

Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by ??? ????? ????? ??? - 23 Aug 2022 12:52

I started with GYE on January 22, 2020. I have had streaks of 88, 188, and 233. I have had 835 cumulative clean days in the last 944 days. Without the work that I have done, I don't think that I would even have 500 days. With the exception of a few rough patches, most of the "falls" that I have had were without pornography. In other words, in the last 944 days, I am assuming that over 900 of those days were pornography free! My biggest win has been that I have managed to, both emotionally and spiritually, size down my struggle.

Still, the work is far from over and, thanks to *Hashem*, today is a new day!

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by DavidT - 23 Aug 2022 16:15

[??? ????? ????? ??? wrote on 23 Aug 2022 12:52:](#)

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Still, the work is far from over and, thanks to *Hashem*, today is a new day!

Thank you for sharing this amazing update.

I know you've written some details in the past, but if it's possible, can you please share with us more details on what did or didn't work for you?

Thanks so much and keep up the great momentum!

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ???

Posted by ??? ????? ??? - 25 Aug 2022 00:58

Day #2.

Shout out to @DavidT for always bringing the positive vibes!

What has and continues to work? Accountability to others. In my case that has been accountability to this forum and accountability to the GYE legend that I text. In order for that to work, I have to be actively posting to the forum and texting the partner.

What hasn't worked? Overreliance on filtering solutions. I am a big proponent of Internet filters and I pay hard earned money for them for my laptop and cell phone. Still, they are only part of the pornography/masturbation indulgence mitigation strategy. They are but a tool. For one, there is always another device (in my case, my work devices and my wife's devices are not filtered. My work devices are managed and monitored by my employer and that seems to help, but not full proof). Also, you cannot put an Internet filter on your eyes, mind, and hands. Thinking that I am "out of the woods" because I have a filter or because I adjusted the settings on my filter has not worked for me.

I have a huge win to report. Yesterday morning, I had a huge urge to "fall." It started within an hour of posting my first post in this thread. I suppose I should've texted my GYE contact, but I felt that the sense of accountability to the forum and this thread was enough. I resisted. I realized--with the help of the accountability--that saying "no" is an option. The world continued . How about that?

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ???

Posted by ??? ????? ??? - 28 Aug 2022 02:19

[??? ????? ??? wrote on 25 Aug 2022 00:58:](#)

What has and continues to work? Accountability to others.

I should've listened to my own advice. I had a "fall." I am back to day #2. Now, I am listening to my own advice. I am posting here on the forum and I texted my GYE contact the following:

"Gut voch, sir. Texting you for accountability. Will text when I retire for the night to say "all
."

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by ??? ????? ????? ??? - 28 Aug 2022 13:03

[??? ????? ????? ??? wrote on 28 Aug 2022 02:19:](#)

[??? ????? ????? ??? wrote on 25 Aug 2022 00:58:](#)

good." And will text tomorrow morning to say that I didn't change my mind after I retired
What has and continues to work? Accountability to others.

I should've listened to my own advice. I had a "fall." I am back to day #2. Now, I am listening to my own advice. I am posting here on the forum and I texting my GYE contact the following:

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...and that is what happened! Success!

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????

Posted by DavidT - 28 Aug 2022 14:30

[??? ????? ????? ??? wrote on 28 Aug 2022 02:19:](#)

[??? ????? ????? ??? wrote on 25 Aug 2022 00:58:](#)

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"Gut voch, sir. Texting you for accountability. Will text when I retire for the night to say "all
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You're a perfect example that proves that day 1 is different for every person. By some people day 1 means that they are in the dumps, but for others (like you) it's just another small adjustment in the road to success! Keep it up!

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by ??? ????? ????? ??? - 29 Aug 2022 03:05

[DavidT wrote on 28 Aug 2022 14:30:](#)

You're a perfect example that proves that day 1 is different for every person. By some people day 1 means that they are in the dumps, but for others (like you) it's just another small adjustment in the road to success! Keep it up!

I appreciate you, @DavidT. You asked me, GYE brother, to share what has worked and what hasn't worked. Here's another one:

What has worked? Hope.

What hasn't worked? Despair.

You wrote that for some people day #1 means that they are in the dumps and for others it's just another small adjustment. I am both the "some people" and the "others." It's not me, the person. It is my sense of hope vs. despair.

I was in despair mode for a long darn time. Something like 12.5 years. I had longer breaks from this stuff during yeshiva zman as a bochur and at the beginning of my marriage, but the majority of 12.5 years was me not knowing a way out of the clutches of pornography and masturbation. My sense of hope increased tremendously when I joined GYE.

Hey, reader! I'm talking to you! Yes, you the one who hasn't shared your struggle with pornography and masturbation with GYE yet. You who haven't had the opportunity to have a

@DavidT or @Hashem Help Me or @Realestatemogul or @committed_togrowth or @Lost In Search write you a response (and shout out to everyone who has responded to my posts, I just listed the last five)! You who haven't experienced all the little "thank you"s appear after you shared a piece of yourself that you have kept buried inside! Look at me as an example! I was stuck for 12.5 long years. No way out! And don't think I stood for hedonism in those years! I was learning in a prestigious yeshiva and then kollel. I had close personal relationships with leaders in the yeshivish community. I served as a rabbi of a community! Wasn't so easy to look myself in the mirror and reconcile all of that! But I got my rear end on GYE, shared my story, became part of this group, received support from others, gave support to others, and here I am experiencing success. No, it wasn't a quick one and done fix. I still struggle, but the the struggle is entirely different than what it was before I joined. If you have already made it this far that you are reading posts on GYE, it is time for you to start a thread and share your story. I hope to be more active with other threads, but in case I don't see your new thread, private message me so that I can follow it and offer "thank you"s and replies.

