

Life

Posted by shmirashachaim - 16 Oct 2016 19:18

Hello everyone

I'm not making a new user name this time rather a new thread. A new beginning. Haven't written anything for a while but have been snooping around. A lot has happened in the last few months but not up to writing about it. No matter how painful life seems, no matter how much hell I am in, I look forward to a happy life, a good life, and a meaningful life.

I am starting a new period now and it will be extremely challenging. I hope- no will, learn and implement what I learn, in order that I can have that fulfilling and meaningful life that I have always wanted.

Lust isn't just wrong. It ruins everything. I am committed for today to GUARD MY LIFE. One day hopefully I can enjoy life. Doesn't seem like it right now but living in the future isn't living. The past, at least for now, is impossible to leave and it will haunt me for a long long time, but I need to leave the future and not let that haunt me as well. I need to live in the present, no matter how hard and painful it may be, and- without taking the destructive escape route of lust, take the next best step, one day at a time.

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Re: Life

Posted by Markz - 08 May 2017 01:01

[shmirashachaim wrote on 08 May 2017 00:52:](#)

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 07 May 2017 04:55:](#)

Shmira, welcome back to GYE. Some food for thought. Maybe you came back to help others.

That is something to think about. But not for too long. Otherwise I get ahead of myself and try to help others before I helped myself to a level where I can help others in a way that is appropriate in relation to the level I have helped myself.

I am here to help myself; perhaps included in that is to help others. But the former must be at

least the focus if I want the later to one day be the focus. Otherwise the former nor the later will never truly get anywhere. Does that make sense?

Yup

A comment of greatness!

[In Sig, Cordnoy wrote:](#)

Disclaimer: I am not a cheerleader; B"H, there are many on the site. I am here to change myself, and with God's help, by some mistake, I might even help change others

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Re: Life
Posted by Singularity - 09 May 2017 11:10

welcome back!!!

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Re: Life
Posted by shmirashachaim - 12 Jan 2018 14:52

Hello everyone. I have rarely been on GYE until recently. I decided a while ago to be on more

often, but I haven't had much of a chance to access it,. This is on top of old (but not sure how logical) inhibitions to do so as well.

I wanted to share something that happened a few weeks ago. At that time, I was in another rut. Lust was creeping in for days. Not lust in all its glory, but the (not-too-) subtle feelings that often precede it. It is during such times that any major trigger could easily lead to a bad ending. And a major trigger did indeed come my way this time.

It's been a while since I had a substantial amount of time on my hands with internet. So, I decided to take the opportunity to get my feet wet with GYE again. After skimming through some of the threads and responding to some posts, I headed over to the video section and began one of the 'inspirational' captioned ones. I can be a pretty emotional guy and watching it affected me. I teared up. I felt a rare morsel of inspiration. But this time I cried not only from the actual content in the video, but partially from the reminder that for the most part my life has been bereft of the themes of giving, meaning, and goodness portrayed in the video.

And that's when it happened: my covenant eyes (which acts as a filter as well) stopped working. It has happened before, and it is extremely annoying (or convenient depending on how you look at it). I have a bad history with filters and getting through one is a huge trigger for me. Now, it is true that a couple of those times in the past I (semi-) calmly restarted my computer. But that was when I was 'doing ok'. Not when I'm in a rut, as I was in this time. Me in a rut and malfunctioning internet filter are not a good combo. And here I was in a rut with free reign on my computer. Yip-pee.

So naturally, my fingers did their conditioned response to make sure that covenant eyes was indeed not working. Check. Then they continued on by clicking the incognito window tab. And then I broke down and cried. Why did I cry? I cried because the stark difference between the emotions generated by the video on GYE and the feelings that rushed in afterwards was too apparent. The quick and natural transition from the first video about giving, meaning, and goodness, to the rush for things that, at least in my mind, are the epitome of everything opposite, shook me. It showed me clearly how a little inspiration could be snuffed out. I stopped. I breathed. I actually was able to have a coherent conversation with the rush of hormones and dopamine that were waiting impatiently to enter fantasy land on the Google train. I told them through my tears that I don't want this. I told them that this was not me. That I can be better. That I can let go, at least this once, of the obligation to press the progression of keys that seem to be so engrained in my fingers during these rushed moments. I restarted my computer. Covenant eyes restarted. My day didn't end in defeat.

What happened a few weeks ago was the pouring out of an awareness that's often present on some level. Sometimes it is in the distant recesses of my mind while sometimes it's at the forefront of my attention. But the realization that my life lacks giving, meaning, and goodness, and the frustration by the dichotomy of my desires is an "epiphany" that I live with often. These feelings are probably not unique; many likely share them as well. But I don't think that negates my suffering, and it doesn't either negate my inability to come to terms with the confusing fact that I am both neshama and guf.

But I guess the aftermath gave me a sense of control, and the past few weeks have been a little brighter. There were a couple days with some feelings of lust, but I got through them. I think that emotional incident and coming out clean somehow jump-started me out of the rut I was in.

However, I know that I can't write or think my way out of this, and I don't think GYE videos will make the cut either. I am still trying to find what will.

Hope to share more soon.

