

Want to be BT again

Posted by BT Again - 18 Nov 2021 17:12

Hi everyone. This is my second thread on here--I haven't updated the last one in a while, and frankly, I need to be more open about my struggles than on that thread, so I'm restarting my journal.

I'm a fairly newly married mid-20s guy (no kids yet), went BT a few years ago and Torah is unbelievably important to me. When I think about what I want to accomplish in my life, the big things all have to do with raising a family and practicing Judaism. Despite this, I have really struggled to keep a consistent practice. When I went BT initially I was on fire, but that fire eventually smoldered and I became a pretty irregular davener/learner. Part of it was that I never addressed my porn problem until the last year or so. Since "burning out" I have always kept shabbos and kashrus fully, put on tefillin daily, followed taharas mishpacha, wore tzitzis/kippah, among other things, but my davening and learning has been lacking.

For more details of my specific situation, I live in a pretty "out of town" community in the US. My city has multiple shuls, eruvim, kosher food, learning opportunities, etc. but it's still a fairly small frum community. In fact, most of my friends are not religious as there's not many frum people around my age here.

Something changed in my brain recently, I don't know what it is, but over the summer I felt a real drive to increase my religious practice. I've always wanted to have a closer connection to Hashem but didn't have the drive for a while. These days I prepare divrei Torah to share at the shabbos table most weeks, daven shacharis with a minyan more days than not, started to add in mincha/maariv, added learning b'chavrusa once or twice weekly, prioritized hanging out with my few religious friends, and learning for at least a bit daily (minimum 30 mins listening to a shiur on my commute). I've felt like I'm going "BT Again" hence my name.

Sounds great, right? Well, I feel like I'm burning out again (hard to describe how exactly, but I've been struggling to get to minyan), and I'm still struggling with porn and masturbation (henceforth referred to as P and M). My usage of both has gone down immensely, though: in the last month I've refrained from M more than 75% of days and I've only looked at P three times. This is a lot of progress, as even a year ago both were multiple times a week if not daily.

My Jewish practice and recovery are deeply interconnected. When I use, I don't go to shul, and when I go to shul, I don't use. I really want to be more religious, I love learning and davening, I

want to be an active part of the Jewish community, I want to live a holy life, and I want to have kids who are frum and inspired. And I know that my P and M habits hold me back from this. If I can really make davening and learning integral parts of my life, I feel like I will be much better positioned to overcome my addiction.

If anyone has tips for me on my religious journey, please share. I'm also wondering about how to pull away from internet and phone use in general. Even outside of recovery, I dislike using the internet or my phone. I've deleted all of my social media which has helped. Does anyone know of a way to properly remove my ability to use the browser on an android phone (more permanent than disabling the app as I can't uninstall it)? I would prefer that my phone has no browsing capability, ideally keeping my current phone though I may buy a kosher smartphone in the future.

I will keep this thread updated for accountability.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 15 Feb 2022 18:13

Holding at 12 days. With Hashem's help I have been able to get a lot of stress relief from productive activities such as exercise, so I don't feel a need to engage in P&M (which of course don't provide real relief). Also holding at 60 days porn-free BH!

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by ??? ????? - 15 Feb 2022 19:54

gevaldig gevaldig!!!

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 17 Feb 2022 22:15

Sad to say that I had a fall with porn today. I feel awful, but I am proud of the progress I have made. I just had 62 consecutive days free of porn and only masturbated once during that whole time. Honestly, not long ago I could not have even dreamed this was possible.

This was a long time coming--I've been feeling terrible mentally in recent days and haven't kept up with my habits, and haven't been sleeping well. Obviously, I need to avoid the situation that led to this, but I have gone ahead and made a new shvuah--I let my shvuah that included not using youtube on my phone or edging to expire (this was the trigger that led me to completely falling). My new shvuah includes these things.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 22 Feb 2022 17:00

Fell again today (though without visuals BH). I really thought I was free; don't think I was complacent exactly, but really a huge letdown to have two falls after so much time clean. Just having a very rough time lately, in general, and urges are very strong.

