

The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 03 Jan 2017 22:13

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Topic: Middos

The very first statement in Even Sheleima (likutim from the Vilna Gaon) asserts, "The entire service of Hashem depends on improving the character traits".

We must take working on our middos very seriously. It's not enough to read through Mesillas Yeshorim! Someone once asked Rabbi Miller, "How many times a year should a serious yeshiva bachur finish Mesillas Yeshorim?" The rav answered, it doesn't matter how many times he goes through it, the main thing is that it should go through him!

Working on our Middos is not something we do by relaxing on the couch with a light "self-help" book. We must be ready to invest in it.

It is the most important business in our life!

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 09 Jan 2017 23:47

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Topic: Bechira Mitzvos

"Rava said to his talmidim, I beg of you, don't lose both worlds!" One can lose his entire olam hazeh, killing himself for the torah... but if he does mitzvos without thinking, Rava is telling us, he lost his olam haba as well. It can't be helped, to get olam haba we have to internalize the mitzvos, we must do them with our whole heart and soul, otherwise... lose both worlds!

V'yasem mbelibeinu ahavaso v'yiraso, v'laasos retzono **ul'uvdo b'levav shalem!**, why?  
"Lemaan lo niga lorik"! Otherwise it's all wasted! So the tip is:

THINK! when you do a mitzva!

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by Singularity - 10 Jan 2017 07:54

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Thanks Rav Miller

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
To be fair, I almost never think when I do an *ovair*  
Posted by Avigdor Ben-Nisim - 12 Jan 2017 00:45

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Topic: Teshuva

The way to do teshuva is not to expect a complete change overnight. Malachim fly, but when they were teaching Yaakov, a human, to ascend to heaven, they showed him that he must ascend a ladder, slowly, step by step.

If someone smokes twenty cigarettes each Shabbos, and one week he smokes only nineteen, make no mistake about it, it's a very big deal! The fact that he gave up the twentieth is a great accomplishment.

Of course, he'll still get punished for the first nineteen, no question. But not smoking the twentieth is still a great accomplishment!

One should never think it's all or nothing.

One step, another step and another step, and little by little before you know it, you've ascended the ladder to perfection!

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by Singularity - 12 Jan 2017 07:57

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Yes but put a nice time boundary too.

A rov I know says people misuse the "small steps" approach.

*A Mashal:*

In our country, the government put up a billboard showing its achievements:

323km of roads repaved

50km roads layed.

Or something like that. So the regular folk would say, well, "Oh that's fantastic?"

I was thinking:

*In one week? Unbelievable!*

*Or maybe it was a month? That's still quite an achievement!*

*Maybe half a year, they meant? Hmm. Quite good.*

*A year?*

*Five years?*

*Since democracy (1994)?*

See the same announcement can bring achievement or absolute shame.

*See, Rov, I'm really changing! I now commit to lighting Shabbos candles every week!*

*Wow! That's amazing! When And how long have you worked up to this for?*

*About 40 years...*

But I think it's part in parcel of what you're saying. The next rung of a ladder is "up". You can't keep going on level ground. so must be *Davka* a ladder.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 12 Jan 2017 12:38

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I don't get it. I know the Rov probably said it, but I still need it explained to me how it's true.

If a guy smokes 20 cigarettes on Shabbos, he desecrates the Shabbos and will be cut off from HaShem.

If he one time smokes 19, will he be rewarded? NO. He'll still suffer in the next world and be cut off from HaShem. Is he really working on it? Does he want to keep Shabbos, just it's so hard for him to give up?

There are MANY (unfortunately) Jewish smokers who don't smoke at all on Shabbos, because they love HaShem and keep his Torah. THEY will be rewarded. So what about this guy? They are also addicted to cigarettes and stop completely...so I don't think 19 is an accomplishment. He still is cut off from HaShem.

Let him stop completely on Shabbos, and just smoke a ton before and right after Shabbos, and get reward for keeping Shabbos. Are you going to let him go 20 years, before keeping 1 Shabbos?

He is moving on the ladder. 1 less per Shabbos...but a year working on it, then another 1 less per Shabbos. This must be ridiculous. Again, even full smoker addicts can go 25 hours without a cigarette...

meaning so can he, IF he cares about HaShem and cares about keeping Shabbos. And therefore, it is likely that he will receive massive punishment of being cut off in the next world.

"But I was growing on the ladder" won't help him. Just my thoughts.

The ladder point is correct, but might mean that he is not expected to behave on Shabbos as the Tzadikim, learning and davening and singing in great dveikus to HaShem all day long...but to take it more slowly. But that doesn't mean that there isn't a bare minimum.