Thanks and have good shabbas,

Shmira

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Re: Life
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 12 Jan 2018 15:55

Wow!!

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Re: Life

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 12 Jan 2018 17:36

Wow, gadlus! May Hashem protect you and help you grow and thrive. I am humbled by your sincerity, your hergeishim, and your clarity. A massive inspiration for all of us.

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Re: Life

Posted by cordnoy - 12 Jan 2018 19:01

Nice.

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Re: Life

Posted by shmiraachaim - 10 Apr 2018 22:08

Hello. Here I am again.

I never explicitly related over here what happened with me, and as I'm barely on the forum (I really should re-introduce myself by now) there aren't many around who would *chap*.

I'm divorced.

That's my story.

It's a story that's too personal and that has too many details for this forum, but I will try to express myself in a way that is hopefully appropriate enough. Although I would have said that the story is over, I am here, writing, breathing, so apparently it is not. It is not a pleasant story. Not that my life has been all marshmallow until the divorce, and many of the things that I struggle with now aren't new to the narrative. But it's obviously not the same. Hell earned itself a new meaning.

After the divorce I plunged myself back into Yeshiva, took a break from college when the opportunity arose, and started a once-a-week phone call with an addictions therapist. But things

didn't get better.

I was broken, confused, angry, dejected, ashamed. I was full of self-doubt. Concepts that used to be self-evident and naturally part of my life and goals, such as giving, meaning, and goodness, crumbled into pitiful ambiguities.

I couldn't come to terms with what I did, what I went through, and what I lost. I usually was either tied up with the past, bogged down with the present, or trying to run away from everything altogether. Life was so confusing, so sick, so bleak.

The acting out continued, and life wasn't getting any rosier. My attitude towards acting-out even changed. I still didn't like the fact that I couldn't control my behavior, but I started to cave in at one point. I started becoming less agitated by my acting out, and the behaviors became more natural and more frequent.

Yet I never went all out. I didn't want it to be this way. Eventually, I decided that I needed a fresh start and went to Israel. I couldn't see a future and I wasn't sure why I should even see a future. I wasn't sure what direction I was going. But as I was making plans for the winter, I decided that I must recommit a serious attempt to be sober, hoping that sobriety would bring some sort of stability. I didn't know what life would bring me. But I figured that I needed to just get to a stable place and take it from there.

I was anticipating some change in Israel; for various reasons it was a healthier setup for me than in the last place. And indeed, I felt better there. But in general, things were pretty frustrating. Difficulty getting Chavrusahs and a *dirta* were the least of it. I went to a new and much anticipated therapist (a pretty well-known one who cost a pretty penny), but after some discussion with others and some debate, I decided to drop him. Even after my recommitment and me trying new things, it just took one filter malfunction to fall. Life was still, for the most part, dreary, despairing, and dead.

Chanukah rolled around. Once again, I acted out a few times after a very trying, not *stam* situation. Things were pretty low for me at that point. Time was moving along while I was not. But I plugged on. It's hard to really explain why, although the experience that I posted about last time did stir something within me. I put myself once again into therapy. I put myself in a program that my therapist said can help me. It wasn't smooth sailing. Among other things, my schedule wasn't easy; I couldn't get my ADHD medication (which not only helps with concentration and consistency, but just as well- believe it or not); and although I didn't act out, lust made its appearance here and there, making things very difficult at times. But, I somehow pulled through, and before I knew it, winter came to an end.

I think I'm in a different place since before this past winter. I can't say that I have the "giving, meaning, and goodness" that I desired and thought I once had, and I don't know if I ever will. But recently, I have tried to not let the questions and doubts take over my life. I've been focusing, at least for the time being, on being part of the life that I have. I have the most adorable nieces and nephews (completely unbiased by the way). I love being with them. I still have a family who cares about me, and although I mostly take from them, I can try to help them in small albeit seemingly insignificant ways. There are other ways that I can do good, albeit the

smallness of that ability and the doubtful motives behind them. There are parts of me that are quite ugly. I am embracing them and appreciating that these parts can help me grow (at least I hope). There is nothing ugly about an angel, yet an angel cannot grow. Man has ugly parts to him, yet those parts are what make him great.

I am still carrying a lot of pain. I am still not beyond my past and I still have questions about myself. But I have been trying to recognize that not every aspect of life is terrible- that there is some good in life. For some time now, I have been trying to drill into my closed mind and my hardened heart that grief doesn't have to be pervasive. I can enjoy things- even if they seem trivial. I can be amused by a silly nephew. I can sit with a nice cup of wine (no. Not Woodford). I can enjoy a kumzitz. I also have been trying to sit with the 'bad' in my life by not getting absorbed by- or running away from, certain thoughts, feelings, and moods. Yes. Things suck. And that's life (or my life for that matter). But I needed to see how I can let the pain be and not let it take over me or let myself run away from it. I don't know if this a matter of "being positive". I'm not sure. But for now, I would say that it is a matter of reality. The reality is that there is pain and that there is happiness. I have been trying not to make the pain more than it is and I've been admitting that there is good in my life- that I can, at least for the moment, feel happiness.

