

Kudos to the forum

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 Jul 2009 19:34

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The greatest thing that impresses me about this forum is how much encouragement and love for each other is expressed here.

Which lead to a new realization in my struggle, particularly not being able to control my eyes at all on the street.

Previously, I would try to conjure up all sorts of sayings from Chazal. But, when the yeitzer is at work, the thought of gehennom or of becoming steeped in tumah are very abstract--very hard to relate to.

Also, I would keep trying to remind myself "look down. look down." But, the yeitzer is always stronger.

Paranthenically, I also felt that I really can't stop looking unless I really feel that something is bad about it--which I didn't. I had a new realization about this, which I think is actually from somewhere in the beginning of the Mesilas Yesharim--sick people taste sweet as bitter, and bitter as sweet. I realized I'm NOT going to feel that anything is wrong with looking!! I'm like a sick person, and therefore it will seem sweet. But it's really bitter. This thought seems more effective than images of olam haba and gehennom.

So, as soon as I realized that my eyes ought to be down, I tell myself "you're sick. bitter seems sweet. Just don't look. the only remedy is to keep your eyes down, and eventually you'll taste the truth."

BUT THEN, instead of repeating this command to myself, an encouraging word from GUE came to mind. This was really powerful. Instead of feeding myself commands, I started feeding myself my own compliments. "You're doing great!" "You're destroying the forces of evil in the world!" Just a string of non-stop compliments, which felt great. I felt like I'm getting something positive in exchange for not looking. I wasn't just depriving myself of looking because it's what I theoretically know I "ought to" do.

Thankyou, GUE, and everyone who has been so kind to respond to my messages.

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Re: Kudos to the forum  
Posted by hoping - 28 Jul 2009 19:55

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Ditto! You said it better than I ever could. The people on this forum have the Zechus of saving me and many others.

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Re: Kudos to the forum  
Posted by 7yipol - 28 Jul 2009 20:16

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Ditto 3!

GYE is all about selfless love.

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Re: Kudos to the forum  
Posted by kutan - 28 Jul 2009 21:03

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E.N,

Thanks for the post.

I'm glad you came to this realization (I tell myself "you're sick. bitter seems sweet.) on your own. I was trying to figure out how to write it politely yet firmly, and pushed it off to tomorrow.

Me, one of Bardichev's posts that hit me. the way he says things, you know.

I'd still like to answer your post with some things that happened to me personally, IYH tomorrow.

The chevra here are great! your description is right on the mark.

kutan

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Re: Kudos to the forum

Posted by the.guard - 28 Jul 2009 22:21

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Dear Eye.nonymous,

The site is called "GuardUrEyes" because no matter how complex this disease seems to be, emotionally, psychologically, physically, etc... it all boils down to guarding the eyes. If a person can guard your eyes, he is 99.99% healed. The heart and mind may be polluted from years of abuse, but they too will become pure and holy if one learns to guards his eyes.

But there are many levels. Even for one who has stopped with the porn and masturbation for a while, may find himself still struggling with keeping his eyes clean when out on the street. This is a valiant battle. But with small steps and determination, it can be done.

Here are some tips that I can think of now (for guarding the eyes on the street)...

1) Tell yourself that no matter how painful it feels NOT to look, it will be MORE PAINFUL to look. Why? Because when you look, there are two acute pains you will feel.

a) You feel suddenly far from Hashem and from your goals.

b) You know you can't have it anyway, and when you look - you desire it, and you can't have it, and it HURTS.

So essentially, the pain you feel when not looking is MUCH BETTER than the pain of looking.

2) The pain you feel when not looking is HEALING pain, like the pain from an important surgery. The pain is healing you. On the other hand, the spiritual pain of looking is the pain of the

disease getting worse. Which pain do you choose?

3) The pain you feel when not looking is not really your pain at all. It is the pain of the Yetzer Hara in his "death throws". He is screaming that you are hitting him hard. So enjoy the pain! You are feeling the pain of your enemy as he dies!

4) The whole desire is a blown up bubble of hot-air, built around what we see and imagine in the mind. Experience has shown us all, that as soon as we get what we thought we wanted -- what we thought was going to be absolutely incredible (according to what we saw and fantasized), as soon as it's done, the bubble pops and all that's left is "hot air". And we are left shaking our head and not believing that this was the whole thing for which we sell our very souls.

