

BackToBasics - My battle begins

Posted by yesodos12 - 12 Jul 2009 14:25

Hi everyone,

I have just joined the group. Writing this brings tears to my eyes because I have never been able to ask for help in this area before. This is the start of breaking an 11 year habit, something that makes me both proud and humble, as well as very, very ashamed. I've always been too embarrassed of my addiction to ever get any help face-to-face, and deep down I've lost the belief that I can make a lasting change in this area.

I saw the website for the first time on shiva asar betammuz, and I was amazed that there was so much help available to me, to get out of my crushing addiction, as well as kindhearted people who are building this site and building the participants along with it. It has kindled the hope inside me that I can face down this challenge, overcome it, and eventually destroy it.

I guess, if I'm honest, my main motivation to break the habit is the fear of somebody finding out about it, especially my wife. I'm scared that it will cause me to lose my job, reputation, marriage and children. I'm even scared that she is somehow going to read this post, find out that it's me writing, and get the shock of her life that she is married to a porn addict. The fact that I would consider losing everything I hold dear for the sake of some stupid, cheap thrill, amazes me. I am amazed at my own stupidity. I guess this proves that I'm an addict - I never thought of myself that way until now, I've just been in denial.

I'm four days clean now. It's been easy so far, but I know what happens. I get overconfident, I get uninspired, I forget everything I've fought for, and

BANG, I'm back in my stupid self imposed prison. How do you instill belief in change after so so many times of falling?? This is especially problematic for me, as I generally don't spend hours on end looking at porn. I just do a 30 minute escape from reality, and then resurface as if nothing ever happened, and get on with my life. I have no problem being a tzaddik for 95% of the time, but it's the 5% of misbehaviour that makes me an addict and a fool.

Every single Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur has been filled with regret for my addiction, and yet still nothing has changed yet. I've improved in many different areas, but I actually feel that in this area I've sunk in recent years. I would love this year to be different - perhaps you guys can help me ensure that it will be?

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by the.guard - 12 Jul 2009 15:52

Dear BackToBasics,

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!

We get cries for help exactly like yours every day, by e-mail and on the forum. *Tzuras Rabim*
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 give you all the right advice in one short post, so I implore you, do at least this for yourself. **You're worth it.**

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

We have a hotline on [this page](#), where you can call and speak to someone with experience.

And we just started recently a 12-Step phone group that would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you turn your life around. PLEASE JOIN [DUVID CHAIM'S daily group](#). Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps - which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are. This is VERY important.

Chatzi Nechama

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 live 12-Step SA 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.

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: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by bardichev - 12 Jul 2009 16:11

DEAR HEILIGE YESODOS

WELCOME TO THE CLUB

YOU CAME TO THE RIGHT PLACE

YOU ARE A TZADDIK YES YOU ARE

BY THE FACT THAT YOU CAME ON BOARD IT SENT THE MENUVAL THE Y"H RUNNING

HE IS AT A LOSS HE JUST LOST ANOTHER CLIENT

YOU HAVE THE POWER IN YOUR MIND TO CHANGE AS YOU HEART AND NESHAMA
ARE BEGGING YOU TO DO!!

WE ARE YOUR BACK UP WE ARE HERE TO BE MECHAZIK YOU EVERY STEP OF THE
WAY

ALL OF US HERE CHANGED ONE DAY AT A TIME

YES YOU CAN DO IT!!!

I DID !!!

I TOO HAD MANY TEARY ROSH HASHANAHS AND YOM KIPPURS

I HAVE HUNDREDS OF NOTE PADS WITH WRITTEN "NEDARIM AND SHVOUS " TO
MYSELF

HERE IS WERE YOU CAN ACTUALLY TALK OUT YOUR ADDICTION

AGAIN ADDICTION LIKE SMOKING OVERIEATING DRINKING AN ADDICTION

I TOO WAS TOOOOOOOO PROUD TO ADMIT I WAS ADDICTED

I AM A VERY UPSTANDING PERSON IN MY FAMILY AND KEHILLA

I WAS JUST A LITTLE "SHVACH" WHEN IT CAME TO THIS LITTLE THINGAMAJIG CALLED
UHH UHH YEAH INTERNET

WRONG WRONG WRONG DEAD WRONG

I WAS ADDICTED LIKE CRAZY

STAY HERE LONG TERM THER ARE MANY WONDERFUL PEOPLE HERE WITH MANY
DIFFERENT OPINIONS(me no less)

