

1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 22 Oct 2009 05:26

howdy gentlemen.

I've been lurking around this site for about a month now (thank you anonymous yid for emailing me!) and i figure its finally time i post a bit about my experiences.

i just made it to level 3 in the 90 day journey. i'm 14 days clean! a record for the past 12 months, yishtabach shemo ;D ;D ;D

my main problems seem to be the r"l standard P and M issues. i'm in my lower 20s, single, in college.

steps i've taken that are working great so far:

1. working through the 2 handbooks
2. stepping out of the room and praying for 10 seconds if inappropriate content appears on my screen, no matter how it got there.
3. daily emails
4. daily 5 minute seder in Esah Einai, a new sefer on shmiras enayim
5. prozac (been on for a year)
6. weekly appointment with therapist, discussing this among other issues
7. keeping the door open when web surfing in room by myself
8. internet filter
9. praying for help with these issues, for myself and klal yisroel
10. helping a friend work out his issues in these areas

11. reading through these forums and seeing holy jews in much worse situations break free!
what a geshmak to see how much hope there is!

12. keeping track on the 90 day program

13. trying to watch my eyes outside in general

ok. holy cow. thats a long list. this is really my number one priority right now. and its working!!!

here's where i can use some advice:

historically, i'd fall 1-2 times a week. getting to a week clean is a challenge. when i do get there once in a while, i tend to fall on that very day. sometimes i'll tell myself "wow! you've made it a whole week! and you're feeling totally in control!" and shortly after, i'll fall.

last Tishrei, i went a whole month clean (first time in over 5 years!!!!!!!!!!) and fell like on day 31.

i've come up with 2 possible explanations for this pattern of falling after milestones:

1. i feel like i'm in control, so i let down my guard, allowing the yetzer to strike.
2. i feel like i've accomplished something, so i 'reward' myself with pleasure

so how do i combat this pattern?

i've made it 2 weeks now pretty bump-free, yishtabach shemo. probably because of the constant chizuk i'm getting throughout the day (see list above).

here's my fear:

i'll hit 30 days, and fall back. c'v. or maybe even 90, and fall back.

how do i break this pattern? anyone with similar experience?

thank you so much. i love all of you. and i pray that you'll all break free.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bardichev - 24 Dec 2009 06:03

Bahava

As we truckers say

"No matter what road u take as long as you got here"

Keep on trucking!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 25 Dec 2009 01:01

The past 24 hours have been rough.

I did really poorly on a bechinah.

And I slipped like 4 times.

And I was it with a rush of feelings from a breakup I still haven't gotten over yet.

The next few days will be tough. Not much work to keep me busy. Not much structure at all really.

But I'm hanging in there. Heading out now (to a shiur, relax!) to avoid driving myself crazy.

Also, yesterday's email was great. I'm posting it here for safe keeping.

Thanks, again, for all the help.

A beautiful parable from the Ba'al Hasulam:

A king once had a good friend whom he hadn't seen in many years. When this friend finally returned, the king was so happy to see him that he told his treasurer to take his friend - who happened to be a pauper - to the royal treasury, and to give him one hour to take as much money as he wanted! So they brought him into the treasury and gave him a bag, which the poor man proceeded to fill with gold coins until the bag could hold no more. Full of gratitude and happiness, the poor man began to leave, but as soon as he stepped out of the door, the guards gave the bag a big kick and all the coins spilled onto the floor. The man was distraught, but he looked at his watch and saw that he had still had plenty of time until his hour was up, so he quickly returned to the treasury and began to refill the bag with coins. But when it was full and he tried to leave, once again the guards gave the bag a big kick and everything went flying. The man was at his wits end, but seeing that he still had more time, he refused to give up and he went back in and tried to fill the bag

yet again.

But the same scenario repeated itself over and over. The guards kept kicking the bag of coins and causing everything to spill, until the poor man was sure that he was simply wasting him time.

Finally the hour was up, and the guards dragged the poor man out of the room with his bag barely half full.

But suddenly, the poor man looks up and he sees a wagon over loaded with gold coins standing before him. And as he stands there wondering for whom all that money is intended, he sees the king coming to greet him with a big smile. And the king tells him that the entire wagon load of gold coins belongs to him, explaining that he had commanded the guards to make him lose his coins each time, so that he would manage to gather up so much more in the one hour that he had!

And so it is with our life on this world. Often after we have made good progress and our bag is "full", Hashem commands the guards to give us a kick and we lose everything. Hashem does this purposefully so that we can keep filling up the bag again and again, but the foolish man thinks that all his work is in vain and he simply gives up trying. However, the wise man knows that he hasn't lost anything from his previous efforts, and he starts over again and again from scratch - with JOY.

And if we follow the path of the wise man, when our time is up and we come to the next world, we will see a huge pile of spiritual "gold coins" waiting for us from the progress that we had made each and every time we started over again!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 25 Dec 2009 06:56

I head some nice stuff from the Ktav Sofer tonight that explains some of my behavior after my fall this week.

