

My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by nezach - 23 May 2011 19:46

Shabbat was amazing, I created a new life for myself, learnt to dream again, felt happy and good about myself for the first time in ages. It was really inspiring. Motzei shabbat..I fell. hard. and now I'm trying to make sense of it.

How many times has it happened this way, that I climb to new heights, my mind becomes focused and clear, my heart sings and the world looks beautiful, only to lapse shortly after. How often do I need to awareness and signs of Hashem, and His personal love, to gain a sense of perspective and value for life, and only neglect the importance of holding up my hands.

I am ready to call Hashem's name, to pray, to cry, to do whatever it takes to overcome temptation, even the times when it doesn't even feel like pleasure, but addiction calls its name. A trigger of desire, a stupid idea, a moment with such strength and power it feels impossible to resist. maybe sometimes I do resist, after all, I tell myself I can surrender and 'let God' take over this temptation which is forbidden to us. sometimes I don't. It's too difficult I hear myself call, but I know that's not true; Hashem gave me this struggle so that I can realise my potential. It is a world full of lust, and desire, and if we can only start to resist we can become great. we can heal and the world will become a better place. except its everywhere, like a cancer. That is what we have, isn't it, a disease. It affects our minds, our relationships, and our souls become bitter.

Sometimes we are not even sensitive to the fantasies we recently had, to the 'she's cute' or other more graphic thoughts or images we think about. its pretty much a daily event, a personal mental pleasure. what is the big deal if we don't talk to strangers, or if they don't literally enter our lives? Except they do. we all know they do, perhaps that evening or a few days later. they are on our minds, even when we don't recognise it because we have so much going on with our busy lives. And then boom. shoot, how did that happen? oh my God! I just watched porn and acted out. damn.

Then the instant thoughts: it was an accident, I didn't mean it. these things happen. oh God, not again! (reality check) I thought I vowed to stop it, to change. guilt creeps in. thoughts about my priorities, my family and friends. I am so disgusting, so perverse. shoot, where do I go from here. Is God going punish me? Instantly or later in life? I feel sick.

These thoughts are all too common. I right them as I have experienced it so many times before, most recently a couple of night ago after an inspiring Shabbat. Since then, I have been down

(although know I will get up again) although most concerning was today, when I could not focus or concentrate to the detriment of my business. It was a painful and difficult day for me psychologically, especially as before my lapse and sin I had created the goal to drive forward my priorities to start again with dating. It has knocked me big time, as I simply don't trust myself and struggling to keep enthusiastic about growing (as it so often follows up with a lapse).

I always 'know what I got to do'. Have tactics in place, say a prayer, don't browse images, only use internet when in the same room as your family, etc. Except in never really happens. not with me anyway. The addiction is still within me, and that is painful reality. It is a scary thought, especially when I remember that it is not an 'external problem', but the issue is me.

My real comfort, is that Hashem has 'blessed me' with the opportunity for rectify the holy covenant. He wants me to do teshuva, and I articulate this fact every day. I pray for mercy, patience and kindness, and for the acceptance of prayer.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by musicman - 24 May 2011 05:33

The idea that you can fall to great lows after soaring to great heights is not a new one. R' Akiva Tatz says all the time (and so do I) that there are 3 steps to every process in the world.

1) the moment of inspiration - This is given to us as a gift. We didn't earn it, or even deserve. It is a vision from above of what could be if we do earn it ourselves.

2) the moment of reality - The rug is pulled out from under us, and we are faced with the stark reality that the previous step was really just an illusion. What we are left with is the desire to reach that step again somehow. This involves work on our part.

3) transcendence - After doing the requisite work, we arrive at the point where we started, but this time it's no mirage. We earned it (with help), and now it belongs to us.

Every high you get from an especially inspirational shabbos almost always wears off the moment shabbos is over. We rarely work for for that inspiration. It's given to us (maybe in the form of a neshama yesairah), and we don't have to try hard to access that inspiration. That's what Shabbos is all about. We say havdalah as a desperate prayer to H' to let us carry some of that hisorirus into the week. The fact that you feel Motzei Shabbos is H' telling you "I'm glad you got to see what your life could be like if you worked to achieve it. Unfortunately, you didn't earn it, so it wouldn't be godly for me to just hand it to you. Your llt in life is to work towards this level of inspiration, and your test starts right now." Shabbos ends, and you freefall like Shabos never hapenned. The secular world would give up at this point. As a Jew, it's your job to realize that this is only the beginning of a long and dangerous road, one that hopefully, with some help from above, be a road that changes your life forever.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by lamAdam - 25 May 2011 00:29

