

Hello everyone

Posted by davidngu613 - 20 Apr 2013 01:37

Hi everyone. I'm 18 years old, modern orthodox, and going off to yeshiva next year. I've been struggling with the nisayon of lust for as long as I can remember. Although I've been observing this community of warriors from the sidelines for quite some time, I think I'm finally ready to become a member of it and to restart my journey with help and guidance. This is my story.

I honestly can't even remember when this problem began- definitely way before puberty. It had always been bad, but it got much worse when I discovered that the Internet can be an outlet as well, in 8th grade. It slowly got worse as the years went by; every year around Yom Kippur I told myself I would stop, but, as you all know, it never lasted. In fact, I tried to stop countless times but nothing ever worked. I hated this secret part of my life and always felt that it made me a hypocrite. After 10th grade was when the flood gate opened. I was at it, easily, 2-3 times a day. I was in a hole the depths of which only the people in this community could ever understand. I put so much filth into myself that year that I gave up hope of ever stopping.

The following summer changed my life. I went to a learning camp, became inspired (not to mention clean for over a month as there was nothing to do except learn, talk with friends, and sleep) and when I got back I decided that I couldn't go on with this double life. I gave stopping an extremely serious, mature effort for the first time- and things improved, somewhat- but never for very long. After so many years of self medication and obsession, things weren't going to get better so quickly.

Finally, after a streak of failures this past fall, I confessed to my dad that my laptop was ruining my life. It felt really good, although I was SO embarrassed when I was telling him, and I knew that I had just won a major victory for Hashem. (Despite that, I still don't think he really understands the extent of the problem- he probably just thinks I have a self control issue). I was clean for my first 90 days after that, but it was MAMESH GEHENOM ON EARTH. Every night I died trying to push away the fantasies and desires. Since I've been around this site for a while I know about Dov and I would like to paraphrase something he posted once: "Without Hashem, trying to restrain yourself is like holding your breath- eventually you have to let go". And that's exactly what happened to me after those 90 days- I had to let go, and fell.

Some time after that, after another particularly hard fall, I believe I experienced what is commonly referred to as "hitting bottom". I knew that something drastic had to happen in my approach to this whole problem. What I was doing wasn't working, and would likely continue not to work. Trying to restrain yourself, cutting off all access to the Internet and fighting with all your might was ineffective. I had never really taken GYE seriously before this, but now I realized that

it was my only hope. After spending a lot of time on it, I finally internalized the idea that I have an addiction, a disease, and that I need help.

I want to restart my journey, everyone, and I need your help. All my aspirations for myself, for what I want to accomplish in my life- being an eved Hashem, a talmid chacham- will go down the drain along with my tiny portion in Olam Haba if I don't get out of isolation and work the 12 steps. Can anyone offer advice to someone like me? I know that I'm somewhat of a minority in this community- most people are married adults, with kids. I haven't reached the point where my life has been completely ruined, but I feel that if I don't do something now, it very soon will be.

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by inastruggle - 23 May 2013 22:50

for me the difference between a shavua and kabbalah is saying hashems name which makes it more chamur. A shavua is a really serious thing so i try to avoid it if i don't feel it's necessary instead for the easy things i use a kabbalah that i won't do it.

About making a broader shavua, 1) like chacha and you yourself said, it doesn't work many times because when push comes to shove you might break it. That's why when i made them i tried circumventing the direct struggle and using them to not get into a situation that i can fall in.

So try to find indirect ways to fight the yetzer harah, (otherwise known as avoid the fight) it's easier to win that way.

in the meantime you're doing great, KOT.

TO DOV: though i think you made some good points, not sure about the halacha part (but if you're the rov as you crowned yourself a while ago then i can't argue)

tell you

what /av suicide is. I'm not bluffing so watch your steps very carefully.

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by Dov - 27 May 2013 02:00

Sorry if I went too far again.

And I am far from being any kind of Rov (even a bad one).

In the big-picture, picture: I see swearing of any kind as a nice tool to use to stay sober and work steps or do whatever real work a person need to do to live on a different basis. If it works for you, then it is not goofy. But if that is all a person is doing, I am sorry but that is just plain Look out!)

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by Avrom - 27 May 2013 02:44

[inastruggle wrote:](#)

for me the difference between a shavua and kabbalah is saying hashems name which makes it more chamur. A shavua is a really serious thing so i try to avoid it if i don't feel it's necessary instead for the easy things i use a kabbalah that i won't do it.

goofy. (Aye!

Correction: Forgive me Inna, A shvua IS VALID even if not said with the name of Hashem! So if you just want to make a kabblah DON'T MENTION the word SHVUA. Yes, its less severe but it still counts as a shvua!! On the other hand, only a Shvua with the name of hashem can be undone by a Rabbi.

