

**My Beginning**

Posted by Inspired - 05 Jul 2019 04:10

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I call the subject of this message 'My Beginning' because that is what this is for me. I am 24 years old, married with a wonderful son and I have struggled with issues of pornography, masturbation, and I guess overall lust. I've tried everything to change and get out. Just recently (like two days ago!) I realized for the first time that I have a problem and this isn't simply another nisayon. It wasn't one of those thinking hard and taking a long look in the mirror moments. I quite honestly am not certain what happened. All I know is that I have to change me; not simply overcome a difficult challenge. My realization is that I am no longer in a battle, but a full blown war to reach the person who is "I".

In my years of struggle, I have yet to reach out to a group. It's actually quite amazing to be a part of something bigger than myself. I think that will help me.

I told my Rav two days ago, when I started this new life, that I don't think I can do it. I don't believe in myself and a (big) part of me wants me to continue down the path of physical pleasure. But reading about others' experiences is a true chizuk.

I checked the calendar to see when my 90 days would be up and what I saw brought tears to my eyes. That's right, my 90 days of sobriety will be completed on the second day of Rosh Hashana. A new year! A new beginning! A new life!

I am still learning how GYE works and the layout of this website, but in just 24 hours since signing up someone reached out to me. PLEASE CONTINUE!!! It gives me chizuk to know that someone with the same struggles cares.

May we all be zoche with Hashem's help to reach our own personal Rosh Hashana.

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Markz - 05 Jul 2019 04:17

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Welcome brother.

‘Adam nidon bechol yom’ it's rosh hashana every day.

Making a goal is nice, but don't pin your hopes on it. If you can make it till the next rosh hashana which is tomorrow, that's also an accomplishment.

Life is about living and growing, not about achieving, cos that is in Gds control.

KUTGW!

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Re: My Beginning  
Posted by Inspired - 05 Jul 2019 04:33

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Thanks!

Sound wisdom!

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Re: My Beginning  
Posted by David26fr - 05 Jul 2019 07:36

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You recognized that this isn't just another nisayon : it's a big first step !

Just 2 points :

- Don't make the 90 days like an absolute objective, I agree Markz on this point. Making objectives could be a good thing, but could also make the things worse (depression if you fail to accomplish them, stress, etc...)

You have to make efforts to your sobriety, each time by each time. One day at a time.

Your objective is to manage the moment, make a program, and the rest is in Hachem's hands....

Perhaps you will make it to 90 days, perhaps not. But this is not important.

- Why this is not important ? This is the second point...

Because sobriety is not just about "I mustn't fall". It's rather to work on yourself and to CHANGE your way of life. You can be sober for 100 or 200 or 300 days, but if you don't have a deep and serious change in yourself, you could become a "dry addict" : you think you are sober, but you are not, and there is an high risk of relapse...

You have to identify what are the triggers that make you fall. Why do you fall. Because this addiction is just a symptom... But the real disease is in another place. It could be unsatisfaction, stress, or whatever.

And the real work is here.

For my example, I am very sensitive to stress, it's a big trigger to me. And when I am working on my stress (with meditation, positive thinking, musar...), I clearly see that I have less and less

Behatsla'ha !

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Inspired - 05 Jul 2019 18:47

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Markz and David26fr,

I am amazed at the wisdom you are giving me.

falls. And if I stop my program... well, there will be some consequences

Here's my skepticism...I am concerned that I will always be that "dry addict". I am more practical-based and I judge myself on my accomplishments. I think I have a very negative perception of myself because I don't think I've accomplished anything substantial in life (maybe) or because I don't think I am actualizing my potential. I tell myself that if I exercise every day or learn four hours a day b'hasmadah or do that chesed or treat my wife such and such then I will be happy with myself. But I know that isn't true. I am stuck in this thinking.

I want to think like the two of you because the emes is so clear.

Any advice?

Thank you Achim!

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by ColinColin - 07 Jul 2019 00:01

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Welcome.

You are 24 years old.

What are you supposed to have accomplished?

You have a marriage, a child, and I guess a job?

A great platform for life.

Sure, history has examples of people who "Accomplish" great things in their early 20's....usually in sports and music.

They are a tiny minority.

But holding down a job and raising a family in today's tough economic environment is a great accomplishment.

And if you keep Kosher and Shabbat too....that is excellent.

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Inspired - 08 Jul 2019 04:34

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ColinColin,

Thanks for the encouragement!

I understand what you're saying, but that is a difficult mindset to adapt to especially when it doesn't come naturally to me.

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Singularity - 08 Jul 2019 08:37

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[Inspired wrote on 05 Jul 2019 18:47:](#)

Markz and David26fr,

I am amazed at the wisdom you are giving me.

Here's my skepticism...I am concerned that I will always be that "dry addict". I am more practical-based and I judge myself on my accomplishments. I think I have a very negative perception of myself because I don't think I've accomplished anything substantial in life (maybe) or because I don't think I am actualizing my potential. I tell myself that if I exercise every day or learn four hours a day b'hasmadah or do that chesed or treat my wife such and such then I will be happy with myself. But I know that isn't true. I am stuck in this thinking.

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Any advice?

Thank you Achim!

