

Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 13 Jul 2009 21:08

I'm new to this forum, but not new to this struggle. I signed up to the weekly E-mail lists a few months ago. I often just glance at them, as I'm trying not to spend so much time reading E-mails. But, even with this, I have gotten chizuk through the themes that keep repeating themselves.

I grew up secular, but did Teshuva in college--I came to Yeshiva in Israel and never left. Now I'm married with five children (our oldest is eight and our youngest is a month old).

I was in the habit of staring at girls, I remember even in nursery school. I just liked the way they looked. Things got worse when I was 10 or 11. My sisters had a "facts of life" book with indecent pictures and crooked ideas, and I found it. It described Mast... as a fun thing to do, and so I followed the instructions. I've been stuck ever since.

I was a member of a shul youth group around the age of my bar-mitzvah. The youth group leader gained my trust very early on, and I could discuss anything with him. Luckily, I learned early on that mast... is wrong. I've been fighting it ever since, sometimes more successfully and sometimes less so. I think now I go two or three months clean, and then I tend to trip up a few times close together. I always feel that the yeitzer hara tricked me, and somehow it's strategy was different than last time. Also, I view it as tripping up for one "phase," instead of multiple times. So, I manage not to get too depressed about it, and can pick myself up again pretty quickly.

I would like to be able to stop altogether. But, I am more concerned with controlling my eyes. I feel that it is impossible to walk down the street without taking a look at every woman along the way. I think the trickiest part is that, in my neighborhood, everyone is dressed so tznius that it's hard to feel that I'm really doing anything wrong.

Besides that, I slip up every once in a while with the internet--probably a few times a year. But then, I feel that I was somehow outsmarted again by my Yeitzer. I wasn't looking for indecent pictures... I was just curious about such-and-such an actress... I wasn't expecting to find such indecent pictures...

I see the progress is still very slow on my own, and that's why I decided to become more involved in this forum.

But, I find this is also a challenge. I think my own situation is rather mild, and I find that by seeing other people's stories which are more involved than my own, I end up getting thoughts instead of getting rid of them. Any advice on this point would also be helpful. Thanks.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by the.guard - 28 Nov 2009 18:00

Yikes. That's a hard question...

My gut tells me that both halachicly - **and** from the addiction standpoint - it might be best to avoid anything that could even bring to an erection. After all, if there's no option of finishing, why take the first sip? We all know where that can lead...

Sorry to hear about your predicament. Be sure it is a test from Hashem for your benefit and growth. May He give you the strength to truly grow through it!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 Nov 2009 22:29

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Nov 2009 18:00:](#)

After all, if there's no option of finishing, why take the first sip? We all know where that can lead...

Thanks, that's what I was starting to think, too.

My confusion was because I thought, maybe in all this time my wife really needs something a little more. And maybe it's my duty to take a risk for this.

Once again, amazing what happens if you just ask:

I discusses this with my wife. She clarified that, physically, that cuddly "loved" feeling is sufficient. Which is much less that what I thought she needs.

I think I could handle this. (But a few months ago I couldn't).

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Kedusha - 29 Nov 2009 01:11

I'm with Guard. Under these circumstances the minor Harchakos (e.g. passing things, sitting on her bed, pouring her a drink, touching where there is no Chibah) should not be a problem. But the major Harchakos, such as hugging, kissing, and cuddling should be avoided.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Kedusha - 29 Nov 2009 05:56

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 28 Nov 2009 22:29:](#)

[guardureyes wrote on 28 Nov 2009 18:00:](#)

After all, if there's no option of finishing, why take the first sip? We all know where that can lead...

Thanks, that's what I was starting to think, too.

My confusion was because I thought, maybe in all this time my wife really needs something a little more. And maybe it's my duty to take a risk for this.

I would do almost anything for my wife. But, risking my sobriety is not on the table, for her sake as much as for mine.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Dov - 29 Nov 2009 21:14

Dear Reb Eye, (i still want to write "rib-eye", but it gets me way too hungry...)

Disclaimer: Dovish 102 and 202 may be a prerequisite for this post.

Perhaps this should be a PM, but here goes...probably nothing you don't already know, just sharing what I am finding out the hard way (of course!):

What my wife really, really needs is *to be loved*. What I really, really need is *to love*. If there is anything positive that I can *use* the niddah thing for (mitzvos are eitzos, right? [Zohar h"K']), it is to learn what intimacy really *is*. Now, as a professional lustaholic, I was *absolutely sure* I knew exactly what intimacy really is and exactly how to measure it, too. I tried to convince my wife of *my* definition for years. Heh-heh. Boy, was I off. No wonder life didn't work too well for all parties involved...

