

Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by Momo - 09 Jun 2009 13:18

Hi all!

OK Reb Guard, I'm ready to start working through the GYE handbook.

I'm not so sure how to do this, especially since I've never attended a 12-step program. Everyone is invited to help me do this correctly and effectively. Here goes:

Tool #1: Attitude and Perspective

We can Sign up and receive the daily Chizuk e-mails. VERY IMPORTANT. - Done!

- We can read through the archives of previous Chizuk e-mails sent out - Done!
- We can read through the incredible chizuk that is posted on the forum every day! - Done!
- We can read through the "Mind Tips" and the "Attitude" section of our new blog-site. - Not yet done.
- We can read through the tips of fellow strugglers on our website. - Done!

Is that it for Tool#1? Does this mean tomorrow I can move on to write about Tool #2?

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by Momo - 14 Jun 2009 07:26

GYE, thank you for your very kind words. However, I may be talking the talk, but until I walk the walk, I don't deserve such honors. You see, I've not had more than a 24 clean day streak, and I've now done 4 clean days.

To respond to your suggestions:

-Your first SA link was to join an online SA group (known as a DSR), which I've actually already done. I found that going through the GYE handbooks and posting daily works much better for me than the DSR (please take this as a compliment). The second link is to join a U.K. phone conference. I'll consider this.

-When I get to tool #14, I'll get to it.

-You wrote "See also how Miribn explains it beautifully in her thread." I browsed through her posts, and she really is an inspiration. Anyway, I think I found the post of hers that deals with step #3 of the 12 steps. Here it is:

"One wonderful thing I learned from the 12 steps is to stop fighting. To just realize that I have no power over my addiction and that I am powerless, to realize that Hashem is the only one who can relieve my addiction and that if I just let Hashem take it away from me and to daily beg Hashem to relieve me of this obsession then Hashem will! And Hashem truly does! I no longer fight, I just completely rely on Hashem that Hashem will keep me abstinent!

I think that I have a natural tendency to want to control my life and other people lives and I also want to control the outcome of things. I like to plan out my day, week, month, year, life etc. I also have a perfectionist type of personality and an all or nothing. This has caused me to turn to my addictions when things did not go my way. I was always a fighter and many times I fought with all my might for things to go a certain way. Learning to break this habit and realizing that I am trying to play G-d was a true eye opener. For me, I needed to learn to stop fighting and letting Hashem run the world the way He see's fit. I learned to accept. To accept myself and accept others. I learned to accept my life and life circumstances. I am learning and relearning this every single day. But I know that because I let Hashem run my life now, this is why Hashem has granted me all these wonderful days of abstinence!"

Interestingly enough, I am also a perfectionist and have very "yekkie" personality.

I'd be honored to read whatever Dov or anyone else has to say about this or anything else we've spoken about.

Now, I've got to get back to work....

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools
Posted by Momo - 14 Jun 2009 09:48

I'm just going through more of the handbook during my lunch break.

I'm reading tool number 16. It says "Because, you see, as soon as you get down on yourself about these (lustful) thoughts, you become sad, and the sadness brings even more fantasies, and this becomes a vicious cycle that is difficult to break away from."

See, being sad makes the Y"H tell you that you either deserve some pleasure (read "lust"), or that if you escape into fantasy land you'll feel some comfort. However, we know in times of sanity that you'll just feel guilty afterward, and then feel sad again. This is the cycle. I know it well. However, we must remind ourselves that the couple of minutes of pleasure you'll get is nothing compared to the happiness you'll get by saying "no" to the Y"H.

The key to remain happy. I know how hard this is, since I've been suffering from depression, in various degrees, for many years. I can tell you this (from experience): even if you feel alone in the world with no friends, and that living day is a struggle, you can feel happy that you've remained "clean" for the last third of a day, or at least for the past hour (60 minutes). That's right, I don't say "today I'll be clean". That's too long for me. I break the day into morning (when I wake up until lunch), afternoon (lunch until I get home), and night (get home until I wake up). Each of these 3 segments is a victory for me. Thank G-d I was clean this morning, and with G-d's help I'll be clean this afternoon.

