

Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 19 Apr 2012 21:34

Hi everybody,

After almost 6 months of observing this forum as a guest, I finally decided to introduce myself (...painfully shy - even in anonymity). I'm not a youngster - over 40 years on the roller coaster; so obviously my addiction started long before the internet. Like many of you, I've tried and failed over and over, but B"H never gave up. Until finally Hashem helped me discover GYE. I had a good streak of 168 days which ended this week (still not ready to say "f-e-l-l"). I am starting again be"H. The following is my 3-point plan, based on what I learned on this forum.

I am using a Mishne in Pirkei Avos to remember these 3 points:

Im ein ani li mi li - I must avoid all forms of lustful images and thoughts at all times.

Uchshe'ani le'atzmi moh ani - I must surrender my lust to Hashem and pray and ask for his help.

Ve'im lo achshav eimosai - Forget about yesterday or tomorrow - one day at a time.

Looking forward to meet you

MT

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 01 Jun 2012 14:33

A Great Tactic to Protect Ourselves from the YH

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Mesilas Yeshorim (perek 11) brings a Midrash that Hashem is teaching us that just like a Nazir needs to stay away from eating grapes, raisins, or anything that comes from a vineyard, so that he should not come to actually drink wine; so too regarding a woman that is not yours, all forms of lust are forbidden. This includes lustful acts, lustful looking, lustful talking, lustful hearing, and even lustful thoughts.

And later on (perek 13) he writes about this:

... ?? ??? ??? ?????? ?????? ????? ????? ?????? ???'

"... this is a great tactic for a person so that he protect himself from his YH. Because once a person is involved in the aveira, it is difficult for him to win over his YH and to conquer him. Therefore it is necessary that when he is still far from the aveira, he should keep at a distance."

Shabbat Shalom

MT

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 01 Jun 2012 18:36

In this week's Parsha there are 2 insightful pieces of Even Ezra regarding a person's avodah to stay away from desires.

On the posuk (6:2) ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ??? ????? he says that ?????? also means to do a ??? ???, i.e. something out of the ordinary, because most of the world pursues their desires.

In a later posuk (6:7) he says that the word ????? can also mean a crown (???), as it says ?? ??? ?????? ?? ?????. And he explains that people in general are slaves to their desires, but a true king who has a royal crown on his head is a person who is free from desires.

May we be zoche...

MT

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by tehillimzugger - 03 Jun 2012 09:35

[Machshovo wrote on 01 Jun 2012 18:36:](#)

On the posuk (6:2) ??? ?? ????? ????? ??? ????? he says that ????? also means to do a ??? ???, i.e. something out of the ordinary, because most of the world pursues their desires.

I heard from Rabbi ELimelech Biderman Shlita [in the name of someone- can't remember who]:

What's the big deal?!

So you won't eat grapes or drink wine for thirty days, SO WHAT? Do you deserve it that the torah calls you "Kadosh" for that?!

But one small kabbalah that a yid makes, and he holds onto it with his whole koach taking care not to slip "omrinan linazira 'schor schor, likarma lo sikrav'." It is enough to make him Kadosh. And even Hashem [who is called "Ish"- Hasem Ish milchama] wonders about this-

Ish ki yafli, Hashem is in awe!

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by jewish jew - 03 Jun 2012 11:12

MT, maybe that is where they (GYE or whoever it was) got the idea for lust addicts (????), to learn in the programs, the AA book (???)

JJ

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by tehylimzugger - 03 Jun 2012 11:27

[jewish wrote on 03 Jun 2012 11:12:](#)

MT, maybe that is where they (GYE or whoever it was) got lust addicts (????) to learn in the programs the AA book (???)

JJ

Like!

See, smach to the 12 steps from the Torah!

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Dov - 03 Jun 2012 17:40

[Machshovo wrote on 01 Jun 2012 14:33:](#)

A Great Tactic to Protect Ourselves from the YH

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needs to stay away from eating grapes, raisins, or anything that comes from a vineyard, so that he should not come to actually drink wine; so too regarding a woman that is not yours, all forms of lust are forbidden. This includes lustful acts, lustful looking, lustful talking, lustful hearing, and even lustful thoughts.

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Shabbat Shalom

MT

I call that "drawing the battle lines back", and it is a wonderful eitzah indeed! Of course, in my experience the ones who will actually take that advice and *do it*, are the ones who *need* to for personal, real reasons - not the ones who just *want* to, "cuz Hashem says so".

When Rbban Yochanan ben Zakai was dying, the gemorah says his students (tanno'im, mind you) asked him for a brocha. He responded: "May your fear of Heaven be like your fear of your fellow man."

They said, "Excuse us? Rebbi..." That's all??"