No, I'm **not** saying that honesty and open communication should *always* be enough, so cuddling should *always* be more than enough when we are mutar. What I **am** trying to share is that the combination of open and honest communication about what we each want and expect (out of physical intimacy, out of our jobs, out of our kids, our shuls, our friends, our diets, everything!) combined with me seeing what a privilege it is and how meaningful it is to be physically close with the person I am sharing life with, is a simple pleasure that can't be beat by all the lust in the world. It can be, and perhaps should be, quite satisfying.

So, being able to be physically close (even without going "very far", as you put it) to the person I am building a life with, WHILE being emotionally together as well, takes a bit of the wind out of sexuality, and 99% of the wind out of lust.

In fact, it actually begs the question: Where does sexuality, when appropriate, figure into *improving* this relationship? And that is something I do not believe any rov, shmooz, or sefer needs to (or perhaps *can*) answer. That is not apikorsus, I hope...I believe it's just something we all need to discover together as couples.

One more thing. This business about being OK with cuddling and emotional closeness, is not something that would have been "OK" with me 15 years ago. In fact, it would have probably been ossur. See, I didn't see the *value* nor the power of physical and/or emotional closeness *without sexuality*, back then. To me, it was **anathema**. Therefore, being physically close would just have been teasing my YH. You know, "al yiharher odom bayom...."

Now, sorry if this offends anyone, but aside from halachik issues, of course, I do not believe that many of the standard, party-line Torah mottos and mussar guidelines are meant for recovering perverts, like me. Hey, I do not even see **lust** as primarily coming from my YH. Many here do, and I respect that. As far as I am concerned, though, I consider it a **mental illness** combined with a **physical allergy**, that I innocently (but very stupidly) learned to use in order to protect me from all spiritual and emotional pain. I don't focus on the gravity of the aveiro to stay sober. It never stopped me before! In fact, my frummet efforts *got me* as screwed up as I got. What helps *me* is coming to see that it will kill me, and learning how to depend on Hashem instead. Even though I am still a very poor example of a yid in many ways. "afilu rosho, ubote'ach ba'Shem chesed yisovevenhu," chazal say (reb Yisroel Salanter and others elaborate on that...).

So, no, for us today, it's *sometimes* bedafka safer to be physically *close* and not go farther than to stay further apart. It makes me aware that I am loving in this way, without the stuff I thought

Some days, though, the above just doesn't work at all (usually when I get very self-absorbed and selfish) and at those times I can't tolerate being physically close at all, if going farther is out of the picture. Like kedusha said, I'm not sacrificing my sobriety for anything.

Hak'lal: Above all, I need to be as fearlessly honest as possible with myself and with my wife about where I stand about this, too.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Kedusha - 29 Nov 2009 21:34

[dov wrote on 29 Nov 2009 21:14:](#)

Like kedusha said, I'm not sacrificing my sobriety for anything.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 29 Nov 2009 21:52

Well, this limbo is continuing a little longer.

This afternoon I had this feeling that all hope was lost.

I felt like I was suddenly run over by a steam-roller.

It was hard, but I slowly pulled myself back out of it.

I just tried to focus on the moment; what can I do now; what do I have to do now.

I was home alone watching most of the kids, so there was plenty to do.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Dov - 29 Nov 2009 22:47

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 29 Nov 2009 21:52:](#)

I just tried to focus on the moment; what can I do now; what do I have to do now.

I was home alone watching most of the kids, so there was plenty to do.

Gevaldiggggggggggg!!, as someone else here would put it. Doesn't really sound like "limbo" to me. It seems that you are living the one life youv'e got today.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Kedusha - 29 Nov 2009 23:00

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 29 Nov 2009 21:52:](#)

Well, this limbo is continuing a little longer.

This afternoon I had this feeling that all hope was lost.

I felt like I was suddenly run over by a steam-roller.

It was hard, but I slowly pulled myself back out of it.

I just tried to focus on the moment; what can I do now; what do I have to do now.

I was home alone watching most of the kids, so there was plenty to do.

You're doing great, Eye. Take one day at a time - you have every reason to succeed this time!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 01 Dec 2009 14:34

I'm on day 32.

These thoughts still drift through my head sometimes "act out!" or, "think about this..."

But it's easier to let them drift away than it used to be.

I feel like there's more distance between me and these thoughts.

...and I hope to keep it this way!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by the.guard - 01 Dec 2009 15:03

Some people REALLY ARE inspiring!!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by silentbattle - 01 Dec 2009 16:52

Please keep it up - I'm with you, in any way I can be...

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 Dec 2009 13:20

Today I'm on day 33. Baruch Hashem, it's going pretty smoothly.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by silentbattle - 02 Dec 2009 16:17

That's fantastic! And now you've inspired me - I'm going to go and learn a few minutes extra b'zchus your battle!

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