Hello Inspired.

ps I am 28.

I am extremely practical-based as well. It's not just you! I'd learn ten daf chazora a day. And have all these calculations. Not to mention I'd act out profusely and darker ever more, too!

What accomplishment is ever really going to satisfy that desire for accomplishment? I see you've already identified that as well.

I love your first post and attitude. You remind me of me four years ago. How do you start thinking that way? I'm not sure. Either through lots of trial and error (which could be up to 120!) or submission of the truth about ourselves. How did I start? By breaking my ego progressively, because if I'm not so inflated then I don't have to keep accomplishing to produce that helium, you know.

I am sober one day at a time because I am slowly recognizing God as my best friend. He keeps me sane each day, and each day I experience untold gifts in life I otherwise would never have even been aware of. And for that I am grateful. To top it off, I believe I am "accomplishing" more now than what I was before. Even if I don't learn at all in a day!

I admit it's not easy, for a perfectionist. But that life was hurting a little too much for me.

and I wish you much hatzlocha on your path.

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by strugglingbochur - 08 Jul 2019 14:08

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Hey!

You're not only inspired but inspiring.

I'm in the same boat as you, just 26 years old. While I've been struggling for years and been clean for stints at a time, I never felt that I have it under control. I just started a 90 day challenge 5 days ago too and reading your post inspired me to write the first thing I ever have on here. I'd love to connect and be partners in this together. I really think supporting one another is the way to go. When you can feel not ashamed and face the challenge head on it's easier to make progress.

Please reach out to me, I'd love to get to know you!

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by sbj - 09 Jul 2019 00:42

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Inspired: Many of us are guilty of being harsh on ourselves. It's very easy to fall into this trap, especially in our overly demanding, fast paced, instant results culture. And even more so for people with a fine heart and high standards. Feelings of unworthiness can also be a factor, as we only feel 'valued' when we can 'prove' something, even just to ourselves.

Maybe try the following, it has worked for me. Look at yourself in the mirror and ask forgiveness from yourself, for being so harsh. Then thank yourself for forgiving... (If your inner boy is not ready to forgive yet - as was my experience - thank him for considering or even just listening). Try to do it 3 times a day, or if that's too much, whenever you remember. For me, after doing this for a little while, it has lifted the load of my own demanding standards for myself. I feel much lighter and experience less frustration and feelings of inadequacy.

Now, Hashem has created this world with you in it's plan. You're a unique individual with massive potential and maybe you're destined for greatness! But let's try to imagine how all the great people got to their high levels. They each had their goals and standards and constantly worked to become better and grow higher. It was consistent hard work bit by bit towards their goals, that got them somewhere.

At your age people usually have yet to figure out what they want to do with their lives. If you happen to know roughly what you want to accomplish, maybe it's time to sit down and write down what you want so you get clear. (You may do it multiple times to get really clear). Form them into goals. Short and long term. Create a plan to achieve your goals. Maybe get knowledgeable about goal setting etc. If you're not sure yet what you want then figuring this out may be your first goal...

(Honestly I feel awkward writing about goal setting, this is something I've 'known' for a while but could hardly get some real results yet. So, I'm not talking from real experience here, but it's common sense).

On the other hand we have to accept that we are limited, acknowledge our weaknesses and appreciate small wins. And of course ask H' for help and guidance.

Speaking of goals, accomplishment and feeling ok, it's probably worth mentioning another point. We're conditioned to dismissing the importance of 'process' and focusing only on the end goal. Instead of focusing on the present moment, on what we're learning & trying to acquire, we eagerly look forward to and are mostly focused on the 'result'. This causes frustration and distress; lack of satisfaction from the small successes along the way; being less efficient due to not being fully present, but somewhere in the future.

So, focusing on what is at hand, being in the 'here and now' is also a major factor in overall well-being.

Hatzloche!

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Inspired - 12 Jul 2019 08:13

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Singularity,

I love this line "What accomplishment is ever really going to satisfy that desire for accomplishment?!" Pure Genius!



You sound like someone who understands my predicament.

Can you, perhaps, provide more practical advice on how to have that shift of mindset from the need to grow and being dissatisfied with oneself to appreciation and gratitude?

Thank you!

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Inspired - 12 Jul 2019 08:21

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Sbj,

You sound like a man with experience!

Looking into the mirror thing has yet to be my tactic, but I'll give it a go!

I agree to setting a goal and like you implied it's easier said than done!

Living in the moment has been previous on and off avodas of mine in the past. It is so difficult to stay motivated. I tend to jump from one thing to the next.

I appreciate what you said and if you can provide some ways that helped you I would appreciate it!

Thank you!

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Inspired - 12 Jul 2019 08:25

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Strugglingbochur,

I would love to team up in our avodah together. Two is better than one, ain't it?!

I received your private email and will respond accordingly soon IY"H!

(P.S. How do you initiate a private email to a member of GYE?!!)

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Markz - 12 Jul 2019 10:45

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Here you go :-)

[guardyoureyes.com/component/uddeim/?task=new](http://guardyoureyes.com/component/uddeim/?task=new)

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Re: My Beginning

Posted by Markz - 22 Jul 2019 04:15

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You figured it out?

cool!

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