

Striving

Posted by jollylemur95 - 14 Oct 2024 15:29

Hello,

This is my first time on the forum. It took me a lot of courage to go on to it. I have been struggling with these things for awhile. Usually it was M as porn was not accessible. I have always tried to keep all my devices clean. However recently I was exposed to an unfiltered device and I feel into that too for a while. BH that device is no longer accessible so I don't have to deal with that angle of it for now. But now Masturbation is the main concern. I am trying mightily to kick it but I feel like a caged tiger that is waiting for a release. Every walk down the street , to grocery, Bais Medrash, is agonizing. Keeping my head down at all times is my only option ant women regardless of how appropriately she is dressed is a trigger. Is there anyone who has some chizuk or guidance for me?

In addition I want to be clean from this stuff not because it is not accessible but because it is the wrong. I feel like if I got my hands on an unfiltered device it would be under a minute I would in the depths of this shmutz.

I just wish I can be normal that not every women is an almost overpowering urge to Do P&M.

Can anyone help?

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Re: Striving

Posted by jollylemur95 - 26 Feb 2025 19:41

I wanted to relate something that happened recently that maybe can help me (If I can get it into my heart anyway.....)

I was forced to go somewhere else today that presented many kedusha challenges. (looking which leads to thinking which leads to acting out, hameven yavin) I walked in with my 10 year old son beside me. I had to take care of some paperwork for what I was there for and went directly to the front desk to takes care of it. After I was finished , I started turning around to find a seat until the other papers were ready. My son takes my hand and leads me to the best seat

in the house from a shmiras Einayim perspective. Away from the magazines, screens, people, etc. He already knew where I would have wanted to sit because I are trying to clean up my act, (No , he does not know my struggles. Just knows I am trying to get better in these things) He sits down and makes a point of showing me how he chose this seat because of the benefits for kedusha. I was so full of nachas that he was trying to guard his eyes. (not to mention all the nachas I got from him when we soon started talking about the mishnayos he was learning in yeshiva to keep my mind off all the things around me). It got me thinking..... As much as I love (before I hate) looking at immoral things, I definitely do not want my son having to deal with all my struggles. He is kadosh and I want him to remain that way. (A feeling all of us can relate to) He is too young to understand the full extent of this nisyon but he just knows from watching me recently that I am trying to keep my eyes away from these things. He knows that he should not look at these things either. So I had 2 thoughts. 1. Even if I can not find any joy or enthusiasm in overcoming my desires for immorality, I should not think about myself. My son is watching me, or getting ques from me what I stand for even if he is not there at the moment. That might give more motivation in this battle. 2. I was thinking how much nachas I got from him at that moment. I said to myself: If this is how much nachas I am getting from him without knowing how much (if any) taava he has for these things, but doing it because he knows his father wants it. Then certainly, our father HKBH who knows our very strong desires for these things and knows we are trying not to look because that is what he wants, Can I imagine how much nachas he gets from every time we hold back...?! This might make the battle for me a little more in the moment, and not abstract concepts that I can not feel. Of course it is entirely possible that when faced with a huge urge, I will not feel it but will be just another one of great ideas in my mind that have a very long trip to my heart. But definitely something else for me to chew over.

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Re: Striving

Posted by amevakesh - 26 Feb 2025 20:11

This resonates very deeply with me. When I was in the grip of lust, the biggest deterrent for me, and the thought that made me feel like a hypocrite the most, was not "what would my friends say", not "what would my wife say", not "what would my parents say", not even "what would my Rabbeim say", but "what would my pure children say if they knew what their father, who they adore and look up to, struggles with". This was one of the only thoughts that would even get me emotional.

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Re: Striving

Posted by jollylemur95 - 09 Mar 2025 15:21

Just a quick update without any other of my boring ideas.

Had a good week 2 weeks ago without continuing my slide to the abyss.

Last week life got more stressful and my feeling of vulnerability continued.