No argument on the one point of: he has transgressed and smoked 19 already. Then, he asks you can or should I smoke the last one of the pack? The answer is clearly NO. What difference does it make? Because Shabbos is important, and right now, he is not transgressing. So, if he listens and doesn't smoke it, then that is an accomplishment.

But if he sets out to smoke 19, that is a BIG desecration of Shabbos and he will surely be punished for it.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by Markz - 12 Jan 2017 13:53

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[Yosef Tikun HaYesod wrote:](#)

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But if he sets out to smoke 19, that is a BIG desecration of Shabbos and he will surely be punished for it.

He cannot stop himself from smoking - it's something his brain is wired to do

If he decides to try and cut 1 cigarette out of his unwanted transgressions, **that is a major achievement**

But to quit smoking totally is gonna need something more than trying to cut a little, and it's not gonna work to simply go cold turkey

Same thing for Porn and Masturbation

It seems you're happy with cutting down a little... and if you fall you try cut a little more... and sometimes you TRY to cut it all...

I'm sorry but that doesn't cut it for me

**At a certain point we gotta stop stopping and start living**

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread

Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 13 Jan 2017 12:58

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I would really like the different points of my post addressed, please.

Ideally, from the writer, but from other people would be nice too...Gevura.

And Mark, I don't understand what you wrote.

Are you speaking to me, to the smoker, to the addict?

Do you disagree with my post? Which points?

What I wrote was not a 1 line answer/objection.

I didn't say 19=20. There's much more to it.

Does anybody agree with what I wrote?

And if not, why not?

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Speaking of Shabbos, Good Shabbos!

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 13 Jan 2017 13:04

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Two other points to consider:

1. people do succeed at going Cold Turkey
2. there are many Jewish smokers/addicts who restrain from smoking EVERY Shabbos, and don't smoke at all, not even 1 puff from 1 cigarette, until 3 stars come out Motzei Shabbos.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 13 Jan 2017 14:53

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I think it's pretty simple. If a guy usually smokes 20 cigs on Shabbos, and one week he only smokes 19, but with the same b'maizid as before, then he's still the same Mechalles Shabbos as before. But if he's honestly trying to stop, and he only manages to overcome his YH once and the other 19 he tried his best to stop but he wound up giving in, then he has definitely accomplished. He might be at the very beginning of a long and painful journey but he's still on the right path and that is something he can be proud of.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by cordnoy - 13 Jan 2017 18:56

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[Gevura Shebyesod wrote on 13 Jan 2017 14:53:](#)

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The reason this became confusing to some is because of the numbers 20 and 19. It has nothing to do with that. The only number that counts is 1. If last week he smoked 20 and didn't stop himself at all, and this week he smoked 30, but one time he stopped himself because it is Shabbos, that is a big deal and an improvement.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 15 Jan 2017 15:46

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Not sure about the numbers.

Week one: 20 aveiras, no mitzvas; week two: 30 aveiras, 1 mitzvah of restraint "shamor"

I don't think it's obvious which is better or if there is really an improvement.

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But the idea of stopping himself because it is Shabbos and it is against HaShem's will, is for sure an accomplishment. On that, there is no disagreement.

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Again, I think smoking on Shabbos is perhaps a very bad example to use as a mashal for us, since there are fully addicted Jewish smokers who avoid smoking AT ALL on Shabbos, every Shabbos.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 23 Jan 2017 18:11

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Topic: Positive Thinking

Think good thoughts! Most of your troubles are of your own making [your biggest enemy is your mouth by the way, but that's a topic for some other time]. Say a man is walking on the street and his mind is working overtime, he's thinking "last wednesday my wife didn't say hello when I walked in, what a chutzpa of her"! and he continues thinking about it until he gets sick he gets an ulcer or he gets diabetes. I knew a man who had a fight with his wife and he dropped dead of a heart attack in middle of the fight. People get so worked up over minor things, and for no reason other than thinking.

If the same man would forget about getting a warm smile from his wife, and instead he's walking on the street thinking gratitude. "Baruch Hashem I have a wife, baruch Hashem I have a family"

Oh does his life look different!

He's a happy personality.

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by AvigdorBenYisroel - 09 Feb 2017 16:54

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Just found this link

[www.guardureyes.com/GUE/GUEList/GUEList21.asp](http://www.guardureyes.com/GUE/GUEList/GUEList21.asp)

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Re: The Rabbi Miller Thread  
Posted by growup - 25 Sep 2017 17:36

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hey where d you go? just wanted to say i used to be involved on kiruv and i was speaking to a guy who was telling me that he is a barber and he works on shabbos and he watches outside his window all the frum people walking with their kids to shul he just wants to keep shabbos already, so i told him you know, you have to take it slow etc.

he turned to me and said "----- i have been taking it slow for fifteen years already.

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