I will update this post when I double checked, until then please dont make kabbalah's with the word shvua.

Small insight: What in essence is a shvua? The talmud explains that heaven and earth shake
Why is a shvua so severe?

The chinuch explains: A shvua is basically saying "Just like Hashem is true, its true that I will/will not do ...". By breaking the shvua we are stating "Hashem is not true". So only by saying the name of Hashem the shvua is in full effect. But even without saying the name of Hashem the same message is sent. Taphsik is the most dangerous tool in the when a shvua is made

GYE arsenal. It helps me on a daily basis. Use it with caution!!

Update: As it turns out my memory didn't let me down. See Shulchan Aruch Siman 237-1 "A shvua is valid even without the name of Hashem and in any language. (Yesh Yad L'shvua)

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by inastruggle - 27 May 2013 07:31

To Dov: The truth is that I agree with you 100 percent and if someone is just forcing themselves to stop by using a shavua then they aren't really getting anywhere (I believe AA refers to that as a dry alcoholic right?).

However two things,

one if a person isn't ready or willing to solve the problem then it might be best to just force themselves to stop.

I'm assuming that you disagree because then the person might never start real recovery. I hear that but it's still an issue each time someone falls, and the person might never start recovery so isn't it better at least for the person to be clean even if he's still a full addict? because this is different than alcoholism or even gambling, this is serious issue each time, and another thing is that if the person is a dry addict then at least he's living for the most part even if he's an addict so wouldn't it be worth it to at least use the shavuos if someone isn't ready to commit to actually start the recovery process?

The second thing is that like you told me once, not everybody here is addicted (If i remember correctly you said most people here probably are not addicted) so in that case then the shavuos are all they need.

Now as chutzpahdig as i sound, i actually think that you know what you're doing seeing as lot more experience than i have so i'm not really trying to argue with you, just trying to get you to explain yourself so please do.

Also about the rov part, look what i called you in the next post.

Also gevurah sends regards.

you've had a ~~little bit~~ uh oh...

Warning: Spoiler!

Also you called it goofy again

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by inastruggle - 27 May 2013 07:41

Lekavod R' Avrom Shlit"a, (not to be pogeia in Mara D'website K"K ADMO"R Harav Dov Shlita's kavod in any way)

Thanks for the warning.

B"H i don't use the word shavua when i make a kabbalah, the nusach i use is bli neder i will/won't [rhymes with...] which is hopefully not a problem at all.

And like R' Dov was saying earlier another reason i try to avoid using the shavua is because that isn't the answer and i want to be controlling myself without them as much as possible.

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by Dov - 27 May 2013 22:40

I don't want to be controlling myself at all. Controlling myself was always the biggest reason I ended up acting out my lust. I'm an addict, tried everything, and do not need to die trying more and more things once I get sick of trying so many things (even more mussar and chassidus and this kind of chassidus or that kind of chassidus and this medicine and that rov and that shrink or this rov and the other shrink)...once I find what works, *stick with it!* Yisro would have dies trying new gods....b"H he didn't need to. Some people are not really searching to find - they are searching to search. Thank G-d I am not that way. I do not need to control lust at all, b"H. I surrender it and depend on my G-d to take good care of me one day at a time. And it works far better than any Torah/mussar/shrink/medicine/chizzuk ever did, for me. For those things are not made for this job, bichlal.

Sheesh.

Not goofy! Not goofy!!

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by Dov - 27 May 2013 22:47

I don't want to be controlling myself at all. Controlling myself was always the biggest reason I ended up acting out my lust. I'm an addict, tried everything, and do not need to die trying more and more things once I get sick of trying so many things (even more mussar and chassidus and this kind of chassidus or that kind of chassidus and this medicine and that rov and that shrink or this rov and the other shrink)...once I find what works, *stick with it!* Yisro would have died trying new gods....b"H he didn't need to! He found what works, so the search was over. Some people are not really searching **to find** - they are searching **to search**. Thank G-d I am not that way. Woo, I searched *porn* that way, searching one day at a time for better and better, always needing. It's never ending searching, never satisfied. B'H that's not the way recovery is. Recovery for me is *Shabbos*. Kol m'lacht'cho asuyah. Phew! I do not need to control lust at all, b"H. I surrender it and depend on my G-d as best I can to take fine care of me for today without my assisting Him with my lusting, jealousy, resenting and fixing my wife, kids and others, and without any help from my guilt or fears. And it works far better than any Torah/mussar/shrink/medicine/chizzuk ever did, for me. For those things are not made for this job, bichlal.