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools
Posted by battleworn - 14 Jun 2009 09:50

I think the post from mirbn is really great! It gets the point across quite well.

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools
Posted by the.guard - 14 Jun 2009 10:04

Momo, this is becoming my favorite thread on the forum!

Yes, Miribn's quote was right on target! And yes, breaking the day into segments is a GREAT way to go.

Your work on the handbooks, together with your OWN amazing comments - are going to be an inspiration to many others for years to come!

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools
Posted by Dov - 14 Jun 2009 23:57

There's a great song from a saying of the Eben Ezra: "Heovar ayin, veheosid adayin, vehahoveh keheref ayin - Da'agoh Minayin?" I'd love to sing it right here on the forum for you, if I could! Sometimes we simply cannot afford to look forward or back. For some things, we may never be able to afford to. I cannot usually afford the "luxury" of worrying about "how in the heck I'll ever remain sober tomorrow" so I jut put it out of my mind. On some very realistic level it's shtuyot because there is nothing to do about it now because it'll never be *tomorrow now*! I can't afford to "baste" myself in the regrets of yesterday's failures because that'll lead me to repeat them! So, I find something else to do, like think about whatever I am doing *right now* (or, *was* doing before I nearly got lost in worries and fears!).

Maybe I am missing your point, but if it is understanding you crave, nu, so it works w/o understanding it like lots of stuff... Not good enough, well maybe this'll help: For me, I feel the lust leave at some point **before** I finish my prayer, sometimes as I am **starting** it. "Vehaya terem yikra'u va'anee e'eneh" (see aneinu). The surrender is a giving up of it. Perhaps **being w/o lust is really so natural a state** that our "self" phases right into it, as it recognizes it and says "Hey, I remember this! It's the way I *used* to feel when I was five and still un-screwed up!" Unfortunately we have so little purchase on it in the beginning of recovery because we don't know how to use it yet. So it slips out of our hands rather quickly and we need another surrender to get it back. All our davening, relationships w/people, emotions, etc., are twisted up in it for the past ten, twenty years or more. It takes time to get used to *staying* in that freedom

w/o getting too uncomfortable. What do you think? Maybe?

I heard an old AA say: the problem wasn't drinking. *That* we knew how to do very well. Our problem was ***living w/o drinking***. Now ***that*** drove us crazy! *Sobriety* was our problem! Earthshattering, if you ask me!

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My 10 commandments for fighting my lust addiction
Posted by Momo - 15 Jun 2009 04:59

Today's report:

Since I'm such a "yekkie" and I love to make lists, I felt the need to create order with all of the information I've discovered and read over the past week. I also added two new ideas, "commandments 9 and 10, and they are big ones, but essential.

I need to read the following, daily. I think since I've learned so much during the past week, it's enough for me to repeat and live the following daily. Of course, I reserve myself the right to edit and add to this list as I continue to go through the GYE and SA material. I'd like to my list the 10 commandments for fighting my lust addiction. If only I can live by the following rules, and I think they are attainable, I think I "would have arrived".

I purposely began each "commandment" with the word "today" since this battle must be fought one day at a time.

A word of caution: I think each person has to read through the GYE and SA material and, if you are a person who likes to make lists, make your own list. I think this list will work for me, meaning, I think these commandments will help me battle my lust addiction, and I feel that I personally can perform these. This list is personal, and may not be suitable for everyone. But, Maybe some of these ideas will be helpful for some of you reading this. It's also a reminder for me of what I need to do each day to get better.

If you think any of the commandments are imprecise or incorrect, please let me know.

