

## A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyschem - 24 Jun 2024 18:19

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A'ight,

I want to suggest an idea for GYE that I believe some of you have been contemplating.

I think many, many people who have gotten clean credit that to connecting with other members. The connections go from phone calls without sharing a name, all the way to in person meetings. Many people have called it the most important step to getting clean, no matter the level of the struggle.

GYE doesn't currently really push that. There's the partner program, which is underused, unclear, and very hit or miss. There's Dov's phone call, which is not pushed, invitation only, and marketed as more of a step for people who are/may be addicts.

So currently the way this is recommended is by people posting on other people's threads suggesting that they reach out to recognized members. Which is great. But perhaps it's possible to work personal connection as more official element of the GYE program. And that's important because 1) it's a very helpful tool and helpful tools should be in the GYE program, and more importantly 2) people are more likely to actual do it if it's presented as "part of the program" and not just a recommendation from some rando on the forums.

Here's a suggestion as to how to work it in. [I don't know if anyone is familiar with Miriam Adahan's EMETT program, but this is loosely based on that concept and Dov's call.]

GYE should institute a vaad system. The broad outline is like this. Small groups of members would get together on a conference call for perhaps 45 minutes a week to study a text together, share about their application of the text, and schmooze a little. The groups would be moderated by a member, but the moderator is not a teacher. That's it.

Here are some of the details I've been thinking about.

Who would join: A big thing is safety. Members need to feel that they are sharing safely, and there needs to be some screening to ensure there's no predator joining a group. To that end, I think joining a vaad would be predicated on completing the F2F program, and perhaps a minimum forum post count. Ideally, it should also require the member to do an inventory and share it with the group moderator, but that may be too hard for many people. Groups should either be with all members using their real name, or no members using their real name (individual groups could maybe make that decision on their own).

Members could be on any level of the struggle. I'm not sure if it would make sense to segregate people out by age, area of struggle, marital status etc.?

Ideally, groups would be small (5-7 people) so everyone has a chance to talk in a short meeting. Also, large groups of people on a conference call gets very confusing very fast. New people could be added one by one to existing groups, or could form new groups. It would probably make sense for groups to be arranged by a central coordinator, because if they are self-arranged, many people would not work up the gumption to form or join a group. That being said, it's essential people feel comfortable in the group, so there should at least be an option to choose your own group.

The text: What the groups study and apply is actually less important than the actual connection and discussion. They could study the battle of the generation, a mussar sefer, the gye handbook or whatever. That being said, it would be amazing if we could find/put together a book specifically for the vaad (some excerpts from TBOTG, some of the white book, some classic posts, whatever. Just a thought).

The leader: The leader does not need to be someone experienced. They're there just to keep the group on track. More of a gabbai than a leader. Ideally, they would be established, clean members. Even better, they would get a little training on how to identify someone who needs a recommendation to SA or therapy or whatever.

Meeting schedule: A basic meeting would be a few minutes of reading and discussing the text. Following that every member would share something (a success, failure, struggle, whatever. Not generic advice or commentary). No advice should be given unless specifically requested - the goal is connection, not problem solving. Certainly no criticism should be dished out, however, praise is great. That's it. Short, sweet, and simple.

Some other points. Because it's individual small groups there's room for personalization. Groups could pick specific texts, times, even choose to be in person. The general format of connecting

is the ikkar. Also, because it's a "mussar vaad", it doesn't have the stigma of SA and people will be less deterred from joining (e.g. there's no way I personally could tell my wife I'm going to an SA meeting, but I could tell her I joined a new mussar vaad that I want to do in private.) And again, if it becomes part of the official "GYE program" people are more likely to join it. I think that it took me a very long time to pick up the phone and call someone. And if there had been an official program to do so, I would have likely done so a lot faster. And while people are embarrassed to share honestly, once you're on a call with 5 other guys sharing honestly it'll seem a lot less intimidating.

So what does the oilam think? Good idea? Bad idea? Would you join if you were a new (or old) member? Any suggestions, comments, tweaks, or critical comments?

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 09 Oct 2024 21:18

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If anyone thinks they may be available to lead a vaad please email GYE.Vaad.Project at gmail.com or PM me.

You don't need to have it all figured out to lead a vaad. Just some amount of clean time and the willingness to do it!

It's a fantastic way to give back to the community.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemyshem - 26 Nov 2024 22:12

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[jollylemur95 wrote on 26 Nov 2024 19:47:](#)

I strongly recommend the vaad, if you are not ready to make a personal call. When I started out I was not willing to call but the vaad felt safer because it was not one on one, more people who are in the same boat. Once I saw how understanding they were, that gave me the courage to

make that phone call. But if you can, go all the way. You will not regret it! I have gotten , empathy, love, and the sledgehammer from HHM. As stated he usually reserves the hammer only for those who are mistreating their wives. Go for it. We are rooting for you!!!

Now there's a haskama!

From a very chashuve yid too (some would say talmid chacham, but I think he's a tzadik).

Hit that link and join a vaad. I dare you.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by jollylemur95 - 28 Nov 2024 00:47

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I just saw this post now.

I am not sure if my haskama is worth much but as you quoted me, I do strongly believe the Vaad is Fantastic!

I think I told you privately but I will state it publicly as well.

IF I am ever zoche to kick this (hopefully I will) The vaad will be a huge reason why.

Thank you to Proud Yungeman and Shem!

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by cleareyed - 28 Nov 2024 19:46

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I'm new to this site and to this chat, but this sounds like a really wonderful idea. I've heard about GYE for years, and I'm finding the resources a little overwhelming...where to start when there's so much. The thought of a weekly conference call to touch base sounds great.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by jollylemur95 - 28 Nov 2024 19:54

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Welcome!

You will find the greatest group of Tzadikim here!

You will not regret it!

Go up 2 posts on the screen to find the link to join the VAAD, under the user name chosemysheM.

I have spoken with him many times. He is a true tzadik and one of the nicest people you will ever speak with.

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by proudyungerman - 18 Dec 2024 00:54

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New Vaad just started...

Never too late to join, now with two options...

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by chosemysheM - 18 May 2025 20:39

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New vaad starting soon. Now is a great time to join! Hit the link in the signature and get on board.

If you've previously joined a vaad and didn't stick to it 1) hop back on anytime, you don't need to be re-approved, and 2) please reach out and let us know what wasn't clicking so we can optimize the product.

If you're looking for a way to give back / be of service / earn oodles of Eden, joining a vaad as a leader/gabbai is extremely helpful and not very difficult (some minimum amount of clean time is required, pm PY or me for details).

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Re: A Modest Proposal

Posted by proudyungerman - 01 Jul 2025 19:58

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Hard to believe it's been a year since the first post that kickstarted this idea...

BH there are now three vaadim with hopefully more on the way.

If you want to hear more:

-Reach out to [Shem](#)

-Reach out to me

-Read the thread from the beginning

-Hit the link [here](#) and sign up!!

If you want to lead a vaad please reach out to Shem or me or email GYE.Vaad.Project at gmail.com

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