Motzei Shabbos has always been a difficult time for me. For the past several years, Shabbos has been a "free day" for me. Although I was using M* every other day of the week -- sometimes multiple times -- I didn't on Shabbos, and often didn't even feel the urge to do so. I don't know what it means, but I know that motza"sh often found me lying on the couch with my computer on my chest watching hours of stupid TV shows, ignoring the fact that my friends had invited me out to a restaurant or that my family was playing a fun game together. Once I was totally exhausted from boiling my brain with TV, I'd surf to racy websites, then to racier websites, and then p*. I typically fell three or even four times by the time the sun came up Sunday, missed zman-everything and stayed in bed until the afternoon. Needless to say, this ruined both my weekend and the beginning of my week. Blech.

What is it about Shabbos that holds me back? I'm not sure. I know that some years ago I had a very scary moment on Shabbos. I was completely alone in my college apartment having told my buddies and girlfriend-at-the-time that I was going to take a Shabbos nap. And I looked at my computer and realized, "Nobody would know. I could pick it up (muktzeh), turn it on (seven kinds of assur), go straight to just one website (it's not so assur if you only go to one site!), do my business (assur, but what do I care?) and head over to mincha. Baruch Hashem a bazillion times, the habit of keeping shabbos prevented me from following through with that crazy thought. But is it just the habit that protects me? I don't know...

In any case, my past couple motzei shabboses I simply haven't turned on my computer. I like to work on a crossword puzzle, call a friend, hang out with my family and try to go to bed early. I've also stopped napping on Shabbos so that I'll be tired on Saturday night. They're just mechanical techniques, but they help me when my bigger picture -- surrender and progressive victory over

lust -- is hard to grasp.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by nezach - 29 May 2011 15:32

I know what you mean. Yesterday I had slept a lot and after some struggle decided it was best not to switch on the laptop. Its better to not get ourselves into the situation which (from experience) is likely to get us down. I'm just going to mention this now that I have been feeling very low the past couple of days, for various reasons. I am feeling very 'aware' of the y'h and scared about the kelipot that surrounds me. I am so tired from fighting every aspect of my life, just waiting for everything to fall into place. In short, I am depressed but I know it won't last forever and need to have self belief and determination.

I really hope and pray that this week we can stay clean.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by lamAdam - 30 May 2011 00:32

That awareness sounds familiar to me. I used to rock climb a lot, and I know there were times that I was horribly aware of the enormous void behind and below me. Now, I'm constantly aware that I have an addiction -- that there's something in my life that I don't want to do, but that I have historically done repeatedly.

So I try to use that same tool -- awareness -- for positive. Awareness of Hashem, of His will, of the fact that I am not in control and that He has some plan for me. It's a lot easier to say I do this than to actually do it, so I find myself saying it, either out loud or in my head, or writing it down, whether here on the forum or in my notebook.

Keep plugging away!

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by ontheedgeman - 30 May 2011 01:07

Motzei Shabbat is very difficult for me too. Not in terms of p* or anything, but just depression-wise. I think the addiction is a manifestation of a deep sadness, and it's a way to numb that sadness. At a higher spiritual level, yes, we are all spiritually sad that shabbat has departed. For addicts this sadness is more profound and is dealt with differently. While we may not be responsible for our illness, we are responsible for our cure. And this means getting out for Melava Malka at all costs. Making sure to go out and find a group. Even if it's a sad group trying to get happy. But be part of that group.

Incidentally I just finished reading R. Kook at Penitence. I cried. He speaks the language, he speaks a holy truth on this.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by nezach - 30 May 2011 10:40

It has been coming on, I have felt the triggers. Trying to do some work but as always difficult to focus. I have been bored and feeling lonely, which I why I have just been struggling with the internet. normally the LA kicks me into the worst type of 'images', I have been looking at local escorts for a few minutes. so yes I saw some unsuitable images and fantasies, but I managed to pull myself together. this is not who I am or what my life is for. get real. I am not upset that I slipped a little, what is much more important is that I realised a sense of 'reality', what it is that I really want (and don't want). It is much more important to stay focused and determined. I am still sick, and that is painful. However, we can heal each and every one of us. we need to strengthen our resolve to break free. I have never in my life had such strong temptation for 'escorts' etc. It is soo low, and I have dignity. it was a momentary thought, a fantasy. but once we recall what life can be, once we draw a picture in our mind that by stopping this selfish behaviour we can go on a create an amazing life. may Hashem help us to do this.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by lamAdam - 30 May 2011 17:10