Here goes:

I will, blee neder, read, and perform the following, daily:

Commandment #1: Fill my day with chizuk

Today I'll read through the GYE handbook when taking breaks at work instead of surfing around. I'll read and responses to other people's posts and to my posts, and get chizuk from them.

Commandment #2: Remind myself of my addiction

Today I remind myself the first step of the 12 steps ("We admitted we were powerless over our addiction - that our lives had become unmanageable"): I am addicted to lust and it overtakes my life if I don't try to control it, and that I can't control it all by myself.

Commandment #3: Strengthen my belief in Hashem

Today I remind myself of step 2 of the 12 steps ("Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity"): I believe in Hashem who will help me with my battle. I also have a circle of friends here on this forum who are helping me.

Commandment #4: Make Hashem's will my will

Today I remind myself of step 3 of the 12 steps ("Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of G-d").

- In matters of anger and control: I believe that Hashem controls the world and it's outcome. Therefore, I will try today not to get angry when something happens against my will. I have a natural tendency to want to control my life, my environment, and other people's lives. I will try to learn to stop fighting and let You, Hashem, run the world the way You see fit. I need to learn to accept myself and others.
- I matters of lust: While I will try today not to give in to any of my desires that are against Hashem's will, however, Hashem, You are only one who can relieve my addiction.

Please take it away from me!

Commandment #5: Remind myself why I must remove lust from myself

I'll remind myself why I must remove lust from myself. I have to stop lustful emotions as soon as they start by reminding myself that I WANT to let myself go of the lust, even though it gives me a temporary feeling of escape from my unhappiness and from my loneliness, because of the following:

- Pleasure is fleeting, false fulfillment, and cuts me off from the world and doesn't let me feel the tremendous kindness of Hashem, doesn't bind me to the goodness in the world, makes me lose appreciation for my wife and children and be unable to find inner peace. I remain closed up within a shell.
- Happiness is ever-lasting, real fulfillment, reconnects me to the world, makes me feel the tremendous kindness of Hashem, see the goodness in the world, helps me gain appreciation my wife and children, and find inner peace.

Commandment #6: Break up the day, be happy

Today I'll be happy. I'll break the day into 3 segments: morning (when I wake up until lunch), afternoon (lunch until I get home), and night (when I get home until I wake up). For every hour, and especially after every segment I stay clean, I will be happy about it.

Commandment #7: Guard my eyes

Today I'll guard my eyes in the office and on the street. I will use my filters to guard my eyes on the internet. When I feel weak, I'll try to read from the GYE handbook instead of trying to bypass my filters.

Commandment #8: Make fences

- Today I won't touch myself.
- Today, when I feel like acting out, I won't. I'll wait 10 minutes, sitting or walking around if need be, and by then the lust will have passed.

Commandment #9: Daven better

Today I will direct my energy and spiritual vigor into my prayers. Today I'll focus on davening

with more kavana.

Commandment #10: Love, not lust

Today I will treat my wife with love, not as an object of lust. I will work on understanding and living the difference between love and lust.

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by the.guard - 15 Jun 2009 11:58

Dear Momo, this is beautiful. I haven't added anything to [this page](#) on our website for almost a year, but after seeing your 10 commandments above, I HAD to add it!!

(Find your name in the list and click on it!)

Thank you for sharing your journey with us all. If anyone isn't inspired by you, they'd have to be a rock.

I'm sure this will end up in a Chizuk e-mail as well, in the coming days. (And I'll be using the)

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Re: My 10 commandments for fighting my lust addiction

Posted by Momo - 15 Jun 2009 12:01

Reb GYE, thank you for the compliment!

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by hoping - 15 Jun 2009 12:19

This is my favorite thread in the forum. I know that I keep repeating this but I can't get over all of the work MOMO is putting into this battle. Your systematic approach to every problem should be a lesson for all of us. Your Sechar for fighting off the YH is probably not fathomable. Thank you for your continued inspiration.

