



## ***Have I done enough?!***

Esti was living the ideal life. A successful husband. A beautiful home. Relatively happy kids. Good health. And she was dedicated to her role as a loyal wife.

It was late at night when Esti called me. I could quickly hear in her voice that she was in a state of shock like a bomb had blown up in her back yard. In between the frantic breathing and sobbing tears, she told me that she just found out that her husband was watching shmootz and inappropriate pictures and videos on the computer. She kept asking me, "What did I do wrong? Was it my fault? How can I fix his problem?"

Esti shared that she suspected that something was wrong with her husband for a while. She could tell he was not present with her when she wanted to talk. Steve was hardly at home when she needed help with dinner and bedtime for the kids. She could tell he was not completely honest with her about some strange charges on the credit card. However, she dismissed any suspicion with his excuse that he was very busy with a big construction project out of town.

Up until now, Esti considered herself a happy wife. Her kids were in prestigious schools and yeshivas. Steve had built her a big home in a beautiful New York suburb. She drove a nice car and dressed her little ones in matching outfits.

When her suspicions finally came true on that horrible fateful evening, she called me. I was able to calm her down by listening and being there for her. Then slowly and calmly, I found out more about the marriage. Steve was a high achieving husband who had big dreams to develop his company to not only build homes and apartment complexes in the greater New York area but also in other states. Most of the time, Steve was a very loving caring husband and father and very well known in the community as a Baal Chesed.

However, when he was going through a lot of pressure, he used to throw the anger and frustration on her and the kids. When the kids would come home and knew he was around, they'd walk on egg shells. At first, Esti did her best to be patient and understanding to try to keep him happy. She told the kids to be considerate of how "Abba is working so hard to keep us happy and able to get all we want." She cooked him the foods he liked. She made sure to buy the clothes he considered attractive. She thought that by wearing a longer shaitel and higher heels, maybe he'd come home early and there would be peace between them.

After we spent more time talking together, I noticed that slowly she was calming down. Esti shared with me that this was the first time she felt safe sharing this secret with anyone. And she could finally set aside her anger and frustration and explore the issue.

I took the opportunity to invite Esti to think for a moment to see if she felt that she had done enough. Next, I asked her if she felt that whatever

she tried to do for her husband, did it change him? Was she able to control him or cure him with her overtures to be more "attractive?" With quiet silent understanding, I was able to share with her my experience and give her hope.

I helped her see the insanity of trying again and again to change her husband and that the situation is to no avail. No matter how hard she tries to keep him happy, it is not going to help. As wives of addicts, what we need now is to realize that we can only change ourselves. It doesn't matter how hard we try. It is only going to hurt us more and the results are going to be the same.

I taught Esti that as an addict, her husband uses the shmootz to escape the pain, stress and frustration that comes from his crazy and unmanageable life. As hard as he might try on his own, he can not control his addiction and the best way he can recover from it is through the 12 Step Program and by working with a coach or a therapist trained and experienced in these matters.

We put together a suggested script to say to her husband about the shmootz, she found in a way that does not shame him or blame him. Esti recognized that her husband was suffering from a disease and that many men have found Recovery. Esti believed in Steve and felt that their marriage had been through other struggles and that they could get through this one, too. She learned from me that it was going to take work on both their parts, and with the help of G-d, they could restore their marriage.

I gave her the phone number to Duvid Chaim's Guard Your Eyes Conference Call and to the 2b1 Institute. We scheduled another session to help her gain more strength from the situation rather than the giving up. I suggested that she join the local S-anon Group but she was not yet ready to expose herself to it. Esti and I are now meeting regularly to give her support and hope that she and her husband will both be able to take what has happened and be able to see a better vision for their marriage - one that is honest, open, healing and hopeful for change and growth!

We share Esti's story as we are writing a Monthly Series about lust and internet addiction. In upcoming articles, you will learn a lot more about this "dis-ease." We will share more stories about real husbands and wives, and how you will learn about the cause and effect cycle that leads to all addictive behaviors. The research and methods we present are based on the well-known 12 Step Program for Addictions, the Art and Science of Personal Development and Motivation utilizing the latest insights from the fields of neuro-psychology and enriched by the enlightening Wisdom of our Sages.

Please know that this disease does not discriminate whether you are young or old, traditional or modern, whether you wear a kippa or a sheitel... or not! This Lust Addiction is truly a "Silent Killer." It can exist in your midst and you may not even know it.

*You can learn more - in a discreet and anonymous manner - through the 2b1 Institute ([www.2b1institute.com](http://www.2b1institute.com)), founded by Duvid Chaim & Miriam - experts who have spent over a decade working with more than a thousand men and women from Los Angeles to New York to Israel and the rest of the world. Today, they are guiding singles, husbands and wives 2b Free, 2b Whole, 2b Connected.*