

Just getting started

Posted by monseyid41 - 13 Mar 2023 03:24

Hello everyone, I am a new member of GYE and I am excited to be joining this chaburah of Yidden who are striving to come closer to Hashem. I would like to start out with a confession of sorts. I actually signed up about 2 months ago, not really knowing what this was all about, but hopeful that it could be helpful to me. Before I actually checked in or started any kind of program, I was reading a lot of the different comments from people in the forum, just to get a feel of what people were struggling with and to see if there was anything in common with my own struggles, and I was actually kind of turned off. Because when I was reading all the different stories of people with the challenges they have, I started thinking: "This is really not for me. True, I struggle with Shmiras Einayim, and I have looked at things and done things I shouldn't have, but these people are talking about addiction to porn, masturbating daily for years at a time, etc. these people have serious issues, I'm just a regular person who once in a while gets caught up with the Yetzer Hara. This is not the kind of crowd I belong in". Yes, that's the view that I had from up on my high horse. But some time after that I fell again, with porn and masturbation, and when I was feeling all guilty and horrible about myself, it hit me. Maybe I do need some help. Maybe I'm not any better than all those people in GYE that I so casually dismissed. So I went back on and started reading some more. And one of the first things I read in the forum was from Eerie, entitled "It's all in the name", and I literally broke down crying. Because I have so many things in common with his story. For one, I don't believe that I'm addicted, but it really doesn't matter if you give yourself (or anyone else) that label. The main thing is I have fallen many times in the past, and I am looking to improve myself, and that is true about everyone here. Also, I too am in chinuch and I am dealing with the same feelings that Eerie expressed about the hypocrisy of someone teaching Torah and giving over our heilige mesorah to the next generation when he himself gets caught up in the worst Aveiros (I read the responses as well and I found them very much on target). And then, when he mentioned that he discovered one computer in his school that had unfiltered internet, I almost fell off my chair. This literally happened to me as well (do we work in the same school?) So, thank you Eerie, for opening my eyes and allowing me to realize that we are all here for the same reason; not to judge anyone else and decide who's better than whom, but to grow together and help each other in our shared goal of Kirvas Elokim. And thank you as well to everyone else (if you're still reading at this point, double thank you!) for allowing me to join you all in this holy endeavor. I haven't actually gotten to my story yet, but I think this is enough for now. I would like to wish you all much Hatzlacha in your Avodas Hakodesh and I hope this can be a fresh start for me as well.

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by retrych - 20 Apr 2023 15:42

from Torah.org

The letter is found in Pachad Yitzchak: Igrot U'ketavim No. 128.

Your letter reached my hand, and your words touched my heart. Know, my friend, that your very letter belies the descriptions that it contains. Now, let me explain this statement.

It is a terrible problem that when we discuss the greatness of our gedolim, we actually deal only with the end of their stories. We tell about their perfection, but we omit any mention of the inner battles which raged in their souls. The impression one gets is that they were created with their full stature.

For example, everyone is impressed by the purity of the Chafetz Chaim's speech. [Ed. Note: The Chafetz Chaim led the battle against lashon hara and is held up as the model of how a Jew should speak.] However, who knows about all the wars, the battles, the impediments, the downfalls, and the retreats that the Chafetz Chaim experienced in his fight with the evil inclination?!

As a result [of this gap in our knowledge of gedolim], when a young man who is imbued with a [holy] spirit and with ambition experiences impediments and downfalls, he believes that he is not planted in the house of Hashem. This is because this young man thinks that being planted in Hashem's house means experiencing tranquility of the soul "in lush meadows beside tranquil waters" [Tehilim 23:2].

However, know my friend, that the key for your soul is not the tranquility of the yetzer hatov, but the war against the yetzer hara. Your letter testifies that you are a faithful warrior in the army of the yetzer hatov. There is a saying in English, "Lose the battle and win the war." You surely have stumbled and will stumble again, and you will be vanquished in many battles. However, I promise you that after you have lost those battles, you will emerge from the war with a victor's wreath on your head.