Came across a few strong triggers and literally felt like I was ripping my eyes off it. Even though I had only just seen it a second earlier.

Feeling so sick with this fight. I want to give in.

But I can not!!!

I have to take responsibility. I have to tell myself . Be a man!! Stop trying to blame everyone and everything for your struggles.

Ein hadavar toloiy ala bee.....

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Re: Striving

Posted by lamaazavtuni - 09 Mar 2025 23:43

R jolly your four months in this already!!!

You know how to handle this, stay calm you got this.

Your loving friend

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Re: Striving

Posted by jollylemur95 - 17 Mar 2025 17:10

My wife tells me I was crying hysterically to her on Purim how hard shmiras Einayim is for me. (Honestly, I do not recall it)

I have mixed thoughts about it.

She knows even before Purim I am trying hard to get better in Kedusha. (She does not know about the P& M - at last not the full extent) She sees how important it is to me.

She has definitely understood me more when I tell her I would rather not go somewhere because of the hazards involved.

On the other hand the fact that this is one of the things I am speaking about when being somewhat drunk perhaps means I am spending way too much time thinking about my struggles. It obviously is a big part of who I am but I have to take it down a notch.

The problem is that because of my weaknesses, I am confronted with a nisoyon of varying levels wherever I am except when I am learning. Have to somewhat stay focused on it.

Any ideas?

Meinyan linyan boisa inyan:

I had a thought that is terrifying and hopeful at the same time:

I feel that I am losing motivation to keep fighting. It is SOOOOOOOOOO difficult to keep it up. I am not acting with the same alacrity that I did when faced with a nisoyon. (if its sound contradictory to the first part of this post, I have the same kasha) I can not say that I fell or even slipped b"h but I feel that I am being more acceptable of getting into trouble. Case in point: I was somewhere surrounded by people in close proximity, including some who were not dressed appropriately. It was for the most part non-yidden. I tried keeping my eyes to myself but somethings came to my line of vision. While I did turn my eyes away it was without any fire or passion. It was perhaps a little slower turning away as well. I greatly respect those who are calm when facing a nisoyon. This was without fire not because I was unfazed and calm by it, but rather because I am losing the motivation to keep doing it. (A big difference)

I was thinking as to why I am getting like this. I honestly do not know for sure, but I truly believe that it is revealing a shortcoming in yiras Shamayim. I really think if I was on a higher level of Yirah I would still be motivated. (a very distressful thought)

But there is a kernel of hopefulness as well.

Let me explain:

Many people can agree with me that when many (maybe all) people come to GYE it is not a yiras Shamayim issue. Once I got so into the dirt it was not something that a few good mussar sederim can help. It was living in a world that celebrates promiscuity, and glorifies immorality, without being given the tools to fight against it. A totally uneven battle. When I was in yeshiva as a bachur the whole topic was off limits. (not that I would have understood even if it was discussed because most of my problems read: P & M other than fantasizing and looking started after marriage.) When we come to GYE, it is not like a magic pill that we take and tada! I am clean! Not at all. What GYE does is that it teaches us the tools to break free and evens out the playing field so it is more of a fair fight. I truly believe that if I get my yiras shamayim in order I will be more motivated to keep fighting. (This is not to say it will be easy as the YH is very strong as well). If that is the case then it means I have gained so much on GYE! It means I have learned some tools to make this regular milchamas hayetzer like any other. (admittedly, not exactly like any other because I fed this YH for so long and the tavva is very strong, but you get my point). It means that I am definitely in a better place than I was a few months ago. That gives me hope that perhaps one day I can start making internal change for real. Maybe even hope that one day it won't always be one long suppression of my tavvos. Now wouldn't that be nice?

In closing, it is very distressful that I realize I am so lacking in yiras shamayim. I have started saying a lot that as a human, falls and setbacks are to be expected. But I say it could be expected but can never be accepted! But believing that working on that will help me shows what I have gained from you guys over this time!

For that I say Thank You!!! (and please do not stop!)