So in essence, the fact that we struggle so much with shmiras ainayim and all these powerful fantasies, and the fact that we need to use such strength and give our hearts over to Hashem - this all is really Hashem's greatest gift to us.

This sounds a little strange, so let me explain what I'm trying to say:

If we would just be like the goyim and just give in and get all we wanted in these areas, we would have NOTHING at the end. Do they have joy from this? The minute it's over, they are left disillusioned and seeking other pleasures to fill the void they feel. So think about it. Hashem has chosen us and uplifted us from the filth of the world with such kindness. He has given us the opportunity to give him our very hearts! We have the opportunity to make all these "valiant" struggles every time we turn away from looking at something the Yetzer Hara wants us to look at. But what is the alternative, if we would give in? Nothing! Emptiness and disillusionment! The Yetzer Hara promises so much but delivers nothing! So what I'm trying to say is, that this whole blown up desire we have, and all these difficult struggles not to look, etc... it's all really a "game" that Hashem is playing with us. He makes us feel we are "ripping out our hearts" for him - and he indeed gives us the reward AS IF WE DID RIP OUT OUR HEARTS and he allows us to come closer to him than any non-Jew could dream of coming, and yet, it's all a game. For if one would be able to see in advance the way he would feel after he would give in, he wouldn't even have a struggle!!

That is perhaps what Chaza"l meant when they said that one day the Tzadikim will weep with joy that they were able to overcome the mountain of the Yetzer Hara, and Resha'im will weep that they couldn't overcome this little string of the Yetzer Hara. One may ask, how could the

Yetzer Hara really be two things? Well, based on what we just wrote above, it could be that the Tzadikim are talking about the "mountain" that the Yetzer Hara "FELT LIKE" – when they DIDN'T give in. But the Resha'im are seeing the little "nothing" that the Yetzer Hara really was WHEN THEY GAVE IN.

So it's really all a game of Hashem's chesed and love for us. Hashem is really only asking of us to over come a "small string", but he makes it LOOK like a mountain so that we can truly give him our hearts and get the tremendous reward he wants to give us!

Remember this, and you will stay strong even in what "feels like" the most difficult moments!

Keep posting here and may Hashem be with you on your journey!

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Re: Kudos to the forum  
Posted by the.guard - 28 Jul 2009 22:24

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"Me" once wrote:

*When I was struggling with shmiras HaEinayim, I felt that the Y"H was literally pulling and pushing my head in any direction that he wished. It was as if I had no free choice. The reason I felt like this is because...this IS what was happening. He was in control. Where ever I would walk, I tried and failed. Then, I decided to make very very small goals. I would accept upon myself, that the walk from shul to my home, (about 100 meters) I absolutely no matter what, would not look anywhere except at the ground. It was difficult, but this was a goal that I could handle. After a few times of doing this, I was able to increase the goal. During the same period when I was driving, which is much more difficult as we are looking almost everywhere in order to drive safely, I could see with my peripheral vision, that there were "interesting" things walking on the sidewalk. I literally had to scream and shout with pain in order to break the pull of the Y"H. This too worked, and immediately afterwards things became much easier.*

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Re: Kudos to the forum

Posted by kutan - 29 Jul 2009 02:20

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Dear R' Guard,

Thank you for the posts. All excellent advice.

Just like to add that once someone breaks the ice in this area, it is not a struggle but rather it is exhilarating. The struggle is the change of habits, the giving up of the lusting through awareness (all the points you raised) and humbleness, and practice (Me's great idea). But once you break through and reinvent yourself, it becomes a great feeling.

And one more trick. Sounds corny, but it is helpful to many. Practice in private. Before going out, visualize yourself looking down, staying in control... picture it in your mind, and then feel good about it in your heart.

Its called reconditioning.

kutan

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Re: Kudos to the forum

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 31 Jul 2009 08:40

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Dear R. Guard,

Thanks for that advice--I really like that attitude. The pain is not really MY pain. It's a healing pain, and, even better, it's the pain of the Yeitzer Hara dying.

Now the pain is something to relish in.

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