

Hello

Posted by raz - 14 Oct 2011 21:36

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Hello. I have been following this site for a couple years, receiving emails, most of which I have ignored because the yetzer hara doesn't like confrontation. I have been struggling with addiction to inappropriate material and behavior for around 17 years. It started before puberty and now even though I am a happily married man, it continues. It wasn't until I was in my 20s that I seriously questioned my behavior, and I have been fighting myself with that question since. Every day it is like I have amnesia and I forget what I told myself the day before, "this doesn't make you happy, this is detrimental to you." Over the past few days I hit a new low after years of new lows, and today the first thing on my mind was "guard your eyes." In the past I have gone periods of days, maybe even weeks of being clean. I remember at one point after my wife caught me I started marking days on a calendar, and I felt very empowered. But after a while I stopped, and the pattern resumed. I started a 90 day challenge here, and I intend to stick with it but I am honest enough to say this, I can't do it alone. I feel as though this problem, as low and humiliating as it feels to admit it, is my life's greatest struggle. Here goes. What better time to start than Shabbat.

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Re: Hello

Posted by kidushashem - 15 Oct 2011 19:35

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Hi Raz!

Your post warms my heart. You are in the same boat as so many of us. It sounds like you've finally reached "bottom". This is such a great opportunity to finally get a handle on this and turn around!

I wish you much success. You've come to the right place! Keep posting and you'll see miracles!

Love,

KH

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Re: Hello

Posted by Holy Yid - 16 Oct 2011 07:43

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Welcome. You are blessed with great wisdom. You CANNOT do it alone. You are sooooooooooooooooooooo right. Whow I wish I knew that when I started. It would have gone so much faster.

We are here for you. I would suggest the path many others have found helpful. That is don't fight it. let Hashem do the work.

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Re: Hello

Posted by raz - 16 Oct 2011 16:57

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Today is my third day clean, and it's strange how just making the decision to stop causes its own problems. I have casually gone clean for much longer than two days before, several times. But not because I chose to stop, just because I happened to be occupied with other things. Now, the problem is twofold: 1) I am unemployed and have a LOT of spare time. I hope to be employed soon to remedy this. 2) I have chosen to stop, which means that even on day 1, my yetzer hara was protesting through me body and mind. I went through phases of anxiety, anger, and sadness all in the first day. Yesterday I felt utterly defeated, and started realizing just how sad I really was. I thought about how many years and opportunities I've wasted, and it was an almost unbearable sadness. I woke up feeling better today.

I should point out, I am a modern Jew struggling with identity issues, during several years of my life when I was pre-teen I was in a very frum household going to a wonderful shul and we had plans to move to Israel. But a divorce caused intense suffering and havok in our lives when I was about 11 years old, and it caused a great rift between us and the community that lead to us leaving and wandering various paths. Only recently did my mother reconnect and now I am struggling to do the same. It is a hard struggle as well. I am also struggling with an eating disorder (compulsive stress-related eating.) I feel at times like I'm just living in the dust of a battlefield and even with a wonderful marriage (B"H) I find myself in despair very often. Addiction runs in my family, both my mother and father were recovering drug abusers and as my mom has come to realize, addiction never really goes away, you just learn to become stronger than it.

I know that there is hope for me, I just know I need to give up on the idea that I am going to somehow fix this alone. I used to criticize the 12 step process by saying "If you give up and admit you'll never solve your problems, you never will!" but now I realize just how untrue that is. I've been pretending I can fix it all along. If I can fix it, why am I here? I can't, and that's why.

There has been progress in my life too, my biggest victory has been my 10 year long struggle with intense rage and anger issues which almost destroyed my marriage (within 1 day of destroying it before I saw the light and drastically changed my ways.) There are still the signs of damage in my family, and there are some people I still have trouble facing.

Though I may be struggling with my faith I have seen the amazing things Hashem has done in my life and my family's life. I know that if I relinquish control and hand it over, even if I must suffer further, or endure worse suffering to get to a better place, it is the right way. My mother was suffering for many years with a horrible disease that almost killed her. She fought it and was losing until one day, lying in her bed, she said "Hashem, I give up. I cannot fight any more, I am too weak and I'm telling you now, I am letting go of this struggle and it is up to you." She immediately had a vision, and felt a sensation throughout her body. And she knew that somehow, she was stronger. Though the disease was not gone, she had new strength and was able to fight it with much greater ease and now, B"H, she is healthy with NO symptoms! My first thought was to go to her house and say the prayer sheasah li neis in front of that bed, because a miracle most definitely took place, I have no doubt.

It sounds backwards, but it takes a lot of strength to let go. It takes absolute control to relinquish that control. And equally so, it is when I am absolutely defeated that I am at my strongest. I feel stronger just writing these words here, even though after doing so I may be suffering the rest of the day, angry or depressed, this is one step I took in a better direction.

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Re: Hello

Posted by Dov - 17 Oct 2011 07:29

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I admire your post very much, and am glad to say I understand.

You have lots of friends in recovery, chaver. I need to let go, too, so I do. Sometimes it is harder, sometimes easier. Nu. Let's stay friends, one day at a time, that is just for today, OK? Keep posting every now and then.

Dov

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