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Re: Striving

Posted by lamaazavtuni - 17 Mar 2025 19:43

Jolly !! There's nothing to add here you said the question and gave the answer. You shteiged tremendously and yes it's slowly becoming a YH just like lashon hara that most of us don't have huge fire not to say. But we sometimes control ourselves sometimes not. Originally you were on fire about this topic now it's becoming more of a normal yetser hara. Congratulations hatslacha!!

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Re: Striving

Posted by simchastorah - 17 Mar 2025 21:20

It does seem to be a popular opinion on GYE that those coming here aren't struggling because of a lack of Yiras Shamayim. I assume the reasoning behind this is that the same person who is so heavily involved in ????? is at the same time careful in other areas of halacha, maybe some, maybe most, maybe all. Also because the people here usually come with a lot of guilt about what they're doing.

Personally I'm not convinced that this is right. Maybe the right way to look at it is the other way around, if I so blatantly transgress in a stringent area of halacha again and again that's a proof that my rigidness in other areas is not because of yiras shamayim, but because of something else. If I really had yiras shamayim then I wouldn't be falling all the time in this area either.

However if I'm right, it's still true to say that it's not a yiras shamayim issue. Because once we've established that it's possible to keep many areas of halacha without yiras shamayim, the difference between the guy who struggles with porn and the guy who doesn't is likely not an issue of yiras shamayim at all. The other guy doesn't have yiras shamayim either, but for some reason the same things that are enough for him to refrain from eating pork are also sufficient to keep him away from porn. So in terms of the avoda I have to do it's very likely not yiras shamayim, like is attested to by the success of so many in staying clean without the focus being on yiras shamayim.

I don't mean to say I think it's any particular person's fault for not having yiras shamayim. We've been living in a reality which is ????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????? for thousands of years, surrounded by degenerate cultures, full of traumas etc.

I know this is probably an unpopular opinion and I don't mean to offend anyone. I would love to have yiras shamayim and maybe one day I will. And I don't hold the fact that I don't against myself or anyone else. Yiras shamayim is the one thing hkbh asks from us (not sure what to do with the rest of the pasuk exactly but that's what the gemara says) so clearly attaining it is a major accomplishment. Vzeh col ha'adam. And there's no reason to think that because I made it to 20, 30, 40 years old without ever eating pig on yom kippur that I accomplished the only thing that is really asked of me in the end of the day

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Re: Striving

Posted by chosemyshem - 17 Mar 2025 22:40

Whoa was not expecting that hot take. No one has yiras shomayim was not on my list of expected GYE opinions for today.

I'm maskim to an extent. I'm sure no one today has the yiras shomayim the simplest tailor did etc. etc. And certainly nothing in the same level of existence as what even the greatest kofrim of Tanach had.

But then yiras shomayim stops being a reasonable metric. I'll be judged based on the levels I reach of yiras shomayim in comparison to what I could have reached. Not what Mechel the tailor may or may not have reached (which we will literally never know.)

What stops me sinning in other things? I don't know, probably there's a minute amount of yiras shomayim in there but probably it's mostly other things (like what's socially acceptable.) But so what. Call it whatever you want. I happen to think it makes sense to use the familiar term yiras shomayim.

The point is that there is a yotzei min haklal for porn that is remarkably different than the entire other area of my avodas Hashem - where I deal with my yetzer hara sometimes better and sometimes worse but overall functionally. So the porn is not a testimony that the rest of the avodah is fake, it's a testimony that there's something sick with porn. And so it's possible to heal that sickness so that porn become a "normal yetzer hara" (in theory. Haven't seen it happen.)

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Re: Striving

Posted by jollylemur95 - 17 Mar 2025 23:37

[simchastorah wrote on 17 Mar 2025 21:20:](#)

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I tend to disagree with the premise that people do not have Yiras shamayim. I agree that there are some people who meet your description. (I shudder thinking that it may be me) The majority I would say do have at least some minimal level of it. There are some very chashuva people who struggle with this stuff. Speak to HHM. He can tell you what type of people he deals with. But that is beside the point. We can agree to disagree. I obviously do not know everything and it is possible that I am wrong.

