

Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by E-Tek - 17 May 2012 23:00

Editing this post with info from my original thread by way of introduction.

Hello all.

I've been lurking for some time now, I figured I'll give a shout out. The name of my game is shpiegel- I'll just tell you all what I've been telling myself, to better affect myself. Introductions later, I really have to run to seder soon.

R' Leib Kelemen says over (B'Sheim Omro, don't forget!) that R' Chaim Vital writes: He was have a conversation with his Rebbe, the Arizal, and he asked him why the Arizal keeps saying that he (R' Chaim Vital) has a special neshoma. "We, who do not reach the toenails of the previous generation, can't possibly be considered special compared to those that have come before us."

The Arizal answered, because in every generation it is far more difficult to do the right thing, because of the forces arrayed against us, we cannot judge ourselves by our accomplishments. Rather, if we are anywhere near the previous generations in our activities, it means far more than it appears to mean, because the fight is tougher. On that scale, concluded the Arizal, you have a special neshoma.

Concludes R' Leib- in our generation the fight has become nigh on impossible. But if we realize how much we accomplish by simply considering ourselves part of the fight, and a kal v'chomer if we are succeeding to any extent at all- well then, Moshiach should be here any day!!

We are the generation to bring Moshiach, there's no doubt about it. And the proof is what we are up against.

Okay, and now to introduce myself.

I'm twenty(mumble) years old, and I've had this addiction since I was 14. When I was 16 or so, I learned it was bad (although if I had been honest, I knew from the start it wasn't quite right). I made several conscious efforts throughout my teens to stop, without very much success. Emotionally, I went from determined to depressed to ambivalent. About two years ago I started making more efforts on a very basic level- More of the "what" in Yiddishkeit than the "why". This path seemed to work for me- I took my intellectual knowledge I had gained and used it to make a long-term decision to physically remove myself from, well, everything. And all of a sudden, I found I was able to think straight. (I know, this phenomenon is common here.) I made an absolute ton of small steps to keep myself headed in the right direction, and the sum-total of all those has made me a different person. The most fundamental of those changes is a day-to-day, personal, emotional relationship with the Rebono Shel Olam.

I found out about the website a little less than three years ago, and kept it in my inbox until I was ready to work on myself. (It takes a certain emotional maturity to make a commitment, no? I was still a kid.) Started working with some success before I got a chance to start lurking here, but this site seems to be turbocharging my efforts.

I have not finished the handbook- I'm reading it slowly and deliberately. During the zman I spend less time working on this and more time keeping too busy with good things. Use the

Yetzer Hora's ANTI-THINK device against him, and all that.

Hatzlocha to all! Thanks for listening.

I'm posting to get some hugs, basically.

I'm lucky in that I'm sending my computer in for repairs, so I'll have some breathing room. I'm also going to focus on the handbook material, and think about a nusach for Taphsic. There is my parent's K-9 and password computer, so I'll be on, but not more often than daily.

Sigh... Sheva Yipol Tzadik Vokom, eh? The difference between a Tzadik and a Rosha is how many times they get up after falling... So here's for a new count. The old one netted me 4 days. That's about average for a serious try, but not for one I make in the States. So there is that. So, I fell big time today...

Thanks for listening.

Meir

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by E-Tek - 24 Aug 2012 13:57

And the message WAS appreciated by more than one GYE member.

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by Shteeble - 24 Aug 2012 14:26

Dear Meir,

kutgw.

back on the truck.

keep working your program.

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 24 Aug 2012 15:17

Meir,

Sorry to hear of your fall. But 2 months is great run, and I know how much effort you put into it. Be proud!! And use the memory of that wonderful time to get back up. You can have that again, and much more.

And I have also had such feelings when finding out that a good friend had a fall. Especially those who struggle the way I do. It can be so discouraging and depressing. But as RT says, we need to use it to push us forward, not to drag us down.

Now get back to trucking!!!

Have a great and productive Zman and a Ksiva Vachasima Tova!

Gevura!

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by E-Tek - 24 Aug 2012 17:38

Yasher Koach, everyone.