BOTTOM LINE YOU WILL BE HELPED BUT YOU NEED TO COMMIT TO STAY HERE LONG
TERM

WE DO NOT PUNISH PEOPLE WHO FALL AFTER THEY JOINED HERE SO DO NOT BE
SCARED

SO WELCOME ABOARD

humble and happy

bardichev

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by hoping - 12 Jul 2009 19:32

Welcome BackToBasics-

I can relate to every word that you wrote. I had the exact same feeling when I chanced upon this site about a month and a half ago. Everything (including the 95% Tzaddik thing)that you wrote applied to me (except that I've been doing this for 20 years so you saved about 9 years of your life over me). I just jumped into this forum and started posting away and it has already changed my life in very meaningful ways that go way deeper than the act of acting out. So keep posting and we will all be here for you during good times and difficult times.

Your fellow struggler and new friend,

Hoping

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins

Posted by battleworn - 13 Jul 2009 14:42

Welcome home to your spiritual family. Read those handbooks and post away, we're all in this with you. With the power of the tzibur you'll be"H succeed.

If you look around, you'll see that your situation is very typical around here, so you can really expect to be understood. And you'll also see that b"H so many people that were in your situation were successful in breaking free. So stick with us and keep going up!

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins

Posted by Chaim - 13 Jul 2009 14:53

I think that 95% is great!

You should draw much comfort from that self image which was won with hard work!

You mentioned escape from reality for 30 seconds. What do you feel during that escape - or better - a bit before you feel the pressing need to escape?

This is the trigger, and there is a need you will address in the future, instead of just holding yourself back.

What are you escaping from?

Another thought that came to mind that in terms of cardinal issues - I can't be 95%.

I can't breathe for 95 minutes and then stop for 5.

I will die.

So stay alive

However,

Much love and power to you!

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins

Posted by yesodos12 - 14 Jul 2009 05:18

Hi everyone,

Thanks a lot for all the chizuk so far, its been an amazing new start for me.

Im nearly 6 days clean, and so far its really not been so hard, which is amazing.

An interesting story - Ive always felt that my shalom bayis has been extremely fragile, in 2 ways. 1) general relationship strength, 2) ability to see eye to eye with eachother and reach healthy compromises on life issues. I can't see a direct connection between this issue and my addiction, but I've always felt deep down that if one would improve, so would the other. (By the way, Id be very interested to hear form anyone who has some insight into this).

THE DAY AFTER I joined this site and was mekabel to be clean, my wife took out a book from

the library about the importance of being calm, and our shalom bayis has dramatically improved over the last few days as a result!! I hope this is the start of having more bracha in my life in general, and that strengthening my yesod will spill over into all other aspects of life. Do people have experiences that corroborate this?

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by the.guard - 14 Jul 2009 21:11

I am hearing this the WHOLE time in my work. Very often when someone start working on this area, their shalom bayis gets MUCH better...

Read through the testimonials on [this page](#), I'm sure you'll find a lot of this...

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by yesodos12 - 16 Jul 2009 12:50

Thanks a lot for everybody's input and feedback.

Vis-a-vis the question of what triggers me to feel the need to escape, I have to say that I don't think that I am actually MOTIVATED TO ESCAPE, I think its just the sub-conscious urge for physical stimulation - which is obviously much stronger when I'm alone and in range of the internet - which pushes me to escape from reality and fulfill my baser urges.

I guess it could be that many years ago when I DEVELOPED the addiction I was motivated by a need to escape. I don't remember. I just feel that having already developed an addiction, escape is not really a motivation but rather a means of fulfilling a physical urge.

I guess you could say that I want to escape the feelings of lust, and that is definitely true, but that's not the same thing as saying that my present day lusts are actually generated by a need to escape.

Do people think that I am missing something here? I'd be very happy to hear what others have to say about this. ???

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by yesodos12 - 16 Jul 2009 13:12

BTW, I'm up to 7 days. ;D

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by Noorah BAmram - 16 Jul 2009 13:54

Hi welcome on board to our little oasis of sanity!!