Sheesh.

Not goofy! Not goofy!!

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by mr. emunah - 28 May 2013 00:19

Whats wrong with Swearing?

kolaBAD WORD REMOVEDz!

@!#@#@ @#\$!! @#\$@#\$@#\$!!

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by inastruggle - 28 May 2013 06:18

[Dov wrote:](#)

I don't want to be controlling myself at all. Controlling myself was always the biggest reason I ended up acting out my lust. I'm an addict, tried everything, and do not need to die trying more and more things once I get sick of trying so many things (even more mussar and chassidus and this kind of chassidus or that kind of chassidus and this medicine and that rov and that shrink or this rov and the other shrink)...once I find what works, *stick with it!* Yisro would have died trying new gods....b"H he didn't need to! He found what works, so the search was over. Some people are not really searching **to find** - they are searching **to search**. Thank G-d I am not that way. Woo, I searched *porn* that way, searching one day at a time for better and better, always needing. It's never ending searching, never satisfied. B'H that's not the way recovery is. Recovery for me is *Shabbos*. Kol m'lacht'cho asuyah. Phew! I do not need to control lust at all, b"H. I surrender it and depend on my G-d as best I can to take fine care of me for today without my assisting Him with my lusting, jealousy, resenting and fixing my wife, kids and others, and without any help from my guilt or fears. And it works far better than any Torah/mussar/shrink/medicine/chizzuk ever did, for me. For those things are not made for this job, bichlal.

Sheesh.

Not goofy! Not goofy!!

Wahhhh!!!!!!

eh. i say tamahto you say tomato.

If we're clean s'macht nish kein chilik if you call it controlling yourself or surrendering it to Hashem. In fact to be insistent that it be called surrendering might just be goofy

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by Dov - 28 May 2013 06:32

Maybe thats all it is. But there are chilukim between many people who profess those two beliefs in practice, attitude, and expectation. In the long run, I believe it makes all the difference for some people. Not all - and surely most here are not addicts at all, so for them there is no difference at all. Is that OK for me to say?

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by inastruggle - 28 May 2013 06:49

YUP

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by davidngu613 - 28 May 2013 08:42

Words of wisdom from Reb Dov and the chevra as usual.

In connection to the discussion we've been having, I want to share about the new approach I've taken to combating my sexaholism. I posted last time about I haven't really been participating as fully as I should be in the community, kind of coming and going, posting when I feel bad, riding the emotional and spiritual roller coaster of feeling terrible then subsequently close to G-D after a fall, thinking of new strategies and tips, being clean for 3-4 days, then falling again, posting... you guys get the picture and have all been through this.

I thought that by joining GYE and reading the chizuk emails, and posting, and chatting, and reading the handbook and different eitzos and stories on the site was all I needed to do stay sober.

Then I realized that it had already been a month since I came to GYE and I was still getting nowhere- I still had yet to even attain a week of sobriety and it was getting ridiculous. I had progressed quite a bit since before joining in that now I had an account and a thread and some inklings of a chevra which was regularly reading my updates... in other words, everything was in place for me to take the next serious step in my recovery. Only I didn't realize the most important thing. That all this...this whole thing... the forum, the posting, the reading, the whole online experience is just the appetizer, the introduction. Its a support system, a way to connect with new people, a place where we can share and learn new things...but all with the safety and anonymity of being planted in front of a computer screen, without having to actually talk to real people, and be brutally honest to someone's face.

The meat of the whole recovery thing, I realized, is not the forum and the books and the eitzos and the chizzuk and the emails. The ikkar (for an addict, which I'm convinced more and more every day that I am) is the 12 Steps, real sharing with real people in real life (or over the phone, which is currently where I'm holding, but I hope to start meeting people as soon as possible, B'H) and SA groups. The fact is that the main message of the 12 steps program is Let Go and Let G-D, except that we can't exactly do that because people are way more real for us than G-D. In order to let him into our life, we have to let go of our old gods, the naked women and constant pornography and masturbation. We do this, as Dov has brought up over and over again in the phone conferences, by making it real, humanizing our old "goddesses" and bringing them out into the open where we can see just how full of air they really are.

Anyway this is just one thing that R'Dov as opened my eyes to in the past week and I have to say that I'm glad to finally be on his call and have someone with so much experience and understanding to guide me.

Just to conclude, I was wondering if anyone would like to be my partner? The reason i ask here and not on the Partner program is bc the latter is kind of random and I've already tried it without great results; besides I figure if you guys are posting here, there's some kind of interest in whats

going on with me... I'd like it if you are in a 12 step program but its not necessary. As Dov always says: "The best thing about my partner is that he's not me" The point is to get it out there and into the open.