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Re: My 10 commandments for fighting my lust addiction

Posted by Momo - 15 Jun 2009 12:29

Dear hoping,

I said this before, and I'll say it again: It is comments like yours that keep me going! I've mentioned in the past that I suffer from depression and feeling alone. I'm not a very social person, and have very few friends.

When I read complimentary (or at least pareve/not-hostile) comments to my posts, I feel that I do have a circle of friends out there, and that helps me fight the depression. We all know that the Y"H is the most effective when we are depressed, so posts like yours helps me fight the Y"H. That in turn enables me to try and inspire myself and others. This is a beautiful cycle. Thanks for being a part of it!

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by Momo - 16 Jun 2009 06:27

Two points today.

One, I'm reading through "Windows to the Soul". On day 7 there are halachic guidelines that are good to remind ourselves daily. Note that after numbers 1, 3, and 4 he writes that there are different laws regarding one's wife.

1.It is forbidden to look at a woman if she is dressed immodestly.

2. If we know of an area where immodestly dressed women are present, it is forbidden to enter this area. An alternative route must be taken. However, if it is necessary to pass this route and there no alternative route, or the alternative route is impractical or costly, a person is permitted to pass through an area of immodestly dressed women, providing he makes every reasonable effort to avoid seeing the immodest sights.

3. It is forbidden to have thoughts of desire for any woman.

4. It is forbidden to derive pleasure from looking at the beauty of a woman, even if she is modestly dressed.

Two, yesterday I was thinking about Tool #6 from the GYE handbook, fulfillment. I know that I need to fill the void, created by leaving the lust, with something positive. I feel that I have enough responsibility in my life being married with kids, and working, and going to a daily shiur. I don't feel that I have the time or energy to take upon myself anything too time consuming or with too much responsibility for other people, like a chessed project or volunteering for the shul. So what can I add to my life that will be fulfilling and fill the void?

The answer came to me when I read the end of Tool #6. Here is what's written "For those who can achieve it, obviously the best type of fulfillment and joy comes from a true connection with Hashem. This can be built up through learning Torah with enjoyment, adding Kedusha to one's life, and by seeking a deeper connection with Yiddishkeit in general."

Based on this, I was thinking two things, and I started yesterday:

1. Enhancing my time with my kids. When I'm with the kids, I'm with the kids. I'll try not to get distracted, or angry, and I'll just listen to them, play with them, and enjoy their company.

2. Enhancing my time with Hashem, especially when we talk to him one-on-one, during Shmonei Esre. Focus on feeling before Hashem, and on each word.

Any comments? Any other ideas that would fit my schedule as I've outlined it?

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by the.guard - 16 Jun 2009 17:01

Momo, when you finish going through all these handbooks, I think we'll be able to make a NEW handbook just out of your amazing comments!! And we'll make it required reading for everyone too! ;D

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by battleworn - 18 Jun 2009 09:40

Based on this, I was thinking two things, and I started yesterday:

1. Enhancing my time with my kids. When I'm with the kids, I'm with the kids. I'll try not to get distracted, or angry, and I'll just listen to them, play with them, and enjoy their company.
2. Enhancing my time with Hashem, especially when we talk to him one-on-one, during Shmonei Esre. Focus on feeling before Hashem, and on each word.

Momo, you hit the nail on the head. Adding quality is infinitely more valuable than adding quantity.

R' Tvi Meir says that Hashem told Moshe Rabeinu ??? ??? ????? ????? ?? . What was Hashem telling him by saying "??? ??-be there" ?

We learn from here a tremendous yesod in ovodas Hashem: Whatever mitvah you are doing, **make sure that you are completely involved**. This is one of the great secrets of the success of great people.

Hatzlochoh Raboh!

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Re: Momo working the GYE Handbook tools

Posted by the.guard - 18 Jun 2009 09:46

Battleworn, please post this great shitkkle on the new Beis Medrash Board as well!

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