Regarding the improvement in shalom bayis, BH the Almighty in is infinite kindness has blessed me in this area with an eishes chayil par excallance, yet as soon as I started my sobriety journey I've begun to reach deeper and higher levels of closeness and harmony in my home !! I've also begun to appreciate more the virtues and maalos of wife and kids. , something that when in the throes of addiction is impossible.

Why do we see improvement in SB ? Others here can quote the sources better then I, but it would seem elementary that "Itaavah yvakash nifrad" the very essence of the addiction is the antithesis of the Oneness that is the goal of the Jewish marriage!

(DISCLAIMER:the above notwithstanding, don't get me wrong, I'm still very very much "human" and refuse to look over the shopping receipts of all the "bargains" that they come my heart just can't handle that!! those that know what I mean, know what I mean human maybe! "Super"human?
definitely NOT!!

No offense to the Ezras Noshim:))

Love to all

Noorah

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by battleworn - 16 Jul 2009 14:31

Yesodos, one of the big Yesodos of addiction is that it's a self-sufficient vicious cycle. For sure there are many things that can add fuel (anxiety, depression, loneliness, boredom, frustration etc.) but the cycle works just fine all by itself.

Even if there is something that you don't realize, it's not a cause for concern. If need be, you'll discover it when you get up to that stage.

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by kutan - 16 Jul 2009 15:14

Thank you for starting this thread. You write your story very well, and I personally can relate to it a lot better than others... just like 'hoping'.

I too do not have the constant addiction, but when it rears it ugly malicious pernicious ogre-y (made that last one up for good measure) look out, I'm helpless (or was, till recently).

But you put it very well...

I am amazed at my own stupidity. I guess this proves that I'm an addict - I never thought of myself that way until now, ive just been in denial.

we must be addicts too, but perhaps with a different internal pathway? Maybe R' Guard can do a study on the difference and get his PhD.

Battleworn, your right on the money. forget the psychotherapy, just move forward.

On Shalom Bayis, one thing that helps me is to view it as a goal, not just a nice pleasant thing like air conditioning (sorry, its getting quite warm here). That means it needs constant focus as a end in itself. The key is 1) good communication 2) understanding what a women (usually) needs in a relationship 3) anava (helps for everything).

And even then, don't expect it to be always rosy. I have a GREAT relationship with my wife, we are really close, and yet we have flare ups where we are upset with each other. But it (almost) always ends within a day, and we discuss it, and get even closer.

R' Pam would say, on the passuk with the malachim 'hinay be'ohel', where Rashi says that they wanted to improve the Shalom Bayis of Avrohom and Sarah, that think!!! Even Avrohom and Sarah, even after decades of marriage, need reinforcement of SB.

On 2), the main thing is to be machshiv the wife, especially in front of others and the children. Even simple stuff: If the supper tastes pretty good, tell her she should really open a gourmet restaurant and benefit the world.

Make a lot of small deposits in the emotional bank account.

There is a book : "the garden of peace" by Rav Shalom Arush that many people here have found helpful.

But the main thing is to be machshiv it as a goal in itself, not just to make life more livable. R' Wolfson says that the wife is a merkava for the shechina in the house... looking at it that way changes things.

Looking forward to more of your posts.

kutan

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by yesodos12 - 17 Jul 2009 07:30

Thank you for the posts, guys.

Noorah, great point about Itaavah yevakesh nifrad being the opposite of yehayu lebosor echad. Battleworn, I agree with you that the psychology of the addiction it is not the relevant point for now. Kutan, thanks for the encouragement and sb tips.

I've printed out the handbook and attitude books, and I've been working my way through them. I have to say that they are utterly brilliant. My favourite thing about them is that they provide me with so many different TOOLS to fighting the addiciton. I really used to feel ILL-EQUIPT in dealing with the dreaded urge, and all I'd be able to tell myself was things like 'come on, just fight it' or 'try harder', without really having any idea of HOW to effectively and creatively work around the problem. Kol Hakavod for providing this service! ;D

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Re: BackToBasics - My battle begins
Posted by yesodos12 - 18 Jul 2009 18:31

10 days!

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