

Moshe's thread

Posted by MosheF - 25 Jun 2010 14:23

I am a regular frum 30 years old guy, married with kids b'h. I started masturbating at 16, I remember acting out for years as a bochur promising and trying to stop every single time and was convinced that marriage is the solution to the problem. I got engaged, masturbated through my engagement and not long after I got married I was at it again. I started working for a company and had my own office with 56k dial up internet, for about two years I didn't dare go on the internet but then one day I broke that line at work and watched something dirty and from that day on, I must of spent 3 or 4 hours a day, sometimes even the entire day at work slowly downloading images and videos over the internet. We finally got high speed internet with a filter, so I spent hours finding sites that the filter didn't block. The reasons and excuses were plenty, if only my wife were better looking, much skinnier, if only she wore something a little more slinky, if only I had a job where I wasn't give my own room the whole dam day etc.

Over 9 years of marriage, breaking many red lines and continuing to spend my days on the internet and acting out, obsessed with women and fantasies. I made charts to try curve the acting out pattern, promised not to act out a certain hour of the day, ripped up money every time I acted out, tried waiting 10 minutes before acting out, tikkun klali, mikva, made a thousands of different kabbolos, not one worked even once. I went to 3 different therapists, 2 rabbonim and finally SA over a period of almost 3 years and I was only getting worse, never better.

Fast forward to today, I act out a lot these days, more than I ever did. I just can't stop. I still go to SA meetings and talk one therapist, the only one that understands addiction well. I have come to accept that I have an addiction, a real problem. Call it a disease or illness or whatever but it ain't my fault anymore. I am dying to stop doing this to myself, I have had some period of sobriety, a month, a week here a week there and they are so delicious, so full of life, full of energy. I spent time with my wife, my kids, get some real work done, I give my wife the attention she needs, it feels so good. But then I dump everything for I have by acting out again and again, it would be so funny if it wasn't so sad. How I trade masturbating, some stupid boring porn that I don't even enjoy anymore for living real life. It just doesn't make sense, yet I do it over and over again.

If going to SA and talking to this therapist has helped me at all, it is the realization that sex is not my problem, I have heard it many times but finally came to accept it. My problem is facing life, I have an inherent fear of life, fear of real feelings and a fear of facing them. By now, I know what some of those fears are but many I don't. Because of this fear, I have an extremely strong need to isolate all the time, I spend almost all of my evening hours in my office, not to work, just because I want to get away from life. I would rather watch a movie alone in my office alone than at home with my wife because I need the isolation, I feel comfortable in my office, with my

computer and internet. I can't tell you how many times I've told my wife I need to leave early for night seder just because I wanted to run to my office. I have a very special wife who is extremely good to me (yes, she is not perfect and also nowhere near as skinny as I would like her to be), beautiful children ka'h, my own new business that has lots of potential if only I didn't spend all my time on the internet. There is nothing going wrong in my world, everything is going really well thanks to hashem, but I am so full of running away all the time from everything, I wish I knew why.

My therapist claims, that acting out is my lifeline, I have been using it for years as a means of controlling my fears, as a way of managing and I can't just give it all up, it's pure survival for me. He says I need to stop focusing on acting out and begin focusing on how I feel, on my fears on trusting life and the acting out will eventually stop.

Anyway, enough shame and embarrassment for now. I never share in SA, I never talk at meetings either, I walk in and out. I have a problem opening up to other people, afraid what others will think etc.

I will bli neder post my feeling every day on this forum, focusing on honesty and what is going on in my life that day and not thinking about what you strangers think of me.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by MosheF - 18 Jul 2010 19:34

Was there a call today? I couldn't call in because I was home with my wife. I was up till 4am last night, couldn't fall asleep (slept 4 hours shabbos afternoon), i was going crazy with that little thing literally bugging for attention. Finally, at 4am I gave in, i just couldn't anymore. What bothers me is not the acting out, I tried and couldn't stop, but it bothers me that because of my acting out I don't daven, learn or do anything Jewish, and the guilt is killing me.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by installed - 18 Jul 2010 20:08

Hey Moshe,

Yes there was a call today. We basically summed up the first step and started speaking about the second step. We were asked to start writing the second step and to talk about it next call. The Tuesday night call will be postponed to Wednesday night. Sorry to hear about yesterday.

All the best,

Avraham.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by Stuart - 18 Jul 2010 23:35

[MosheF wrote on 18 Jul 2010 19:34:](#)

What bothers me is not the acting out, I tried and couldn't stop, but it bothers me that because of my acting out I don't daven, learn or do anything Jewish, and the guilt is killing me.

Hi Moshe,

I feel for you. I'm in the midst of reading a book (recommended by another GYE colleague), The Garden of Emuna by Rabbi Shalom Arush. I am not into all the Bresleve references, but a lot has put a much more positive perspective on my life issues and specifically my lust problem. Specifically, he says that that these "bad habits" are happening because HaShem wants it to happen. He is craving for you to become closer to Him by working out this problem. Instead of the guilt we should try and be happy for the opportunity to correct.