The point I was trying to make was that once I was doing this on a more consistent basis, it almost felt like I had no bechira. It does not make a diff if I was technically "addicted" or not. I could be screaming at myself "Don't do it, don't do it!" and do it anyway while I am screaming. The reason being that I did not know how to deal with it. I believe that this YH is diff then many others in that regard. It was like what the gamra says putting a kid on the doorstep of a bais z'nus and expecting him not to sin? What GYE does is to give us the tools to fight it. It makes it a fight we can win.

Again, I have been wrong before and will be wrong again. But that is how I see it.

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Re: Striving

Posted by simchastorah - 18 Mar 2025 00:34

@shem I do mostly agree with what you wrote and some of it (the last paragraph) was included in what I wrote. However in my view yiras shamayim is not a "metric," it's an internal "perspective" which is very hard if not impossible to measure from the outside. (My Rebbe once told me from someone (if anyone knows who I'll be grateful) that the only ones who know if a person is yarei shamayim are they themselves, their wife, and Hashem.

Also to clarify I am not saying "no one" has yiras shamayim. I am saying you can't tell, and that it's an accomplishment. Though when you represented my view as "no one" you may have been exaggerating, it's hard to tell in text.

@jolly 1) I see very chashuva and yiras shamayim as two separate categories 2) telling yourself "don't do it! don't do it!" is not necessarily yiras shamayim. Don't do it is a very practical ratzon. But the basis of that ratzon is what may or not be yiras shamayim. For example if I am telling myself not to do it because if I do I will feel like a piece of garbage that is not (necessarily) yiras shamayim. I may feel like a piece of garbage for doing it for some other reason. I can certainly relate to screaming at myself "dont do it dont do it" while doing it. But if I saw the gates of hell open under my feet with an extremely clear understanding that "doing it" was my ticket to enter I'm sure I wouldnt have done it. (This being the lower level of yiras haonesh, not trying to be magdir exactly what that is, just a mashal)

I want to reiterate - none of this suggests to me that what one should therefore do is start learning more mussar. I fully agree that for most of us that's not the eitza. However if learning mussar were as effective in developing yiras shamayim as we would like to believe then maybe that would be the eitza. I could be wrong on this whole thing and I would love to receive a message from shamayim that I am a yarei shamayim.

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Re: Striving

Posted by chaimoigen - 18 Mar 2025 16:25

There are many different levels of *Yirah*

Many different levels of *Fear* -

There are times

when those very selfsame eyes

Well up with more than a tear.

After so many days, and so many times

So much heartbreak, and so many climbs,

I've run out of rhyming,

But I'm still *sincere*.

How can I know what's deep in the depths ?

only *Yodaya Taalumos* can safely address,

I can try to redress

to assuage my distress

and my *Fears*.

Yeah-

*I'm afraid that I **won't**, and I fear that I **will**,*

*I'm afeared that I **dont**, but keep doing **until**.*

???? ???? ?????? ?? ??????

What does it mean?

I'm afraid I don't know,

and that's ok.

In a world gone mad

I try to do

what makes me feel

is right and true

is that *Yirah*?

I do it because

it's how I live

it's who I am

I talk to You

I feel you want me

Sometimes

I want to feel You

Sometimes

I try and I'll keep trying.

Ill keep working to get better.

Is that Yirah?

dunno

It's good, and it's good enough for me.

Ah Bissel Yireh.

Ah Bissel Ahava

Ah Bissel Bitachon.

????? ???.

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Re: Striving

Posted by jollylemur95 - 18 Mar 2025 18:59

Chaim Oigen:

It has been mentioned once or twice that I can be somewhat slow on the pick up.

Is there a way to rephrase that without the rhymes?