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 30 Aug 2022 01:54

A true masterpiece!

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by Kavey - 30 Aug 2022 16:06

FYI for work computers another layer beyond the employer that works for me are browser extensions. I use BlockSite and only go to whitelisted sites (and I update the whitelist throughout the day) though not it's not really a traditional filter in that I can turn it off at will .

Also turning off images by default.

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by frank.lee - 31 Aug 2022 00:35

Blocking image by default, I use wizmage chrome extension.

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????

Posted by ??? ????? ??? - 31 Aug 2022 02:50

Thank you for the tips regarding the browser extensions.

I am back to my first 24 hours. A pretty big accomplishment compared to many of my first 24 hour periods. I had a few periods of desire today and I was able to say no. The first one was on my own because I was busy with work. Second one, I texted my GYE contact for accountability.

What has not worked for me? Willpower alone. That is what happened last night, unfortunately.

But, I had an idea as I was davening maariv tonight. It is certainly so that willpower is not enough. The last fifteen years of my life can testify to that one. However, it is very much my willpower and inner strength that has gotten me this far. Today, for example, I overcame an urge to look at pornography and masturbate because I texted my GYE contact for accountability. I made that decision. I didn't need to do that for him. While I have spoken with him several times on the phone and text with him frequently, we have never met in person. We live several hundred miles/km apart. If I would no longer be interested in keeping this up, I would have no reason to be accountable to him. So, yes, willpower alone is not enough, but it cannot be downplayed as a nonfactor.

One of the most depressing parts of my struggle was that I would finish a Yom Kippur and, if I was lucky, look at pornography and masturbate before Sukkos. If not, right after Yom Kippur, the same darn night. Same thing with Chol HaMoed Sukkos and Chol HaMoed Pesach. I couldn't even control myself during the holiest times of the year. Since joining GYE, that has not been the case for me. I have always had clean streaks that overlap those holy periods. I want that for myself--and I want that for all of you--once again this year. I am committing myself to this. Wish me hatzlochoh!

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by Vehkam - 31 Aug 2022 02:59

Wishing you a tremendous success. Always remember that Hashem is on your side no matter what. In case you ever need chizuk, there are some great audios from rabbi Ephraim Wachsmann on YidPod where he really boosts a person up to recognize how great he is despite any perceived failings. Look for "if you need chizuk listen to this" on YidPod.

with regard to willpower- the Battle of the Generation explains why willpower alone won't work in any prolonged battle....

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 02 Sep 2022 04:25

[??? ????? ????? ??? wrote on 31 Aug 2022 02:50:](#)

One of the most depressing parts of my struggle was that I would finish a Yom Kippur and, if I was lucky, look at pornography and masturbate before Sukkos. If not, right after Yom Kippur, the same darn night. Same thing with Chol HaMoed Sukkos and Chol HaMoed Pesach. I couldn't even control myself during the holiest times of the year.

It is a sad fact that many guys fall Motzai Yom Kippur and similar times. For those of us that acted out primarily due to stress, it is actually very understandable. We developed at a very young age the tactic of using masturbation as our pacifier and never learned how to self regulate and calm down. Therefore any intense time, no matter if it is a serious intensity, uplifting intensity, or a simcha intensity, be it Yom Kippur, Leil HaSeder, Simchas Torah, Shavuot after vasikin, or a child's chasunah - we need to come back down to earth, and release enormous tension when it's all over. Being that we did not have any other tools at our command, we acted out.

Now that we recognize from where it comes, we can b'eZRas Hashem look for kosher pressure releases - understanding that the need to calm down is normal and not a cause to panic. Exercise, simply sharing the tension and feelings with someone else, or just plain allowing one's self to relax, go a long way. Knowing that the feelings are temporary also helps a lot.

Some may wonder what exercise is possible at those times. Putting up a Sukkah after Yom

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????

Posted by ??? ????? ??? - 06 Sep 2022 00:59

Day #7. Thank you to all who have replied and shared "thank yous."

Kippur, and washing the Seder dishes are just two forms of exercise that all will appreciate. I appreciate your *pshat*, @Hashem Help Me, and I'm sure that is the case for some or even many. However, I have a less generous *pshat* for myself. When I did not have the tools to control my urges to view explicit material and masturbate and I was doing it minimum 3-4 times a week whether it was an intense night or not, Motzei Yom Kippur was just another night. Plain and simple.

Wanted to share with the readers of my thread the comment of the Malbim on the first chapter of Yehoshua. G-d tells Yehoshua in a most epic speech to *chazak v'ematz*. What are those two languages of "be strong?"

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The term *chizuk* refers to the initial surge of strength and power whereas the term *imutz* refers to the consistent determination, the unwavering quality that allows the person to continue to be strong.

In my experience since joining GYE, both are necessary. Initially, I need to have a plan in place in order to get to day three, day seven, all the way to day fourteen. Then (in my experience after day fourteen the struggle gets much easier), I need to have that unwavering quality, the quality that is called on GYE "don't let your guard down." That is how I can get to day 90, day 188, and day 230 (and hopefully this time beyond!).

And the Malbim concludes that little piece with:

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Help from on High presents according to human arrangements.

That statement has some serious Jewish theological implications (that are not agreed upon by all authors), but what matters for this thread is that that is what I believe. I poured my heart out to G-d time and time again asking for forgiveness and asking for help in my struggle. The "answer" to my prayers was not the removal of my sexual urges. The "answer" to my prayers was that I found and began to participate in this holy online GYE community. The "answer" to my prayers were the tools that I could do the proper ????? ?????????, human plans and preparations, to create a medium for G-d to present His heavenly help.

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Re: Chapter 2 - ??? ????? ????? ???

Posted by ??? ????? ????? ??? - 08 Sep 2022 00:19

Day #9.

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