He answered, "*That's not good enough for you? **Halevai** it should be so! Know this: a person does an aveira and he says in his true heart - 'as long as no man sees me...'*"

Those were tanno'im in training with one of the greatest tannas of all time and during the dorr of the beis hamikdosh. Gevalt. We are far - very far - from expecting that knowing the "G-d says it is a no-no" will be effective. These tzaddikim are telling us not what is "forbidden to us" - they are telling us to be realistic with ourselves and to draw back the battle lines! When I am between a sweet sex fantasy *already in my head* vs Hashem and His Holy Torah, **the schmutz will win most of the time!** I know the Torah, and I know the truth - but it is all my head - but my (very own) **body** is telling me that the Torah is stupid at that moment.

Saying this is apikorsus is just plain silly. Of course our bodies tell us apikorsus. Our bodies are stupid and know only pleasure and pain. Addiction is amoral, not good vs evil, cuz it is the body, not the 'whole me' that is enslaved and ill.

So yes - draw back the battle lines. For I can be 100% sober and serene - but when I elect to accept in an image or consider a fantasy of euphoric recall in my mind...the power of the image and the lust changes the entire way i will be thinking! This tzaddik will convert into a slave to lust and become totally convinced I will die without it. Hey, what about the deveikus I was just feeling ten minutes ago?

Guess what? It's gone. It's wgat many Rebbes teach, that the *ikkar* avodas Hashem is when we do *not* have the his'orerus. Rav tzvi-Meyer Zilverberg shlit"a talks about this very often, from them.

And the his'orerus does not leave addicts because we'd be resho'im. That is what our fears tell us, but it is a lie. It's because we are ill, and on some level the his'orerus is not of this world - *on **this** world's standards, it **is** fake.*

So I am clearly ill in my addiction. I have an allergy to taking lust. And G-d knows it is an allergy, and that it is not like other people have it. It's not '*just a guy* (or yetzer hora) *thing*'. Nu, it's not as *respectable* as 'fighting the yetzer hora' - but at least it works! I am sober! The sooner a true addict accepts the truth that he has lost and cannot win without a miracle, the sooner he or she (I) will have a chance at taking the right medicine, v'rapo y'rapay with Hashem's loving help.

Gevalt! Macht leibedig chevrah!!

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 08 Jun 2012 19:21

This week I spoke to one of our esteemed chaverim about the nisyonos encountered while walking in the streets and the importance to daven for Hashem's help (e.g. '???? ???? ????? ??? ???'). I told him of a Tefilah mentioned in Chazal which I adapted for such purposes. Here goes:

Chazal say (Berachos 17a): R' Alexandri would add a personal prayer after Shmone Esray - May it be Your will Hashem our G-d that You place me in a corner of light and do not place me in a corner of darkness etc.

What is a corner of light as opposed to a corner of darkness? Perhaps we can explain as follows:

Chazal relate (Avoda Zara 20a) that R' Shimon ben Gamliel was standing on a step in Har Habayis (temple mount) and he saw an extremely beautiful shiksa, so he praised Hashem for having such beautiful creatures in His world. R' Akiva saw the wife of the wicked Turnusrufus, and he spat, laughed and cried. He spat upon the realization that she came from a stinky drop of semen. He laughed because he foresaw that she will convert to Judaism and become his wife. He cried because her beauty will eventually rot in the earth. So the Gemara asks, what heter is there to look at a woman? And the Gemara answers, it happened at a corner, i.e. when he turned the corner she suddenly appeared to be standing there and he saw her unintentionally.

I think we all have such situations where we are not 'looking' for trouble, but nevertheless trouble is looking for us and pops out suddenly from nowhere. Like when turning a corner, or someone opening a car door, or coming out of a store, etc. For this we can daven that Hashem place us in a 'corner' of light and not in a corner of darkness, i.e. that He send us only pleasant surprises and not such sights that will throw us into darkness.

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MT

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Dov - 10 Jun 2012 05:37

Amen!!

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 13 Jun 2012 21:23

A Tip for Guarding our Eyes

The weather out there is turning warmer (and will eventually turn even warmer). As a result, we are confronted with bigger nisyonos in shmiras einayim. I would like to share a tip which may be helpful for those who haven't already figured it out on their own.

There is a saying - I think in Sefer Chassidim:

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Nothing blocks desire like shutting one's eyes.

I think there is a deep message herein. Very often, our eyes may accidently encounter a sight that we should not be looking at. We may dutifully turn our head away, but even as our head is turning away, our eyeballs may remain locked onto the sight for a second too long. Perhaps a better idea would be to immediately shut our eyes and then start turning our head away.

Works for me.

MT

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 13 Jun 2012 21:26

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 13 Jun 2012 12:30:](#)

Please do not use this tool when driving your own vehicle.