I am not sure if this is related to the steps, but I just read this today, so I felt it necessary to write this as well as encourage you and anyone else to consider reading this book on Emunah.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by ur-a-jew - 19 Jul 2010 00:35

[Stuart wrote on 18 Jul 2010 23:35:](#)

I am not sure if this is related to the steps, but I just read this today, so I felt it necessary to write this as well as encourage you and anyone else to consider reading this book on Emunah.

Check out Aaron's post from last Wednesday's call this has everything to do with the steps. I believe that this is what it means to surrender our lust to Hashem. It's a recognition that Hashem is the one giving us the triggers in the first place.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by MosheF - 21 Jul 2010 13:50

Tisha B'av was a really hard day for me. At 2pm, I was bored, horny and desperately wanted to go to my office, I felt like I was not going to manage. I Googled Chatted someone from the forum, we spoke for a few minutes, I don't know how but it weakened the obsession and I stayed home almost the entire day. I did go to my office an hour before maariv, but I didn't act out, just wasted time. it was not perfect, because I still escaped real life and ran to my office but b'h I didn't act out and went to maariv (something I don't do that often when I'm in the office)

This is hard. Sometimes I feel like I can't cope, I never had coping problems before.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by The Never Believer - 21 Jul 2010 13:58

actually moshe touches upon an interesting point here that was troubling me too. i know that i go to porn and lust in order to escape realty for a little bit. just to quiet the busy-ness in my head. and it works really well. when im acting out i dont think of any of my worries or of all the things i need to do (and dont have the time or cheshek to do). so i understand that acting out is killing us and we need to stay away from lust like its wildfire. ok, i get that. but is there any way for us to take the edge off? is there anything we can thats healthy that can just help us escape for a little while and give us the koyach to get back out there and do what needs to be done? what is our escape?

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by installed - 21 Jul 2010 14:20

Jogging with some music! Preferably in the rain.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by Stuart - 21 Jul 2010 16:56

I play BrickBreaker on my black berry to just cool off a bit (but careful it can get addicted too)!

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by The Never Believer - 21 Jul 2010 17:07

brickbreaker and jogging. wow. i was afraid of that.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by MosheF - 21 Jul 2010 22:30

How about just living in the present and enjoying the moment. Accepting your challenges and not being afraid of them, thus not needing to run away from whatever it you are running away from.

I wish I could live up to what I just wrote; not running away is the hardest part for me. I run away from life all the time, sometimes just watching a movie or looking at the news is enough but most times I need the porn and masturbation.

I sometimes come home at night, spending a lovely time with my family, had a good day at work but just have this need to run away, I have no idea what's wrong and why the need to run away, but it's there and that's when I end up acting out, ouch!!!

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by The Never Believer - 22 Jul 2010 00:47

yeah but life can be stressful. doesnt everbody deserve to take the edge off? i know that the way we are doing it is bad and harmful and will destroy me but are we, as addicts, sentenced to live on the edge? i dont want to act out any more. i want what dov has. but does that mean that we are "on" 24/7? do we get no down time? if that is what our goal is then thats fine, id rather live that way then the way we are now but is the only to recovery one where we cannot escape the hardships of life?

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by Dov - 27 Jul 2010 04:04

You want what dov has, but you think that means being 'on' 24/7? Well, I am a screwball, and probably 'off' most of the time, but I am just trying to do whatever I need to in order to stay sober today, and have a nice time being useful. Whatever...

OK, so here is a communication that someone had with me tonight (names have been altered to protect the innocent):

Invite

Very nice, but desperate individual (VNBDI) : Hi

Sent at 10:52 PM on Monday

me: yo

VNBDI: I need help

me: so do I. What's the deal, chaver?

VNBDI: I spent a lot of time on the internet, now I'm home and am going crazy obsessed

I can't imagine why the guy with that pretty wife I looked at before is not the luckiest guy in the world

Sent at 10:58 PM on Monday

me: 1- We pay a price for what we ingest. This is an important uncomfortable truth we all need to accept, eventually. There is no escape from paying some real (sometimes very heavy) price for feeding the addiction. Sometimes it is the scenes and images that we craved and replayed for pleasure, but are now stuck replaying them in our heads like mental vomit, even though we do not want them any more because they are getting in the way of what we really need to accomplish to function and be useful; sometimes the price is the hiding and lying that we carry home with us - it separates us from those around us and makes us also feel less than, too...whatever it is, you are now stuck - at least for a while. They will eventually leach out of your brain and the shame and internal isolation will abate. But it hurts for a while.

Sent at 11:03 PM on Monday

me: 2- The obsession is part of the disease. I am just curious, in a friendly sort of way: do you accept that you are just like an alcoholic in this obsession thing? They obsess about getting drunk...do you feel the same?

VNBDI: Its very very painful, I can't imagine living any longer without that skinny women

Yes, by now I think I do accept it very much

Sent at 11:06 PM on Monday

VNBDI: I think I have come to accept step one, realizing I am getting nowhere after all these years

Is it bad that the only part of the fellowship I feel is really helping me is the reaching out to others for help? it always seems to weaken the obsession.