On that note, KOT and thx for reading as usual.

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Re: Hello everyone

Posted by cordnoy - 18 Jan 2015 11:06

There is somethin' for everyone in this post; enjoy!

[Chachaman wrote:](#)

Im just getting caught up on your earlier posts, and I have several ideas that are kind of a running commentary as I read through your earlier posts. They are in order, so bear in mind which one's I'm responding too.

I think this might be the longest single post in the history of GYE lol. Hope I'm coherent enough and I hope it helps. This is stuff that I have gathered from my time here, but I don't know if it's official or correct.

Shmiras Einayim Yesod. Often if we don't pay attention to shmiras einayim (it's been difficult for me, I've gone to a public school), we think that these urges come out of nowhere, but they are secretly being fed the whole day. We're fighting lust, not the symptom (but it sounds like you've been reading a lot, so you probably know that already).

For me, I've tried getting out of the house—like I said, rationalizing that “I have to study” or have work to do doesn't mean that we need to spend the whole day at home on a computer “working” while we have other tabs open on Sports News, CNN, etc. So I'm trying to say “from here until here I'll study, the next 3 or 4 hours I'll take time off”.

Also, I used to have cheshbonos about becoming a talmid chochom, fulfilling my dreams, etc: in my humble opinion, I think it's best to leave the CONSEQUENCES up to Hashem. We can control the effort we put in, but what happens is up to Hashem. Right now, I'm just going to focus on doing what I need to for TODAY, without worrying about the Rambam's idea about you have to be in the same situation to do Teshuva, or Sha'arei Teshuva, etc. I'll worry about that in a few years.

What makes you think you aren't an "eved Hashem" already? It's the first Mishnah Berurah (I was going through it recently): that "Kol hanikra bishmi v'lichvodi b'rativ": Hashem created the world for us to serve Him. R. Yochanan ben Zakai in Pirkei Avos: Im lamadta Torah Harbeh, Al tachazik tova l'atzmecha, KI LECHACH NOTZARTA. Whether we like it or not—whether we even serve hashem or not—we are avdei Hashem, since that's what he created the world for. It's our responsibility to do our duties as avdei Hashem, but we are all created as avdei Hashem. That's my opinion—I don't know if that's correct or not.

Another big thing that I've found is that we focus on the ADDICTION too much, and not the LIVING part of it. I used to spend lots of time drawing up elaborate fences, attitude ideas, shmiras einayim, stuff, etc, and I think I've realized a few things:

#1, by focusing on it a lot mimeila you're giving credence to the Y"H. More importantly:

#2 The whole point of this isn't to cure the symptom of m* or even lust, but instead LIVING. It's a long process, but life doesn't consist of an endless battle over "to fall or not to fall is the question". We need to start living, learning, and in some cases (mine included) dealing with certain problems that might have triggered it in the first place.

Sometimes when I'm at home all day, it becomes an endless struggle; I try going and playing basketball, shopping, or doing something to get out of the house so that I'm actually living, and life isn't an endless struggle.

Of course, it is a huge struggle—tremendous struggle! That was AWESOME—all capital letters-tremendous-I-don't-have-the-adjectives-to-describe-how-AWESOME and how much courage it took for you to start tackling the problem and telling your father. (That's much farther than where I am—I couldn't dream of telling either of my parents, a rebbe, a friend, anyone.)

(Sorry I'm reading through all of your previous posts all at once).

About the 90 days: it's not a goal, but just a tool some people find helpful. As mentioned, if we go out and really LIVE one day at a time, that's the ultimate goal. As with any other area, all growth is one day at a time.

"The first week or so after a fall is usually ok, though no guarantees": only worry about today, not about "patterns", or what has happened in the past or what will happen in the future. Since you are living in the present, you can only worry about and control what you do in the present. This is another mahalach to answering your question about 90 days: why worry about day 90? Just worry about where you are, and you'll take it one day at a time—B"H you'll reach 90 days, and then you can worry about it. (You have me beat there too—I've never reached 90 days! My best was 55 days, and that was mostly because of a 6-week summer learning program.)

DON'T use an unfiltered computer unless someone else is with you in the house, and is in a position to see what you are doing. (Don't worry—you could still use GYE, they probably won't see what you're doing or even try paying enough attention to see. If you're really worried, have a few tabs open.)

Congrats for dealing with this (like me) early on before it becomes a full-blown, lifestyle-type problem. Personally, I don't think I need the twelve steps (i.e. I'm not addicted enough), but from what you said, it's possible that you're more addicted than me (or it's also possible that over your previous 90 day period, you were fighting a battle with no weapons—you didn't know about shmiras einayim, etc.)