--Elyah

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 13 Jun 2012 21:31

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 14 Jun 2012 16:22

[Machshovo wrote on 13 Jun 2012 21:23:](#)

There is a saying - I think in Sefer Chassidim:

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OK, use it while walking (and while driving someone else's vehicle
Nothing blocks desire like shutting one's eyes.

Yes, it's in Sefer Chassidim (ch. 9). And for those who may have it wrong, The author, R' Yehuda Hachossid, was not from the contemporary so-called Chassidim. He was one of the Rishonim (see the "Rishonim" book by Artscroll). In ch. 1 he defines a Chossid as one whose heart wants to love Hashem and to completely do His will (like all of us here?).

Anyhow, here are his beautiful words in ch. 9: The main strength of chassidus is from the beginning to the end. Even if people make fun of him, he does not leave his Chassidus, and his

intentions are l'shaim shomayim. And he does not gaze at women, even when among others who are all looking at women, such as when he attends a chuppa/wedding, where the women are dressed up in their fineries, and everyone is looking, but he does not look. In return, he will merit the great reward that is stored for the G-d fearing, and his eyes will enjoy the glow of the Shechina, (as the possuk says) "Your eyes will see the king in his splendor". Therefore, it is proper that when one encounters a woman, whether single or married, whether non-Jewish or Jewish, whether old or young, he should control his face not to look at her. As we find by Iyov, "I established a covenant for my eyes, and I will not look at a female". Similarly it says in Sefer Ben Sira: Keep your eyes away from a triggering woman, for you may get caught in her trap. And (the possuk says), One who shuts his eyes from gazing at evil (he will merit a high level of Gan Eden), and Chazal explain that this means not to look at women when they are doing laundry at the river, and they lift their clothing not to soil them, and their legs are exposed, for that is considered 'ervah'. **And so too said the wise man: Nothing blocks desire like shutting one's eyes.**

MT

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Dov - 15 Jun 2012 00:19

Wow, what a powerful eitzah! I have found that shutting my eyes when I notice a person I might lust after is so great, so liberating, and that it needs to come first - *before* turning my head - as MT suggested. (Boruch shekivanti, as I wrote about that a few times.)

It was an einfall when I realized and admitted to myself and to others, that I can be as sober as ever - yet when they schmutz hits the eyes ***and I take it in willfully*** - my very brain changes. This occurs immediately. Lust suddenly becomes attractive and sweet - I feel its pull. Gevalt. It really begins to feel that 'getting a *really* good look at her' is in my very best self-interest. I am not describing a philosophy - I *remain* a frum and good man. But my ***heart*** has changed completely. The power of the brain and lust. It doesn't matter how good I am or how strong my recovery is - I am hard-wired. An addict.

Boruch Hashem I see and can admit this to others! That way I might remember it and keep admitting it to myself!

But...(always one of those!)...this, like everything, needs *siyata diShmaya*. For when guys make women into big bad wolves (that are pretty), they have already lost the war.

"Nothing makes desire come to life more than convincing ourselves that women are naturally

I need His help so I remember that women are His people, just as I am. People with their own avodah and place in His plan, *even* if they are goyos and *even* if they are prutzos. When we use them (really **abuse** them) by taking in their images and checking them out and using their stuff for our pleasure and fantasies, we are *always* making them into objects - something they are not. To Hashem, they are *people*.
sex objects." - unknown sefer known as "The Sefer of One Sexaholic's Experience"

So avoiding looking at a women in the eyes or face *even when speaking to them*, or even for a sister or mother might be *great* for some guys - and poison for others. The ones who are lusting when they look them in the eye know it, and ought to simply need to be self-honest. But for the ones who are adding gedarim of hevel, it is poison with a triple danger:

- 1- they may be self-righteous as kedoshim, which brings gayvoh;
- 2- they gain a false sense of security, and will fall nonetheless;
- 3- they are ruining a wonderful, wonderful tool (closing of the eyes)!

Siyata diShmaya is a beautiful thing.

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Re: Good intentions

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 15 Jun 2012 15:14

Tips for Success

Speaking of (real) Chassidus - and of Siyata Dishmaya - I just came across some holy words in Mesilas Yeshorim (ch. 20), where he discusses three ingredients needed to achieve the proper balance of "chassidus":

1. One must really have pure intention to serve Hashem.
2. One must strongly examine all his actions to make sure they match his intentions.
3. After all that, one must surrender his load to Hashem (???? ?? ?' ????) and place his trust in Him.

Concludes the Mesilas Yeshorim:

If any one of these are missing, it is hard to imagine that he will not fall.

But if he properly heeds all three conditions, he will surely succeed, and no evil will befall him.

Gut Shabbos

MT

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