Just reached out to my Rav to talk and try to address some of the other issues in my life; G-d willing this will help me move out of my current challenges.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by Bilaam Harasha to Yosef Hatzaddik - 22 Feb 2022 18:53

I just started reading your thread so I haven't yet read if you have found a good filter service for you so I'm sorry if you've already tried this but check out microsoft family safety. It's free and works on android and computers that run windows and it also offers a lot of really good accountability features and a good filter system. I recommend using their allowed websites only function and I can drop down my list of allowed websites which include many secular websites you may need like fedex or google drive so you don't feel trapped or anything. You can also block the browser entirely as you said you wanted to do in your first post through the features. All your website activity is also available for your family organizer to see but it's different from most other accountability programs because they don't simply report the general websites addresses you visit, they take it a step further and they archive all the pages you opened on the

website with their unique links. So this gives your family organizer the ability to see the specific pages you opened on a given website and he/she can open those links to see exactly the pages you opened and exactly what you saw. The family organizer can also see all searches you made and microsoft family safety has a good A.I. in order to report some risky searches that you may have made and this is all available for your family organizer to see on the app or on the website. All non risky searches are all also archived and available for your family organizer to see right underneath those that get flagged as risky.

So given all this if you get microsoft family safety you wouldn't even be tempted to search up p websites or anything similar in the first place if you set someone appropriate as the family organizer. By the way they also have an ios and android app so all that data is available for the family organizer to see anywhere and they can edit the settings or allow any websites that you need that get blocked (if you're using the allowed websites only function) on the go and from anywhere. It works fine with webchaver also and if you have a computer that runs on windows you can add that device along with your phone to have the features apply on both devices. I have it on computer and on computer it blocks all other browsers (but you will have to download microsoft edge, a normal browser like google chrome) and it should do the same on android also.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by Bilaam Harasha to Yosef Hatzaddik - 22 Feb 2022 19:08

I don't know if you have found a good filter service already or if you bought a kosher phone but check out microsoft family safety, I think it'll help you tremendously. It's free and works on android and computers that run windows and it also offers a lot of really good accountability features and a really good filter system. You can block the browser entirely as you said you wanted to and you can do it to other apps as well and if you want, the family organizer can also set time limits on the device entirely and on specific apps too. They also have an allowed websites only function (you can also block specific websites) and I can drop down my list of allowed websites which include many secular websites you may need like fedex or google drive so you don't feel trapped or anything. All your website activity is also available for your family organizer to see but it's different from most other accountability programs because they don't simply report the general websites addresses you visit, they take it a step further and they archive all the pages you opened on the website with their unique links. So this gives your family organizer the ability to see the specific pages you opened on a given website and he/she can open those links to see exactly the pages you opened and exactly what you saw. The family organizer can also see all searches you made and microsoft family safety has a good A.I.

in order to report some risky searches that you may have made and this is all available for your family organizer to see on the app or on the website. All non risky searches are all also archived and available for your family organizer to see right underneath those that get flagged as risky. All this is available for your family organizer to see through the microsoft family safety apps (on android and ios) or through the website and the organizer will get weekly emails with all this data.

So given all this if you get microsoft family safety you wouldn't even be tempted to search up p websites or anything similar in the first place if you set someone appropriate as the family organizer. By the way they also have an ios and android app so all that data is available for the family organizer to see anywhere and they can edit the settings or allow any websites that you need that get blocked (if you're using the allowed websites only function) on the go and from anywhere. It works fine with webchaver also and if you have a computer that runs on windows you can add that device along with your phone to have the features apply on both devices. I have it on computer and on computer it blocks all other browsers (but you will have to download microsoft edge, a normal browser like google chrome) and it should do the same on android also.