Have an awesome, clean, relaxed, peaceful Shabbos!!!

Meir

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...
Posted by rt - 25 Aug 2012 21:30

Shkoyach RT for that gevaldige pshat!

Hafoch boh vehafoch boh dekulo boh.

Takes a GYE member to come up with such amkusdikeh pshat, and takes another GYE member to really appreciate it's message.

Dear MT, if You wouldn't be such a serious guy (at least I got that impression) I would think it's irony. What was "amkusdik" in this little haore? I mean, that it can give a little bit chizzuk, well

A gitte voch chevra.

Hope you had a nice shabbes.

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 27 Aug 2012 14:09

Dear RT,

The amkus that you revealed (perhaps without realizing) is that poshut pshat is that the shayla was whether such hair is considered ervah, and the reply was that it is not ervah, it's only a bit of hair. But the way you put it down, the shayla and tshuva goes much deeper. i.e. the shayla was, should we consider such hair ervah, because one may dwell on it and be triggered by it.

And the reply was, if you have the right attitude you won't get triggered - "hair shmair, trigger shmigger",

just keep trucking and ignore those narishkeit.

So tell me isn't that amkus? It may very well be the secret to success in our everyday struggles.

Kol tuv

MT

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...
Posted by rt - 28 Aug 2012 11:36

perhaps without realizing

yep. that's how it was.

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...
Posted by E-Tek - 03 Sep 2012 23:40

Dear friends,

I have been composing this message for over a week, thinking about what to say to you folks.

I fell for the first time on my 60 day streak on Thursday the 23rd of August. I battled with myself all weekend, fell again Motzei Shabbos, dusted myself off, and spoke to my Rebbe (a Taphsic consequence). For a week I did nothing different, falling as a consequence on the following Thursday night and Friday. The above falls were fantasy and masturbation. The fall Motzei Shabbos was full-blown erotica.

During this entire period, I was introspecting about what happened, what led to it, and what I can do differently. I obviously wasn't thinking enough, and so I finally sat down to write this in the hopes that I will get somewhere further.

I am under a lot of pressure right now. In Chinese, they call that life. An addict seeks to escape when faced with life. This is definitely part of the answer, but certainly not all of it.

I recently learned of someone with an internet addiction. The pressure to be "Fixed" increased manifold. My mother told me this, knowing that I have a serious problem but not thinking it was as bad as him, apparently in the hopes that I would be even more motivated to do the right thing. What she doesn't know is that Judaism provides enough motivation, but addiction couldn't care less about your motivations or logical thinking. However, it certainly does move when one is pressured! That too contributed.

What else? Sometime into the count, maybe a month or so in, my system switched from positive, rooted in being busy doing the right things, to negative, rooted in my taphsic consequence. I wasn't sure why then, and I'm still not sure why now. Did I stop reading material? Well, maybe I slowed down. Did I stop posting? Maybe I slowed down. Did I stop communicating by phone and text to those people I have numbers for? Same answer. But what came first, the chicken or the egg? Did I slow down because my sobriety was negative, or was my sobriety negative because I slowed down? Regardless, this, I suspect as being the primary reason that the above even affected me at all.

Another thought- my sobriety suffered during bein hazmanim specifically (This being my FIRST bein hazmanim that I was sober). During that time, the sobriety was technical at best, if I didn't outright rationalize a genuine fall as being a slip, too worried about my precious count to admit it. Maybe. It certainly could be. But during the zman, my structured schedule kept me sane. This fits with what my Rebbe told me this morning when I discussed it with him, and of course Dov says this all the time- "Medaf zein ah mentch." First I need to be normal, than I can deal with lust on the right foot. Indeed, during this time, and especially the time before and during the falls, my davening with a minyan suffered, my chavrusa shafts suffered, I was even tempted time and again not to put on tefillin (and B"H, I did not fall with this), something I haven't been tempted to do for nearly a year now, even though there were times that I didn't care enough to even put on tefillin. As I mentioned in early posts of mine, and I apparently needed to remind myself, my progress leads from someone who's entire life was a fantasy, and who's real life was a TOTAL sham, to someone who's life is rooted in reality, and does what he acts like. It's been a long ride, and the final holdout was masturbation and any related lust-like activity (ie erotica and porn). It is still deeply rooted in me, will probably be forever, and it hits WHEN I SLIP OUT OF REALITY into fantasy. The Meir who lives in reality may be tempted to lust, but he is motivated to daven for help, to reach out to friends, to endure stress. The Meir who fantasizes about anything that is not reality- ANYTHING- he is living in negative sobriety, and may as well not be sober.