The White Book helped me recognize an important differentiation between lust and sex. Lust drives me to act out sexually, yes, but I want sex to be something very specific (between me and one woman, within marriage, respectful, all sorts of other things that I'll figure it out when I'm halfway mature enough to consider marriage!). Lust, on the other hand, is not at all specific and has NO BOUNDARIES! It doesn't respect my religion, my money, my relationships with other people, my relationship with Hashem or my dignity as a human being and a Jew. My acting out could have EASILY progressed to paying for escorts or worse, and it still could!

Your last words -- "may Hashem help us to do this" -- are such a fantastic reminder to me that even though I get hit with triggers, boredom and loneliness all the time, Hashem helps me to do what I can to make today great. "We CAN go on and create an amazing life." Yes!

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by ontheedgeman - 02 Jun 2011 15:16

Wow - lamAdam - amazing reply. Thanks for that.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by nezach - 14 Jun 2011 22:18

Thanks for your replies, it is appreciated. It is true that lust is more of a fantasy which has no boundaries. this reminds me of the beauty of halacha, it is a framework which helps us to live a full and meaningful life, and not living in the desert like our ancestors did around the time of matan Torah.

I have had a difficult few days. It feels like my life is starting to fit into place, and yet I am sad. how strange. some introspection is telling me that I am somewhat scared of failure; past experiences is that as things progress, I end up taking a couple of steps back. and although I have experienced this so many times, I have fear of disappointment. and that is ok. Its fine to be human, there is nothing wrong with that. Hashem has blessed me with what to focus on, new priorities and opportunities.

wow I am so blessed.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by alexeliezer - 15 Jun 2011 19:24

I want to share a few thoughts about sadness.

Sometimes I have felt sad because I was letting a part of me (Lust) go.

Sometimes I felt sad because I miss the heat of the struggle. (I know that sounds crazy)

And sad because of all the time I wasted.

And sad because it's scary that I might never have recovered, but fortunately did.

And sad because life is now soo sweet, but all things come to an end.

But I don't let sadness stay for long. Positive thoughts chase the sadness right out. Life is too sweet and wonderful, and the world is so beautiful. And we are so blessed.

Have a good day! :D

Alex

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by musicman - 15 Jun 2011 20:22

[alexeliezer wrote on 15 Jun 2011 19:24:](#)

Sometimes I have felt sad because I was letting a part of me (Lust) go.

This is a hard emotion to deal with. I struggle with it too.

Sometimes you have to amputate a limb to save the body. While you should be happy that your life is being saved, you can't get away from the stark reality that that limb was a part of you, and it's sad to not have it anymore.

But when you realize that the very fact that it was such a part of you is way it was a problem in the first place, you start to see it in a healthier perspective.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by nezach - 17 Jul 2011 13:26

I have not written in over a month or so, and would like to update you with my achievement.

Boruch Hashem, I am doing well, healthy, happy with plenty of progress. I have been absolutely clean for about 6/7 weeks; a couple of slack moments but nothing for me to worry about. I feel so 'free' and relaxed from all previously anxieties. i do occasionally think back or reflect on my 'past life', and instead of feeling sad I am enjoying the fact that Hashem has blessed me and helping me so much. it is a great simcha, and a lot of good things have happened in my life including meeting someone who I am sure is my future wife. there is a long way to go, although the goal is to keep re-building a foundation.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by nezach - 24 Jul 2011 14:17

I had slipped up, to my regret. I have been much stronger on general guarding of eyes, but this time it was m/b. It was a strange and dilusional motive which I'm not even going to bother

excusing. It was more like the heat of the moment, after many consequent successes. Unfortunately, it was a reminder that I am still human and although experienced great progress, I have not hit the 90 day mark and there is plenty of work still to do; it was probably complacency the cost me..and how it has done so! I must re gain focus and bounce back..head high because I am still doing teshuvah. may Hashem have rachamim on us all and help us to achieve our goals.

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Re: My thoughts - Nezach

Posted by alexeliezer - 24 Jul 2011 16:00

Sneaky fellow, the YH. You're doing fine. Don't let a slip drag you down. Learn and move on. Right back up like it didn't happen.

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