My family tells me that I look like I'm finally doing ok. But I don't think it's that simple. Things have been going well these past months, and I'm grateful for that. I have been clean. I feel a little more settled. But I wouldn't necessarily say that "I'm ok". I have been clean for the longest time since the divorce (17-and- a-half weeks- yes, it's funny that I say it like a child who insists he is not four but four and a *half*), but I'm still not confident that I'm in a good place in that regard (I hope to post about that soon). The dreams that I had, once shattered, are now only fragments that make those dreams seem more like fantasies. Although at times I feel settled, I am not settled. Although at times I feel happiness, I am not happy.

You might be wondering if acting out had anything to do with the divorce. It wouldn't give it justice to say that these behaviors were the only thing, but it definitely was the beginning of it and it was entangled with it the whole time. That being said, I'm going to end by taking this opportunity to give a word of caution: please don't screw around with yours or anybody else's life. If you think you might have a serious problem with acting out (or I guess any problem for that matter), I suggest that you seek guidance before you make drastic decisions, such as marriage. Yes. There are many wonderful stories out there where the couple get through the rough patches and live beautiful and wonderful lives, and if someone is married and is reading this, I'll invite him to read those many wonderful stories and not give up hope. But if someone is considering marriage, I invite them to really think long and hard before they bring the one person in the world that they are supposed to take care of into their potential mess. If you are reading this, then that means you at least think that you *might* have or had a mess, so perhaps such decisions from there should be made with help from others. I don't know who. A Rebbi or a therapist is probably a good idea. A GYE'er. Someone. Don't let yourself rationalize yourself out of it. It's not worth it. Besides for the simple fact that there is a good chance that you are putting an innocent person in a lot of pain, there are times where it doesn't work out fine. Some get divorced. Others, I think it can be assumed, stay married but still don't work it out. Either way is not frolicking in the meadow. So, why bring unnecessary pain?

I don't want to scare anyone unnecessarily. So, you should know that, coming from something very personal, this is likely a very one-sided view. I am no expert. I am not a guidance

counselor. I am just someone who for whatever reason feels that I should say this. Maybe I shouldn't have said anything. I don't know. If anyone thinks I'm leaving something out or that I should have expressed this differently, please don't hesitate because you feel bad for me. I won't be offended.

I'll end here. This was a long and perhaps vague post, but I tried my best.

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Re: Life
Posted by Markz - 10 Apr 2018 22:35

That is sad real real real tough!

All I have to offer is a shoulder.

Havent heard from you for long time. I hope the light shines brighter for you as time moves on!!!

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Re: Life
Posted by shmishachaim - 11 Apr 2018 03:28

Thanks. You seem to always be there Mark. A big shoulder indeed.

Yes. I know. I try to be on more often but I have the worst mazal when it comes to this forum. Will keep on trying though.

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Re: Life
Posted by shmishachaim - 11 Apr 2018 03:30

For one thing, I have a slow computer, but for some reason here it is extra slow. Takes like half

a minute to load one page.

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Re: Life

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 11 Apr 2018 22:57

Wow what a post. So much raw pain. So much honesty and introspection. "Samcheinu k'yemos inisanu" Right now you have experienced such a level of pain and sorrow that you cannot see true happiness or believe it possible to experience, despite expending much effort to that end. May Hashem give you opportunity for so much simcha that you will not be able to believe how sad and broken you once were. And until then buddy, we are here for you. Feel free to call.

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Re: Life

Posted by shmirashachaim - 13 Apr 2018 14:53

Thanks for the support HHM. It's a good feeling that there are caring people out there. And thanks for the brachah. Hopefully the next time I write the outlook reflects yours more.

There was a time when I felt that I knew what real pain meant... and then came another time when I realized that I actually never knew the extent of what pain can be. And I still don't know. "Samcheinu k'yemos inisanu was supposedly uttered by people coming out of the Holocaust. I don't know how effective pointing to others who have had it worse is, or that my situation could be worse is; it doesn't negate my own pain. And I went through a situation that, at least to me, was unnaturally sickening in that the pain more than just a matter of a higher degree that the past. But I guess keeping perspective is important. It gives me the opportunity to be grateful and helps me utilize things to make things better.

Yes, I wonder what it means to have 'true happiness' (and also curious how common it is).

For one thing, I had a happy day. I just got back to Israel and now surrounded by happy kids.

Thanks once again

Have a good Shabbas.

P.S. I appreciate your comment about honesty and introspection. I don't know about you, but I guess the only question is how illusive these things are..

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Re: Life

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 13 Apr 2018 17:19

I was referring to your own pain, not to anyone else (holocaust or other). Hopefully soon you will experience such simcha that you will not believe how overcome with pain you were in the past. Hatzlocha!

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Re: Life

Posted by shmiraashachaim - 25 Apr 2018 12:42

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 13 Apr 2018 17:19:](#)

I was referring to your own pain, not to anyone else (holocaust or other). Hopefully soon you will experience such simcha that you will not believe how overcome with pain you were in the past. Hatzlocha!

Yes, I know. I was speaking to myself more than anything else. I guess it was something on my mind.

Thanks once again.

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