If you wear glasses, taking them off when walking is a lifesaver—trust me, no one cares, and you can just say "I'm resting my eyes". You don't miss anything important either (unless you're trying to catch a bus or something and need to see which station it is).

For me, I try moving on. If I had a failure 5 seconds ago—well, I'm living RIGHT NOW, so I can't control that. Time to forget about it, stop guiltting myself, and do everything I can RIGHT NOW.

The "friends" problem for me is difficult—I'm in a public school, with few religious friends to relate to. (Actually, I'm graduating in a little while, so that'll be behind me.) In hindsight, I think a lot of my m* problems grew out of not having anyone to talk to / feeling isolated, so I would disagree that the friend situation is "a totally separate parsha".

For me, in the "heat of the moment", when the tsunami is about to strike, it's "run like hell". I try to get out of the house immediately. However, part of my problem is the Y"H convinces you that falling isn't so bad, that being struck by a tsunami is okay and isn't so bad.

Surrendering is very difficult, I know. I personally am looking for ways to strengthen my emunah.

"Every time I feel closer to giving up... All I want is to be able to get to two weeks- that would mean Im at least improving."

Of course you're improving! If someone is truly happy, are they constantly looking over their shoulder saying "oh yeah, I'm happy now! I'm now happy!" Of course not! True, while they are thankful for what they have, they are just HAPPY without verifying it.

You're recovering right now, whether you know it or not. A fall doesn't meant that you've lost any of your previous progress. If you think about it, let's take myself as an example: I've fallen probably at least a 1,000 times in my life (from the 6th grade until now; probably more than that). So now I am in recovery. Is Chachaman with 1,001 falls in recovery qualitatively any different than the Chachaman with 1,000 falls in recovery? I don't think so. Not that I am making light of the severity of a fall; chas v'chalilah. I'm saying that AFTER THE FACT, if you really think about it you are still making progress, and one more fall hasn't set you back to the bottom of the ladder.

It's very good (it sounds kind of funny saying that it's "good" lol) that you've hit bottom; I don't think I have yet. Preserve that feeling and remember it—it will give you a very solid reason to KOT when the going is rough.

Beautiful on the davening! Again, I've had this problem since a long time; I've always been thinking "well, I'd better do Teshuvah while I'm at public school to fulfill what the Rambam says". Look at me now: current streak is 9 days, about to graduate high school.

The CHESHBONOS are counter-productive. Take it one day at a time. It's very tempting to say "I'll go into Yeshiva recovered", but these issues quite honestly take more than a few months to recover from. It's ingrained life-and-emotional issues (at least it was for me). To improve in LIVING, getting closer to Hashem, is a slow process.

I've been on this site a year-and-a-half, and I'm still struggling. So don't give up; KOT.

Very true: if you've made it 90 days once, you can do it again! How? By taking it 1 day at a time.

"When is Hashem finally going to have Rachmanus on me, and let me beat this nisayon?"
Answer: when you let Him have Rachmanus on you and let Him, not you, beat the nisayon.

True: everyone here is warriors, but that's another good point. As Dov says frequently, he's not worrying about being a tzaddik or seeking recognition from anyone. He doesn't care what Lav suicide is; he doesn't commit suicide for obvious reasons, but doesn't expect fame and acclaim for not committing suicide.

"I'm a bit wary of the Taphsic shvuos. They seem to be for people who need a bit of help controlling themselves. It doesn't address the emotional issues that are often the root of the problem. Based on what you have posted, I'm not sure Taphsic will help that much."

I agree. They're one tool, but not THE tool.

Anyway, sorry for such a long post, but good luck! It seems like (at least to me) that the two of us would probably have a lot in common in real life.

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Re: Hello everyone
Posted by thetest - 27 Jan 2015 05:12

"If you wear glasses, taking them off when walking is a lifesaver—trust me, no one cares, and you can just say “I’m resting my eyes”. You don’t miss anything important either (unless you’re trying to catch a bus or something and need to see which station it is)."

I never realized what a blessing I really had. I had read before that taking off your glasses is a great way to avoid things that shouldn't be seen. I had just never tried it. I am so grateful I read this post last night. I tried it today--I should add that I walk around on a college campus, full of znus--and it is such an amazing feeling. I feel open and free. I can look around and not worry and it feels like a huge burden has been lifted off of my heart. With that said I have to be Ezra careful now when I have my glasses on, not to develop the habit of thinking I'm in the clear and don't have to be on guard. Such a wonderful gift I have though. I really must thank Hashem and you all.

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