

Jan. 20, 2017



## The Perils Of Internet Addiction

By Duvid Chaim & Miriam

### Like the Desperation Of A Drowning Man

Yakov is a well-known and respected observant Jew; he is an author and speaker. From all appearances, he is a complete *tzaddik*. His articles and books are read and translated in multiple languages; people reach out for his assistance on a regular basis and he dispenses sagely advice day and night. He has, as expected, a long gray beard and wears a long black coat. He was trained at one of the most elite yeshivas and has numerous talmidim.

Sounds good so far, right?

Well guess what? This holy man has been living a double life (like the story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde). He has spent decades living with the unbearable pain of behaving in an uncontrollable manner and is filled with so much guilt and shame that he considered totally “checking out” of the life he was living. He literally experienced the desperation of a drowning man! But he was not drowning under water, he was drowning in a sea of Internet and lust addiction. Not only was his life in shambles, but it had impacted his marriage and his entire family. His embarrassment and pain was only amplified by having to face his wife, his kids and his followers.

Yakov was truly lost and too ashamed to reach out for HELP.

Don't think that Yakov didn't try on his own to solve his problem. He thought that all he needed was a stronger Internet filter. Or that he could find articles and books on the subject to read. He pleaded with G-d in his daily prayers for relief and immersed himself in Yom Kippur fasting and davening – begging for forgiveness and determined to never act out again. And for a short period of time, this seemed to

work. But, Yakov was still impatient, restless and frustrated with people and situations. It seemed to him that the pressures of life and his responsibilities were just too much. He began to feel that life was treating him unfairly. Nothing was going his way... his marriage had lost all its passion, his kids were not following his plans for them, he was out of shape and his career had plateaued.

His emotions were unpredictable. One day he would feel up and full of hope. The next day, he felt a nauseating mix of toxic emotions – anger, frustration and rejection, worthlessness and more. It was not uncommon for Yakov to lash out in rage or biting criticism of those closest to him. He felt his life was completely unmanageable! And he turned to any escape or self indulgence he could find to medicate his pain – food, hours wasted on Facebook, late nights at the office, “innocently” flirting with waitresses at the restaurant – anything that would take his mind away from his troubles. It wasn't long before Yakov found himself again trapped in the web of Internet porn, chats and more.

Yakov fought with all his might to hide his out of control life. He had spent years perfecting the art of “putting on a good show.” And for most of the time, it worked. From the outside, Yakov looked like the perfect role model – prominent, influential, gifted, generous and wise. But on the inside, he knew he was a fake!

His wife never knew what kind of mood he would be in when he arrived at home. She took pride in her cooking and housekeeping, but it was never good enough for Yakov. He always seemed to find something about his wife to criticize. As hard as she tried

to please him, she always felt like she was walking on eggshells. As a result, she decided to “pull away” and distance herself emotionally for protection.

Guess what? The further she pulled away, the further away he ran. Eventually, there was so much distance, so little love, that Yakov felt more justified turning to porn and lust. He was never satisfied and she never felt safe or number one. Eventually, Yakov and his wife were more like roommates than a husband and a wife. Needless to say, their children sensed that something was wrong – the lack of love, and a home empty of warmth. It wasn't very long before their kids were acting out in their own way, too!

As a result, his life was in a downward spiral. And his disease got worse. Yakov experienced the vicious cycle of pain: acting out followed by remorse and shame to be followed by a resolution to change, only to see himself still plagued once again by the pain of his self imposed crisis. And it seemed that nothing could break the cycle!

Only recently, with Divine intervention, did he find the 2b1 Recovery Institute. Surely you can appreciate the agony he had in admitting his deepest darkest secrets. And yet, once he began to open up and reveal himself in this safe environment, he began to feel as if he had literally removed a mountain off his shoulders. Of course, his journey to recovery and to a healthy life was not immediate – but this great man is finally *free*. He no longer has to resort to his drug of choice to medicate the pain of his former unmanageable life, nor is he living in regret and shame. As a result, his connection to his wife and his family

has been restored. Yakov can actually look his wife in her eyes, once again. He also feels connected to his community, his Creator and, most importantly, to himself. And as a result, his impact on those around him is greater.

As our Sages say, There is nothing so whole as a broken heart. *Baruch Hashem*, the clear message for those living “in the dark” is that they are not alone and there is help!

We share Yakov's story as the first installment in a monthly series about lust and Internet addiction. In upcoming articles, you will learn a lot more about this “disease.” We will share stories about real men and women and about the cause and effect cycle that leads to all addictive behaviors. The research and methods we will present are based on 12-Step Program for Addictions, the Art and Science of Personal Development and Motivation utilizing the latest insights from the fields of neuro-psychology as well as the wisdom of our Sages.

Please know that this disease does not discriminate. Whether one is young or old, traditional or modern, wears a *kippa* or a *sheitel* or nothing at all – this 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 all over the world. Today, they are guiding singles, husbands and wives 2b Free, 2b Whole, 2b Connected.

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