

First day

Posted by Azorli - 20 Apr 2022 21:32

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This is my first post. I've been struggling with shmiras enayim on the internet for 18 years, and hotzaas zerah for 15 years. I've tried to stop over and over again. but I've always ended up falling given enough time. For me it's a given that I'm going to fall again if I don't try anything different. I feel like if I try something new, it will give me temporary help, but permanent help is impossible. I feel like I'm fighting myself and since my addiction is so strong, it's impossible for me to win. I'm hoping that this program will give me the encouragement and strength to finally stop for good.

Thanks for listening.

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Re: First day

Posted by Vehkam - 20 Apr 2022 21:36

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Please look back at my very first posts. You definitely can be successful. Feel free to message me and wishing you the greatest success

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Re: First day

Posted by committed\_togrowth - 21 Apr 2022 01:07

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I feel your pain, but you can do this and success if possible! One thing I learned along the way is that hotzaas zerah is neither a physiological nor a psychological need. We can actually just not do it! A lot of what draws myself and many others here to act out is that we use this as a coping mechanism for stress, loneliness, etc. Those are solvable problems, and the act itself we absolutely are capable from abstaining from and being happier for it. I think secular culture particularly trains us to think that this is an unconquerable issue and a need (i.e. if you don't satisfy your cravings you will become deranged/repressed/unhealthy) but that is a falsehood. Welcome, may you have much success! Looking forward to hearing more about your journey.

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Re: First day

Posted by TheNextStep - 21 Apr 2022 06:34

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Welcome, and I understand where you're coming from on a few levels.

It will be well worth your time to check out rabbi Shafier's "The Fight" audio series which you can find in the audio section here, or on his website The Shmuz.

There's one in particular that addresses falling, and what to do next. Just in case you don't check it out, here's a short version. The fight is just as much about getting back up as it is not doing in the first place. If you're running a marathon and you trip, maybe you lose a couple minutes, but if you get back up as soon as possible, you don't fall behind very much.

He also adds that, if you struggle and still fall, that struggle is still a victory. Hope something there helps. I think it helped me, and if you're not convinced then I really recommend his series, because he explains everything fully there.

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Re: First day

Posted by Azorli - 21 Apr 2022 13:07

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Thank you all for your words of encouragement!

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Re: First day

Posted by Trouble - 21 Apr 2022 14:30

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[committed\\_togrowth wrote on 21 Apr 2022 01:07:](#)

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thank you; it's definitely used as a coping mechanism (and sadly, it works temporarily at least). where is this secular culture you are referring to? i see all over the place movements to stop smoking, drinking, drugs, prostitution and the like.

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Re: First day

Posted by committed\_togrowth - 21 Apr 2022 18:57

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Hard to put my finger on a specific example, but I feel like in a lot of tv and movies (and also just in conversation with friends before I became a BT) you would often hear the idea that everyone who isn't fully exploring and embracing sexuality is repressed, that it's healthy to indulge yourself and if you don't you're going to develop a complex. There's also the common idea of "use it or lose it." That's also not to say that there are not good and productive movements to improve in these areas from secular groups as well, but I would say that's not the average. Hard to discuss specifically without devolving into crude language, but I'm happy to discuss more over private message.

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Re: First day

Posted by Azorli - 25 Apr 2022 14:55

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I'm on day 4 of my 90 day count. One problem I'm having is that certain images that I've seen in the past keep replaying in my head. These images are hard to get out of my head, and lead to a desire to act out. Anyone have any suggestions on how to stop these thoughts and also how to resist the urges that come with these thoughts?

Thanks!

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Re: First day

Posted by committed\_togrowth - 25 Apr 2022 15:13

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My advice would be:

1) Don't panic, don't judge yourself, don't think it's a sign that you're not growing, doing poorly etc. They will become less prominent with time. This is just something we have to deal with in this struggle.

2) Rabbi Shafier in the Fight talks about the "gel capsule method," which I found helpful. He says when you take a pill of medication, it doesn't release into your body until the gel capsule around it dissolves. This is kind of analogous to how thoughts pop up. At first, they come into our conscious as a vague impression or suggestion, and at this stage they are still in the gel capsule. It's much easier to say no at the gel capsule phase by quickly switching tracks to a different thought or even for me just physically shaking my head as if to say no and "shake it off" (not too hard you don't want to hurt your brain)! If you let the capsule dissolve, it's much harder to move past the thought.

3) Studying Torah, particularly something you really like will also help. The general approach is not to push off the thought by force of will, but to substitute it with something positive/benign.

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Re: First day

Posted by 5Uu80\*cdwB#^ - 25 Apr 2022 16:27

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Hey Azorli,

I had this problem for years and it led to fall after fall until I realized that I was the one perpetuating the problem by continuing to give attention, emotions, and time to the images in my head. The only solution is to simply move on from those images in your head to other thoughts and don't look back and don't feel bad about yourself. With time their frequency will die down as you simply stop attending to them. If you can make your days full of meaningful and productive tasks, you can just move on when these images come up in your head.

I hope this helps you, too. Unfortunately or fortunately, however you look at it, I don't believe there is any other solution. This is how the mind works.

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