

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 (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 09 Aug 2015 17:05

Maybe this is what you meant, about step 2 (from Additional Tools to recovery, tool #116):

117. Came... Came to... Came to believe This is a slow-motion step 2, "Came to believe a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity."

At first, we just participate. Come to meetings. (Post on the forum).

After a while of this, we gain a bit of clarity; we start to realize how sick we have been in our thoughts and behaviors. I remember people pointing out to me, "There's nothing normal about having sex with yourself! It's sick!" Or, when I was wondering about the exact extent of my addiction someone commented, "You can't be only a little bit pregnant; either you are or you aren't."

Ultimately, we see other people who have been around longer, and who have traveled the road to recovery somewhat further along than we have (and can give us such helpful feedback as mentioned above). We realize that, we too, can travel that path. Help (with a capital H) is available to us, and can restore us to sanity.

...there may have been more that I wrote somewhere else.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 09 Aug 2015 17:10

...this was also relevant to step 2:

I would like to add that a religious person may read this whole section about agnostics and believe that it is beneath him—of course I believe in God! However, I would say that a religious person, though he may believe in God, may hold a narrow or warped perception of this God—a perception that needs to be examined, modified, and perhaps even discarded.

Also, with a touch of ego involved, a person may believe that he believes in God as He truthfully is but, in reality, he believes in a God that he fashioned in his own image. He has made a smorgasbord sort of God, picking and choosing the descriptions that suit him for whatever reason, and rejecting other descriptions of God. One tendency we may have is to embrace God Who is depicted as vengeful and punishing while we deny any description of God Who is depicted as loving and forgiving.

Another point I would like to make is that, although we have learned about God and His mastery over the whole entire world and we have talked about this for as long as we can remember, when we stub our toes (or when someone steps on our toes) the first thought that enters our mind is not exactly in line with these beliefs. In theory, we believe in God. On a practical level, we really don't. That, I think, is also a form of agnosticism to which this chapter can be applied.

In summary: Although we may think we believe in God, there's a good chance that we really don't.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by cordnoy - 09 Aug 2015 17:13

[Eye.nonymous wrote:](#)

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--Elyah

That was super, and sadly, for me, so true.

So what would a yid like you suggest for one like me, to begin believin' in God and understandin' Who He really is?

Thank you

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by levite - 06 Jan 2016 10:24

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Markz - 09 Jul 2021 03:42

[cordnoy wrote on 03 Mar 2015 05:21:](#)

I was asked: What should I write in step one?

There are answers (obviously) to that question, but let's take a look at a real live one:
Hi Elya. Long long long time no see

[Eye.nonymous wrote:](#)

Today I am sober for 5 months.

On my thread, Big Book Study Thread, as we are going through the Big Book, we reached the end of the readings that deal with Step One. I encouraged people here to write out their first step, and to post it in their own threads (see the Big Book Study Thread, in IMPORTANT THREADS, for details).

This what I wrote as my Step One (in 5 minutes or less):

I've felt like an outsider my whole life. In nursery school I was teased by the other boys. I remember staring at the girls, thinking there was something "nicer" about them. I thought girls had some sort of secret society of their own, and I'd never be a part of it. But I wanted to be, so badly.

At home, I also felt out of place. My mother, nagged, worried, and complained all the time—she was usually in a state of hysteria. My dad was full of insults and criticism. I wanted to run away or die. I was abused verbally and emotionally; I hated myself—no matter what I did, I was never good enough. I could never win my parent's approval, no matter what I did. I felt confused, rejected, crushed and terrified; I got no love, affection, encouragement, trust, or respect. I desperately wanted to fill this hole, but I had no way to do it—I never learned how to give love and respect to anyone.

So I went inside my head. I spent all of elementary school, high school, and college staring at the girls and wanting to connect with them. But I COULDN'T IN REAL LIFE—SO I CONNECTED WITH THEM IN FANTASY.

I remember in high school working in the supermarket just staring at the cashiers, practically drooling, wondering how to become a part of their life. The thought never occurred to me to ask them, "What do you like to do?" Instead, I sent anonymous love letters and anonymous flowers. I remember that these ideas used to enter my head AND I COULDN'T GET RID OF THEM UNTIL I FOLLOWED THROUGH.

From early on I thought the missing connection was sex—it was so glorified, I figured THAT must be the solution. One time, a girl I knew was supposed to come over to my parents' house for a date while nobody was home. I assumed we would have sex. I felt empty about it—I was about to achieve the ultimate goal in life and then be left with no further meaning and purpose. (Thank G-d, I was stood up in the end).

I started masturbating when I was eight years old, or younger. I had to stop because I got chapped and sore, but as soon as I healed I started again. When I hit bar-mitzvah I met a very influential youth-group leader. I could trust him and talk openly with him, and we discussed girls, sex, and masturbation. I tried for the next twenty years after that to quit, but only managed to

slow down.

Also when I was eight, I learned about nudist colonies where people could live free and be uninhibited. Oh! That's why I was afraid to talk to people! I was too inhibited because I wore clothes! I imagined that living on a nudist colony would solve all my problems. I played out this fantasy by walking around the house naked when nobody was home, or at night when everyone was asleep. As time went on I felt compelled to take bigger risks—late at night I'd walk outside in our yard to our swimming pool without any clothes on.

These behaviors continued into marriage. During the week of sheva brachas, my wife and I went on a nature hike to a place with an outdoor mikveh. I don't remember if I actually dunked or not, but I remember that my wife definitely didn't want to and I thought something was wrong with her.

About two years into marriage, we got internet in our home. At first I had an occasional slip with pornography, and I wouldn't dare look at it when my wife was home. But it grew more frequent and more risky. Eventually our dial-up connection got too slow for E-mail, so we needed to upgrade to a faster connection. I felt like I was about to get sucked in—I had never seen pornography videos, partly for fear, and partly because our internet connection couldn't handle them. But now a whole new world was opening up. I was scared.

We asked our Rav about upgrading the internet; he recently spoke with Rav Twersky and heard that the internet is a plague that has destroyed thousands of Jewish homes. I was scared again, but stayed in denial—how can the internet really be that dangerous! I convinced my wife that we really needed it, so we upgraded. But I was reluctant to install a filter. My wife kept on bringing it up, so I eventually agreed.

THAT'S WHEN RECOVERY BEGAN. We found a particular website with information about filters (and recovery). I signed up for their daily E-mails and became active on their forum. I learned about sex addiction, and how the problem was really lust. So many things finally fell into place. I had been fighting a million separate battles—how not to masturbate in the shower, or in bed at night, how to keep my clothes on, etc. But now it was just one enemy—LUST! It was actually a relief.

My wife noticed my interest in the forum and E-mails and got suspicious. I disclosed my problem to her, little by little, and sugar-coated. She went through a stage of being furious—we had spent

years in and out of therapy treating HER problem, but really I was the problem. As I became more aware of my disease, I got more involved with recovery—I joined an SA phone group, and eventually live meetings. After a while, my wife saw how much SA was helping me and she joined S-Anon.

Along the way, I've learned about the Restlessness, Irritability, and Discontent that underlie the addiction—the early warning signs of acting out. And, through the steps I've learned how to deal with these feelings in a healthier way. I've become much more available as a husband and father, and I can face a lot of the challenges in life which used to send me running to the toilet.

Sometimes I forget that I've done a lot of work to reach this point in recovery, and that I have to keep on working to stay here—so I want to remind myself of that. I'm a sexaholic, and grateful to be in recovery.

--Elyah

Bump. Great stuff here!

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