Even now, what I thought a few minutes ago was a inevitable acting out, seems like I may

manage just because I found the guts to I'm you

Sent at 11:09 PM on Monday

me: The reaching out to others for help is (I think) ALWAYS the ONLY part of the program that really "works", in the beginning. It takes time to develop any real integrity - integrity means the inner ability to have some accountability to YOURSELF. That self-accountability was worn down and pulverized every time we snuck away to watch porn and violate everything we know is wrong for us and destructive to our trust and relationships. So basically, our addictive behavior has been ripping out our inner integrity for years. It is time to have G-d restore it to us. To get it back it takes one thing: Sharing with other real live people. So a phone group is good, a real person is better - in person, and hence the minhag of meetings for alkies, etc..

Sent at 11:14 PM on Monday

VNBDI: Well, I really appreciate your weakening my obsession tonight. I feel guilty using you without being able to return the favor.

Sent at 11:17 PM on Monday

me: When have you ever returned the favor to Hashem after using Him? I am in good company. Nobody can really 'return the favor', and giving is it's own reward. Schar Mitzvah - mitzvah!

Sent at 11:19 PM on Monday

VNBDI: Can't I just learn to reach out when I need it? forget everything else, this works so stick with it,

me: agreed! And i will reach out when I need it too! A touch of humility feels nice!

Sent at 11:21 PM on Monday

VNBDI: Its a serious question. Maybe I don't need steps, character defects and everything else. I just need a buddy whom I can call when I feel weak.

Sent at 11:22 PM on Monday

me: That's fine. The steps - at their lowest and most pragmatic level - are here to solve a problem you will have: All people die. No person can be truly depended upon. Al tivtechu bindivim - b'ven odom sh'ein lo s'shuah...etc.

Sent at 11:25 PM on Monday

VNBDI: Makes sense, but I feel that reaching out to hashem doesnt helps me, I've cried my heart out to him, didn't work

Sent at 11:27 PM on Monday

me: You will learn how to be open and honest with G-d by practicing being open and honest with with PEOPLE - you will learn how to trust G-d by trusting PEOPLE...but eventually there will not be people there for you - it is inevitable. You will hide mentally or physically where people cannot get to you, or will be in a place where no one can come to help...you will then need G-d.

I understand that your crying to Hashem has not helped in the past but I have a painful suggestion to make about that.

VNBDI: Namely?

Sent at 11:30 PM on Monday

VNBDI: Is it that I ask god for help while not really wanting to leave go? I agree to that, but I also ber hashem to help me want to let go.

Sent at 11:32 PM on Monday

me: yeah, yeah, yeah...enough setting up hurdles for yourself to jump over. I know the struggle cycle well. It's painful and guilt-ridden and did not work for me for years and years. If you have not signed off in disgust yet, you have guts, so here it goes:

Sent at 11:35 PM on Monday

me: I believe that the QUALITY of our emunah (relationship with Hashem) is not as fine as we think it is. We hide so much from PEOPLE, - yet do not hide it from Hashem! We tell ourselves that this is because He already knows it all and is inside us, so there is no hiding...then we go again and act out - hiding every little dirty detail from people. C'mon....this is a game, and it is silly. Our honesty with Hashem will finally become what it really needs to be ONLY after we open up to people! People first - THEN Hashem will start to have some REAL meaning to us.

How does this sit with you? Are you - have you been - open with people about the dirt? i mean really open - in person, not just on the virtual venue....

Sent at 11:40 PM on Monday

VNBDI: Not really, its the hardest part for me. I am getting better, though, if that means anything. I used to be everything, now I at least can call someone or email someone.

Sent at 11:42 PM on Monday

me: That is exactly my point. I know the torture of being 'found out' - even in a group of perverts I still sometimes want to hide the truth about what I want to do or have done. But it is shame that spites myself and i need to get over it or I will not get better.

Sent at 11:45 PM on Monday

me: So I encourage you to keep plugging away and emailing whenever you feel you are straying into dangerous territory - eventually you will be able to call someone on the phone - my number is on our list, too.

The more real the openness gets with other people, the more effective your prayers to Hashem will be.

Sorry, but I need to read to my daughter for a few minutes now and will be back in about 10 minutes iyH whether you are here or not.

VNBDI: I accept that's, hope I can reach it. thank you very much. I will let you go now, hopefully I will gain some serenity one day. Its so painful, looking at a girl, dreaming of it, feeling that I will die if I don't have it and there is nothing I can do but masturbate which doesn't even help.

Good night, thanks again

me: PS - can you somehow post this conversation on the forum board of our group? I think that there are others who might benefit from it or will have insight that neither of us have...

Never mind, VNBDI, I just took my liberties! And it was fun.

Hope somebody reads this... ;D 8)

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by The Never Believer - 27 Jul 2010 14:20

wow. thanks dov for posting that.

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Re: Moshe's thread

Posted by chaim2000 - 27 Jul 2010 17:27

amazing dialoug

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