When Yaakov goes down to Egypt and finally sees Yosef, it says "va'yevkh al tzavarav od," that Yosef cried on Yaakov's neck. Rashi explains that the word 'od' means that he cried more than the regular amount.

The Ktav Sofer explains that Yosef cried double, for 2 reasons. The first being the obvious and natural cry of joy, for reuniting with his father after all those years. The second, though, was a cry of sadness, for all the years that he missed the guidance of his father.

But why was he crying over the missed years now? That part his life was done with! If anything, he should have cried davka when Yaakov was NOT there!

The Ktav Sofer answers that only when Yosef saw Yaakov again could he really understand what he missed out on all those years. You see, all the years of separation made Yosef forget about how much he would have gained from his father. He had become numb, unable to understand the greatness of Yaakov. Only now, when Yosef once again realized what was lacking in his life, could he cry.

Similarly, the Jewish people will shed tears of sadness with the coming of Mashiach. "Im lo a'aleh et Yerushalayim al rosh simchati" – The rosh simcha of the coming of the Mashiach is when we will fully understand how terrible the galus has been, how much we are lacking Yerushalayim.

This hit home for me because I cried over a sin for the first time in my life after my fall this week. I've always felt terrible about my falls, and it always bothered me why I couldn't cry.

Based on this Ktav Sofer, I see that over the past 8 years, the Yetzer Harah had me in his clutches, and he made me numb to the feeling of kedusha and tahara. I had forgotten what it meant to live a life of purity.

Thank God, I was zocheh to 74 days of cleanliness. And the feelings came back.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by Kollel Guy - 25 Dec 2009 07:48

[b'ahava wrote on 25 Dec 2009 06:56:](#)

Thank God, I was zocheh to 74 days of cleanliness. And the feelings came back.

That's the attitude, Rock on Bahavah!!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by imtrying25 - 25 Dec 2009 10:25

With love my holy brother. Dont look at this weekend and say.....Its gonna be so hard. Ypu gotta live in the now. Everysecond just think right now what am i doing. Right ow i dont wanna do whats wriong. What will be will be. But only think about the now. Take it one second at a :D
But please dont break it. It only goes one step at a time. Good shabbos my holy loving brother.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by the.guard - 25 Dec 2009 11:35

Very nice vort... A wise man once posted the following:

Here's a great vort that I heard from a Rosh Yeshiva of mine on this week's parsha, Va'Yishlach. I think it can help us all in our attitude towards this challenge.

When Yaakov demands a bracha from the angel of Esav, the angel names him Yisrael "ki sarita im elokim v'im anashim va'tuchal - because you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed."

The question is, why wasn't his name changed to tuchal? Wasn't the victory of Yaakov that he succeeded?

The parsha is teaching us, that the focus is not the result, not the fact that Yaakov succeeded in his struggle. Rather, the focus must be the struggle itself.

Yaakov's bracha was based on the fact that he struggled, that he cared, that he really wanted to do something. The results were out his hands. The results were given to him as a gift by the Creator because he cared.

Now we can understand why this was manifest in a change in his name. His very identity, and the identity of his children forever, is based on the fact that he struggles to improve, and not the results.

And this is the true bracha to klal yisrael.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by imtrying25 - 25 Dec 2009 11:40

B"H this forum is getting to big even for Guard himself. That vort was posted TWICE on this forum. And B"H the forum is to big for me to go and find it for you, but trust me dear Guardster,
:D

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
its there
Posted by imtrying25 - 25 Dec 2009 11:42

OMG!!!! OMG!!!! In my old age im not taking things in the slow pace i used to. If i would of only read the first line..... Ok back to the walker for me. And im not erasing what i wrote so i can get the Bushos that i deserve. :-[

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by the.guard - 25 Dec 2009 12:56

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by Dov - 25 Dec 2009 14:31

...and who ***isn't*** b'ahava here?

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back
Posted by Momo - 27 Dec 2009 08:29

YOU ARE SOMEBODY SPECIAL!!!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 27 Dec 2009 22:43

Well.

I thought I had hit rock bottom. I thought I had snapped out of it.

But I fell again last night.

I don't want to get back on this roller coaster to emotional hell.

I don't want to be depressed.

I don't want to be numb to life.

So I'll try again.

I was right before. The fact that I'm even struggling with this is a big deal. It's something to be proud of. It's a reason enough not to be depressed.

So I guess I'm back.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by the.guard - 28 Dec 2009 12:45

The fact that I'm even struggling with this is a big deal. It's something to be proud of. It's a reason enough not to be depressed.

If this outlook works for you, and you get free - GREAT.

But if Chas Veshalom you keep experiencing falls, you might have to change your attitude to the way Dov sees it. Instead of looking at the struggle as a big deal, we ignore the struggle - cuz we can't deal with lust at all, and turn our focus OUTWARD. See Chizuk e-mail #667.

With time, you'll find what approach works best for you. (It depends of the level of addiction).

Be well, my friend.

You have a great soul,

and **regardless** of what approach you take,

getting out of this will bring you much closer to Hashem.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by imtrying25 - 29 Dec 2009 23:12

Hows my very loving brother b'ahava doing?? We miss you bro.

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