Both of those people are me. I hope to put one of them behind me, primarily because whoever marries me will marry the person I act like, and I will be unable to bear the hypocrisy of being someone else.

So what am I committing to now? I am committing to fulfilling my responsibilities one day at a time, talking to Hashem and staying connected through the forum and my cell phone to people like me, and to being sane as much as possible.

Thank you for listening.

Meir

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by mifatfait - 04 Sep 2012 07:33

Hey Brother,

Take a chill, make yourself (and me) some coffee, and I'll give you some great advice straight from the peanut gallery.

You fell. You know why? cause your'e addicted to lust like me, and simply can't stop staring and fantasizing (also like me, are we twins?). It's that simple.

So what to do? Nothing, not because this isn't important, but because nothing's gonna work.

Instead, well you know the whole thing, just stay far away from him and when he comes daven to Hashem to save you. In the last 2 months I've been doing this full force, it's simply amazing how when I'm not relying on myself to save myself, big huge mountains crumble away. I still fell a bit, but get up right away, cause every day is a new oppurtunity to not fight. One day at a time.

I really don't like giving advice cause I myself amn't completely sober yet, so I can only share what has helped me. So all I can say is that the day I stopped with figuring out how I'm gonna fix myself is the day that I started recovering (I think, time will tell).

I'll send ya a PM with some more 2 cents.

All the best!!!

(oh, and thanks for putting me in your headline, that really touches my heart... (and ego...))

Chaim

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by rt - 04 Sep 2012 11:22

feel your pain, Meir

chazak veematz

rT

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 04 Sep 2012 14:07

[E-Tek wrote on 03 Sep 2012 23:40:](#)

...So what am I committing to now? I am committing to fulfilling my responsibilities one day at a time, talking to Hashem and staying connected through the forum and my cell phone to people like me, and to being sane as much as possible.

Reminds me a bit of my first post on GYE:

...The following is my 3-point plan, based on what I learned on this forum.

I am using a Mishne in Pirkei Avos to remember these 3 points:

Im ein ani li mi li - I must avoid all forms of lustful images and thoughts at all times.

Uchshe'ani le'atzmi moh ani - I must surrender my lust to Hashem and pray and ask for his help.

Ve'im lo achshav eimosai - Forget about yesterday or tomorrow - one day at a time.

Hatzlacha!

MT

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by Shteeble - 05 Sep 2012 16:07

on with the program

kutgw

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by Dov - 05 Sep 2012 19:45

1- Get help, don't play with doing it alone, and keep working real steps.

2- You are doing great, actually.

3- So think about 1.

- Dov

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Re: Not Counting... But Anyway...

Posted by E-Tek - 06 Sep 2012 00:12

#2 was just the ego boost I needed, actually.

I'd like to publicly thank those who replied, whether here, by PM, or both. I believe all of your advice is relevant, and there were no stiras.

I was working on my motivations for doing this. It's certainly one of the things missing, and I *think* I had it before, so...

I came up with this. It seems to be the style to advertise in people's faces, for greater effect (one way or the other), and not necessarily politely.

One of my Rebbeim said that when preparing for Rosh HaShona, I should pick one thing that if improved a mere 5%, my entire being will change for the better. Just one, he said. Spend two weeks if necessary to figure out what it is.. By this time I had zoned out, because, fellas, this is it. And so the ad follows.

Go on, check it out, I'll wait...

Making this helped me put this in perspective.

Have a pleasant day, everybody.

Meir

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