I hope this helps with the access you may have to unfiltered internet. The filters are also optional but the accountability features are not and they are turned on by default so neither you nor the family organizer can turn it off. Post below if you end up getting it because there are a few websites that will be allowed even when you use the allowed websites only function. Those websites are only microsoft websites but you have to block 2 of them specifically the xbox website and also this website: account.microsoft.com/family That's only because microsoft family allows you to leave the family group if you're above 18 but you can only leave with those 2 websites. So once you specifically block them you will be good to go.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 23 Feb 2022 20:15

Thanks! That may be a good fit, at least for my phone. I'll try it and let you know.

Clean today. Fasting, as that's the knas in my shvuah, and obviously it's rough. As a reminder to future me if c"v I come close to falling--not worth it.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 25 Feb 2022 16:14

Really hard week. Fell again, ugh.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by committed_togrowth - 25 Feb 2022 21:46

Hi BT Again,

You will get through this and succeed! We all believe in you here. Do you have an idea of what is leading to your falls? Do you have easy access to non-kosher content? If so maybe consider Webchaver as a tool. We are here for you, keep going!

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by Bilaam Harasha to Yosef Hatzaddik - 26 Feb 2022 23:47

I looked at the microsoft family website again and I'm not too sure if it works on android as good as it does on windows. I'm sorry if I misled you, I thought it should work on android as it does on windows and I remembering seeing that it should work on it on one of the pages on their website but I don't think it works with it (at least as good as on windows, I have it on windows the features all apply but his may not be the case with android). I tried to look for pages talking about it's compatibility with android but the pages are really vague in what they say so you would need to download it first on android to see if it works as good as I thought was advertised. Sorry I didn't try this first before telling you about it and I really can't because I don't have access to android devices. But can you let me know below if it worked on android or not? Because I'm actually not sure at all and I don't want to recommend this filter for those with android with this uncertainty now that I'm aware of it. And again I'm really sorry if it didn't.

I can give you another suggestion, though, that I know will *100%* work on android and that's Google Family Link. It actually only works on android. I couldn't check the features because of

my filters but check it out. I hope it helps.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 27 Feb 2022 21:03

Just set up Microsoft Family Safety on my phone, and it does work. It automatically blocks all browsers except Edge, and it lets you customize Edge, so I just set it to not have anything whitelisted. Thanks so much! I also set up WebChaver with KBA on my computer. G-d willing, this will work. It's also nice to finally be in line with the halacha of needing a filter for internet use. I previously had a pretty weak filter as part of another program I have, but it was far too easy to get around.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by Bilaam Harasha to Yosef Hatzaddik - 27 Feb 2022 21:23

That's amazing to hear, thanks for letting me know. Also, if you didn't know already, you can also get webchaver on your phone, I believe you can add up to 6 devices in total that are linked with your kba webchaver account, you just download the covenanteyes app on the google play store and then sign in with the account info you signed up for the kba webchaver program. It's not so good for iOS because they can't monitor activity outside of their app but it works great with android. It'll add an extra layer of protection and I personally use microsoft family safety with webchaver on my computer for that reason.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 27 Feb 2022 22:27

[Bilaam Harasha to Yosef Hatzaddik wrote on 27 Feb 2022 21:23:](#)

That's amazing to hear, thanks for letting me know. Also, if you didn't know already, you can also get webchaver on your phone, I believe you can add up to 6 devices in total that are linked with your kba webchaver account, you just download the covenanteyes app on the google play store and then sign in with the account info you signed up for the kba webchaver program. It's

not so good for iOS because they can't monitor activity outside of their app but it works great with android. It'll add an extra layer of protection and I personally use microsoft family safety with webchaver on my computer for that reason.

Yasher koach, thanks for your help, especially with spreading info on free filtering/accountability options. You are really helping people.

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Re: Want to be BT again
Posted by BT Again - 28 Feb 2022 18:58

3 days clean B"H. Getting back on my good habits and going to minyan. Lots of urges though. I'm meeting with both my therapist and my Rav today, hoping to do some good work with them.

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