Sorry for the tircha.
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Re: Striving

Posted by chosemyshem - 18 Mar 2025 19:06

[jollylemur95 wrote on 18 Mar 2025 18:59:](#)

Chaim Oigen:

It has been mentioned once or twice that I can be somewhat slow on the pick up.

Is there a way to rephrase that without the rhymes?

Sorry for the tircha.

Are you asking Chaim Oigen to engage in *blank verse*??!! HERESY!

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Re: Striving

Posted by chaimoigen - 19 Mar 2025 15:35

[jollylemur95 wrote on 18 Mar 2025 18:59:](#)

Chaim Oigen:

It has been mentioned once or twice that I can be somewhat slow on the pick up.

Is there a way to rephrase that without the rhymes?

Sorry for the tircha.

Sigh. I'll try. I won't be able to fully express every emotion this way. And it will be a long Droshe and less poignant. But for you, dear Jolly, I'll do a lot.

To me, an analysis if a person truly has Yiras Shamayim or not is a loaded and not-so-relevant question.

First of all, there are many different levels of Yirah.

Fear of people, fear of embarrassment, fear of various forms of punishments, all these are included within the categories of Yirah. There are Pesukim and Seforim that describe derogatorily people who refrain from Aveiros for these reasons. But it's also clear that refraining because of any of these reasons is still better than falling, obviously! And they seem to fall within the general category of Yirah. Rav Yochanan seems to have been very comfortable with the idea that good Jews refrain from Sin because of fear of other people ???? ??? ???.

So, first off, I think that it's not proper to say "I have zero Yiras Shamayim, it's only social pressure and the way I was raised." That's also a kind of Yiras Hsamayim, albeit a lower level. Maybe it's not ideal, but it ain't nothing. And something is good. (We're not consistent? Yeah. I

know. It frustrates me too, a lot more than I like to think about.)

But, getting deeper, it's hard to really know. Because It's hard for a person to really know what's going on deep inside. Only the Rebono Shel Olam, who is the Yodaya Taalumos (see Ramabm Hilchos teshuva) really understands. A person sometimes thinks he would never do something, **could never** do it, and then he goes and does it. And farkert too, sometimes a person discovers 'Mesirus Nefesh and tremendous resolve welling up inside of him, from a place that he thought was completely empty and dead. We are bottomless wells with deep, deep, eternal Neshamos, and we don't really understand what lies in the depths of our hearts. Simple Yiddin have given up their lives for the Aibershter, and I suspect that many of the good folks here would give up their lives, too. **Don't write off that which you can't measure or understand.**

The main thing is: ????? ??? ?????? ????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????? ???

Keep trying. Keep working. That's certainly a step of Yirah. And it's good and right. Do you feel sincere about trying? Yes? That's certainly some level of genuine, beautiful Yiras Shamayim, to my thinking. And I love you for it. I think Hashem does too.

Yirah means when our Emuna impacts our lives in a practical way, on a level that effects our actions and internal emotional world and life-view.

Fear of being zapped or losing your reputation is far less lofty then fear of losing a sense of closeness and a relationship with Hashem. But it's also something real. And how do you know what you really are motivated by? I've seen that most people aren't so self aware, LiTov UliMutav. If you want to get better and are trying, then there's a sense of **otherworldly awareness** in your life. One way or another, that's a kind of Yiras Shamayim. And Hashem has precious little of it in this world today, trust me.

So personally I think it's less about the analysis and more about the actions. That's what we can hang on to. But with **kindness** and **compassion**. Because you deserve it.

How many people in this filthy, forsaken excuse for world are **STRIVING**? Huh? Not enough, is the right answer. If you are **striving**, you've got a Bissel Yirah, a Bissel ahava. And that's DAMN good!

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????? ???

Love,

Chaim

P.S. I don't think that my good, special, contemplative friend simchastorah would disagree with much of what I've written. Nor have I addressed his fundamental point, which is thought-provoking and well-taken. I just prefer to approach the matter this way, with a little self compassion, and then think about how to stay clean today.

Peace,

Chaim

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