselves. We merely cannot afford to fall any more. And lets never forget, always be happy in our lives journey to the 'ohr ha-Shechinah'.

b'Hazlacha

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Someone - 01 Sep 2009 20:12

Eden, how did you fall? Was it a missing filter? Was it something on the street? Or something entirely different?

Do you have a good friend that knows about your addiction? If not, it is one substitute for SA-groups I think. HaShem sometimes saves one through others!

Do not look behind. Learn from your fall and forget the ugly feelings; serve HaShem with a joyous heart!!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by the.guard - 01 Sep 2009 21:45

SA and SLAA have meetings in cities everywhere. Are you **sure** you don't have any at all?

Also, you can join GYE's 12-Step phone conferences. have you considered that option?

As far as a counselor, make sure they are trained in dealing with addictions. See [this page](#) for a list of some good therapists in the field, both in Israel and the U.S... Where you at?

Don't feel down. The addiction FEEDS off the despair.

We are all here for you!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Dov - 01 Sep 2009 21:50

[bardichev wrote on 31 Aug 2009 19:58:](#)

DONT LOOK WHERE YOU FELL...

..LOOK WHERE YOU SLIPPED

Tremendous!

It isn't the *last* drink that get's us in trouble (drunk). It's the **first** one we take that we need to be concerned with. Cuz we need His help for *that* one **be'ikar!!**

With acceptance of this my life gets much easier be"H.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by bardichev - 01 Sep 2009 21:56

IS THAT NOT A GREAT YESOD

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 09 Sep 2009 15:04

Indeed it is a great ikar,

I'm finally ready to pick myself up and start over.

This was a hard one.

Iv'e literally smashed the computer that i abused the most. I know crazy right?

I've also revamped the filters to cut out games, movies and the like.

The scary thing is that i know that i can manipulate the filters if i am too crazy.

For example i could tell my parents that i need to use the computer for school purposes and that the website i need is blocked, (which could be true). Then i could watch movies and play video games to my hearts content.

Something is missing, i think from my regiment, i think it could be two things.

1. I need to habituate myself to more compassionate thought patterns.
2. I need a constant source of support, like a sponsor. My brother spoke about talking through those times of need. I don't have that, i just run for the hills.
3. I also need to thoroughly work the 12 steps.

The obvious solutions are the phone meetings, look further into SLA meets. Rereading the handbook and staying active on the website. With g-d's help i will accomplish these things.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Dov - 09 Sep 2009 17:40

[Eden wrote on 09 Sep 2009 15:04:](#)

The scary thing is that i know that i can manipulate the filters if i am too crazy.

R' Eden, it seems to me that you are spelling out the crux of the problem for an addict (or anyone w/chronic self-destructive behavior problems). The good thing is that it's also the solution: If we are manipulative liars and cannot trust *ourselves*, how can we possibly police and guide our *own* recovery? On the other hand, who else *can*? It's "im ein anee lee, mee lee" (I need to help myself!) vs. "uch'she'anee le'atzmee, moh anee?" (I need to get out of myself!). Hey, Life, what do you want from me?! All I can see is my little, cracked world, from the *inside*! And *I* made it so! What am I to do?!

As almost anyone I know in recovery would report that all the **good stuff** started once we finally accepted that our situation was **impossible**. Really impossible. Not a matter of *enough* of the *right* kind of chizzuk, *often* enough, trying hard enough, whatever...Just. Plain. Impossible. And there's no evidence it's ever going away. Until then we are like rich folks. Look at the guys living it up in Dubai and acting "frum". When you have \$750 billion, who **really** needs G-d? Not me. That's right, my addiction taught me I'm like that. I was "frum" but only came to see I **really** needed G-d, as a result of my hopelessness in addiction. So, my *acting out* brought me closer to Hashem than my Rebbi did. Lucky, actually, right? But it hurt. So now what?

Something is missing... i think it could be two things:

1. I need to habituate myself to more compassionate thought patterns.
Yeah. My self-talking trash never got me anywhere good. Just the plain truth. I believe that what the *Torah* informs us about the way we **should** be, is far less relevant to actually saving our lives in early recovery than what our actions show us about the way we **really are**. We are not bad at all, just sick. If we'd see a video of the actions we take in acting out, I doubt we'd say: "that guy is evil". I know I'd say, "poor guy is a wierdo. Really needs help." So now what?

2. I need a constant source of support, like a sponsor. My brother spoke about talking through those times of need. I don't have that, i just run for the hills.

3. I also need to thoroughly work the 12 steps.

The obvious solutions are the phone meetings, look further into SLA meets. Rereading the handbook and staying active on the website. With g-d's help i will accomplish these things. I couldn't agree more, tzadik!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 10 Sep 2009 14:50

Thank you Dov,

Much appreciated the feedback.

An internal dialogue i sent to my faithful and patient 90\$ for 90 days sponsor.

I'll admit it, there is conflict here. I intellectually know that i am addicted, i can see the symptoms.

However there is still a voice within me that says that i'm not addicted, that i can handle it.

I know that when sunday comes around that it's this voice that brings me to the fall.

So i respond to that voice. "No, experience shows that for me lust is a means of escaping reality, of throwing off the yoke; there is no rationality in it beside escaping fear and stress.

You tell me that i'm just putting my foot in the water, that just a little bit and i'll stop.

Easy.

But wrong; I've already dove in.

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Someone - 10 Sep 2009 19:02

Beating that little, tiny voice ... is probably the hardest and at the same time maybe most

important step on our journey!

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by nezach - 13 Sep 2009 15:43

from personal experience, when the voice of your yetzer tov (your true essence) is louder than 'the other voice', it is a wonderful and uplifting personal achievement.

This can be achieved, but you need to work hard. Think about what has and has not worked for you over the past few weeks..

Avoid anything that might lead you to sin at all costs. Make everyday count.

b'Hazlacha

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Re: the path to Eden

Posted by Eden - 13 Sep 2009 17:56

Ughh I had a difficult day over shabbat.

I struggled with self contempt,

i don't know why but it seemed like this malignant voice in my head wouldn't shut off all day.

Breathing exercises didn't work, self talk wasn't helping, talking with my parents.

I visited some other people and that helped to forget the suffering.

But then when i left their house it just came right back.

In the end i threw in the towel and went to read secular books to distract myself from the suffering. (no falls or anything)

Honestly, thinking about yesterdays suffering i'm still a little shaken up.

I'm taking out from that experience that i would like therapy to assist me in this regard.

Also i'm not sure how, but i would like to write this event in a calender or something or find some way to keep track

these thought patterns, some sort of accounting method.

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