The wisest of all men [King Shlomo] said [Mishlei 24:16], "The tzaddik will fall seven times and will rise." The unlearned think that this means, "Even though a tzaddik falls seven times, he will rise." The wise know well that the meaning is: "Because a tzaddik falls seven times, he will rise." On the verse [Bereish't 1:31], "And Elokim saw all that He had made and it was very good," the midrash comments, "'Good' refers to the yetzer hatov; 'Very good' refers to the

yetzer hara.” [In line with this midrash, R’ Hutner continues:] If you had written to me of your mitzvot and good deeds, I would have said that it was a good letter. Now that you tell me of your falls and stumbles, I say that I have received a very good letter. Please, don’t picture to yourself that a gadol and his yetzer hatov are one and the same; rather, imagine the gedolim at war with all types of base tendencies . . .

I have seen fit to write these words to you so that you can refer to them from time to time. Regarding specific details, it is preferable to speak face-to-face.

You are one who is planted in Hashem’s house!

Sharing in your suffering,

Confident that you will prevail,

Praying for your success,

[Signed] Yitzchak Hutner.

P.S. Now you understand the opening sentence.

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by Eerie - 21 Apr 2023 00:27

[monseyid41 wrote on 20 Apr 2023 14:37:](#)

Hi everyone, I just wanted to share a feeling with you that I have been having recently as I read some of the members' stories on the forums. There is a famous letter from Rav Hutner Zt"l to a

struggling Bochor, a Talmid of his, where he gives him tremendous Chizuk. The entire letter is a gold mine of good advice and Hashkofas Hatorah and I have received a tremendous boost from reading it over and over throughout the years, but there is one line in that letter that I thought of recently.

He quotes the famous Passuk "??? ???? ???? ??" and he says that the foolish person thinks that what this means is that a tzaddik is someone who, despite falling numerous times, still gets up from the fall and continues onward. However, the wise person knows that what this really means is that the Tzaddik gets up BECAUSE OF his numerous falls, not in spite of them, meaning that the Tzaddik's struggles, his battles, and yes, even his falls, are all part of what has made him great. He has reached the level that he reached because of all the struggles he has gone through and at the end he has emerged victorious. (I am not doing justice to his words, I think it's really worthwhile to see it inside. Besides for the content, he also writes so beautifully).

The reason that I thought of this now is because I see so many heilige people here who are chronicling their stories, and inevitably that includes not just their successes but also sometimes their falls and I wonder to myself, how do they do it? How does someone post that he just fell after 20, 30, 50, 100, days but they are starting over again and are committed to keep going, keep trying, (or keep trucking, as R' Eerie likes to say). I myself don't know if I would be able to do that. But the answer is that these Tzaddikim seem to understand what Rav Hutner was telling his Talmid. That the fall is just another step on the journey, another road on the path leading to their greatness. They're not getting up despite their fall, but rather because of it. Thank you to all those that have inspired me and given me this insight.

Thank you, my friend, for that beautiful piece. If I may add, I think a huge part of what gives us strength to fight continuously, and especially to pick ourselves up after a fall, is realizing that every moment is it's own cheshbon. The whole 90 day thing is a way of rewiring the brain, but it is absolutely not about the streak! If a guy has a 250 day streak, then he falls for 2 days in a row, is he greater than a person who had two streaks of 125 days and then fell one time and the end of each streak? Absolutely not. So it's not about any streaks at all, it's about being clean **today**. It's about every moment that we manage to fulfill his will and get closer to him, to be mekadesh shem shomayim. When we fall we don't "start over again". We continue exactly where we left off. That's why in GYE if you click on your profile you can see how many accumulative clean days you have. Because the length of the streak is not the goal. It is no more than an incentive to make you feel good. But we gotta keep reminding ourselves, every moment that we are clean and good, that is the goal. A fall does not take away your closeness

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by monseyid41 - 25 Apr 2023 14:13

Just reached 50 days. Almost didn't. Apparently, the YH wasn't going to let it happen without a

fight. Yesterday, he gave me a very stressful afternoon at work. The kind of day where you leave thinking: I'm done, I'm not going back. So all I wanted to do was crawl back to the screen and comfort myself in the way that I had gotten used to. But I didn't. And I'm here on day 50, still standing.

How did I do it? I honestly don't know exactly. But two things stick out in my mind that definitely contributed. Firstly, I knew that I would be here today posting something. Either I would be posting about a fall, or I would be posting about reaching 50 days clean. I very much wanted it to be the latter.

Second, since coming here and starting my clean streak I now know that I am capable of dealing with my stress in other ways, or just letting it run its course. In the past, when I would be feeling like this, I convinced myself (or, more accurately, the YH convinced me) that I just had to watch something to distract myself or to calm myself down. But yesterday, as those thoughts entered my head, I stopped myself right away and said: No, that's not true. You know that's not true, because for the last 7 weeks you've survived without that. As soon as I said that, the urge was noticeably reduced.

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by EccentricComposer - 25 Apr 2023 14:16

Wow, you are an absolute hero! Thank you so much for the post, its so special!

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by Eerie - 25 Apr 2023 23:12

[monseyyid41 wrote on 25 Apr 2023 14:13:](#)

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My friend, I know I'm a mushy guy, but you mamash made me so emotional with this, I was close to tears from joy and proudness! Keep soaring higher and higher, and keep sharing and inspiring us all!

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by monseyid41 - 03 May 2023 14:57

Okay, confession time. I spent an hour and a half yesterday on Youtube. Nothing bad, just sports. So maybe technically not a fall, and I guess I should be happy that I'm still "clean" but I'm feeling more anxious than happy. I have been on this road before and I know where it ends up. I desperately want to turn around and go back to where I was the past 2 months.

Growing up as a fan of a particular sports team, I always had a passion for this sport. When I went to yeshiva and got serious about my learning, I left it behind, but it never completely left me. So, a bunch of years ago, when I started slipping and spending a lot of time on youtube, one of the things that I got into was following my old team. I would watch highlights of the games, and things like that. Thankfully, for the last couple years my team hasn't made it very far. But yesterday, after almost 2 months of completely cutting myself off from any kind of news, I had some extra time on my hands and the Y"H convinced me to check the scores. When I did, I was shocked to see that my team had won the first playoff series, something they haven't done in a long time. I immediately got such a high from it (sports fans out there know exactly what I mean) that I decided to go on Youtube and watch all the highlights from the series.

Now I'm really conflicted. This fever has really gotten hold of me, but like I said, I know where this road leads to and I don't want to go there. How do I extract myself before something worse happens?

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by cordnoy - 03 May 2023 15:23

[monseyid41 wrote on 03 May 2023 14:57:](#)

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You can hope (or pray) that the Lightnin' or the Heat knock your team out!

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by chancy - 03 May 2023 15:40

[monseyid41 wrote on 03 May 2023 14:57:](#)

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Sit down and think hard and long about the 2 options you have in front of you.

Option 1. Go back to some of your old ways and playing with fire which probably will end up with you doing worse stuff which you will regret.

Option 2. Learn from your old mistakes and do not go down that route again, now your YH tells you its nothing to watch a little sports, but you are not a little kid that the YH can fool, you know the truth because you have been around the block a few times. So if you feel that YouTube is your weakness, then lock it up and throw away the key, get the filter company to block it completely! Thats how you grow. You learn from your fall and do not repeat anything that you know does not work.

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by cordnoy - 03 May 2023 15:47

[cordnoy wrote on 03 May 2023 15:23:](#)

[monseyid41 wrote on 03 May 2023 14:57:](#)

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Oops, I'm slippin'.

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by EccentricComposer - 03 May 2023 19:25

Thanks for sharing. You got this, I really believe in you, Hatzlacha rabba!

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 03 May 2023 21:02

Hi and welcome. Recently i have not been able to access the forums for more than a few minutes each day. Today i finally had the opportunity to view some new threads such as this one. All i can say is R' MonseyYid you are a real inspiration for the oilam. I hope as you continue b'ezras Hashem to leave all the garbage behind, that you start helping others who are just beginning. Your ability to express yourself so intelligently, coupled with your most challenging history, along with your apparent emotional depth, make you a real candidate to help the chevra. May Hashem shower you with hatzlocha!

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by monseyid41 - 04 May 2023 14:49

Wow! Getting any response from HHM is enough of a Kavod, but such a post is really humbling for me.

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Re: Just getting started
Posted by Eerie - 04 May 2023 17:17

[cordnoy wrote on 03 May 2023 15:47:](#)

[cordnoy wrote on 03 May 2023 15:23:](#)

[monseyid41 wrote on 03 May 2023 14:57:](#)

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I was thinkin' the same

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Re: Just getting started

Posted by Eerie - 04 May 2023 17:21

My dear friend, Reb MY41, you don't cease to inspire. I think the best way to stop anything is reach out and talk. Getting out of you your own little box, hearing from other people, sharing what is on your mind, these are powerful things that give the ko'ach to overcome the tests. Keep sharing, and keep trucking!

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