

Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.

Posted by Tomim2B - 26 Jul 2011 17:48

Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.

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I keep seeing the way the "I'm about to fall" thread is being used, and I have to comment:

We are self fulfilling prophecies, and if we reach out to people in a desperate attempt as if we're on the verge of actually falling, it's for certain that it's only a matter of time till we eventually crack and fall really hard!

In a certain sense, we've already made the decision to fall, and now we just want some support to get us to retract and change our minds.

By not letting the words "I'm about to fall" enter our minds and leave our lips, we'll have a much better shot at greater success in combating the urges, in benefiting from a sponsor, and in benefiting from a support group.

Saying: "I'm dealing with really, really strong urges!" - that's alright... "This is really tough!" - that's okay too.

Eventually the urges will pass and you'll stay on top... :D

But: "I'm about to fall!" - NO WAY!!

We have to change this.

I don't know if there's any case in GYE history that anyone became sober because he desperately posted in that thread - waiting for some "virtual" messiah (who can't even help himself) to come save him and make him stop.

Post there if you want to fall.

Don't be "about to fall" and you won't fall.

2 cents...

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by the.guard - 26 Jul 2011 18:04

2 cents...

Worth at least a buck! :D

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by 7yipol - 26 Jul 2011 19:59

Great insight.

Lets change the name of the thread!

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 26 Jul 2011 20:15

It is a great perspective. But is it the only way of looking at it?

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by ben durdayah - 26 Jul 2011 21:47

[7Up wrote on 26 Jul 2011 19:59:](#)

Great insight.

Lets change the name of the thread!

Not only that, IMHO that thread has totally digressed from what it was originally meant to be (i.e. a 911 type of affair).

I'd say lock it and unpin it from the board and start a new thread for that purpose if necessary...

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 27 Jul 2011 15:13

www.guardyoureyes.org/forum/index.php?topic=3284.msg112531#msg112531

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by OnceAndForAll - 26 Aug 2011 03:37

This is brilliant, true and a breath of fresh air.

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by Yossi.L. - 26 Aug 2011 13:54

I think anyone that what you are saying is true of people who are really along the path of recovery. However, there are people that are not near honest recovery yet but they still have the realization that they have a problem. Hence, they are crying out for help before they know they will act out. And the truth is, you're right, these people will probably act out anyways. However, at is at these very moments of irrationality that a seasoned recovering addict can help such a person see his raw honest lack addiction. It is at this very moment that you can tell such a person "YOU ARE POWERLESS" and it is at these very moments that you can have the most powerful impact on a potential recovering addict.

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by zev_17_years - 28 Aug 2011 20:56

Hello Everyone.

Someone told me about this site and as a person who used to struggle with these issues, I thought that maybe I can be of help.

Let me tell you a little about myself.

I am 46 now and have struggled with these issues until I was 25. And let me tell you that when I

say "struggled with these issues", I mean that thoughts of lust occupied my brain constantly from when I was 12. In other words, for 13 years, I have been absolutely obsessed with the body. And I mean obsessed 24x7. It colored my every waking moment and all of my interactions. Without exaggeration, lustful feelings filled my entire being every minute I was awake. I viewed porn in magazines, videos, made 900 phone calls, masturbated daily and was always busy "checking out" every girl I saw. This is absolutely not an exaggeration. In those years, it was absolutely not possible for me to see a girl and not be overwhelmed with feelings of desire. This obsession was so much a part of me – no it was me, that I don't think I ever even entertained the thought that I can possibly control this. I never thought of myself as being addicted, and being raised in a very sheltered home, I do not think that word was part of my vocabulary. This was just who I was. Oh, to be sure, I hated myself. I knew something was wrong. I knew that other people were not obsessed like I was, but it never occurred to me that I could do anything about it.

All this changed when I was 25. I went through a huge crisis, and to make a very long story short, I finally woke up and began to take charge of my life. I believe my story would serve to be very instructive to many of you and I will IYH describe it at length in some future post.

Today, I would just like to explain how, contrary to what so much of the world believes, a person can really change. And I don't mean "not fall" for a long time or even for many years. No, that is not called "change". That's controlling the symptoms. To truly change, you need to:

1) Unequivocally admit that you have a problem; (this step is the most difficult and the most important)

2) Sincerely and genuinely want to change;

This means that you want to change because you truly and sincerely want to be a better person, because you want to improve yourself, because you want to fulfill your tachlis - not that you want to change because, say, to save your marriage or reputation.

3) Work through a very long and painful process to truly understand yourself and your thought patterns;

4) Fully believe that your problem is “fixable” – ***If*** you’ve done steps 1, 2 and 3;

Notice that I did not write that you can overcome your urges simply by learning mussar sefarim and realizing the gravity of your actions. No, the mussar method works for basic shemiras einayim – not for ingrained years-long lusting behaviors.

But you’ll notice that I most definitely did write that this problem is fixable if you fully accept that you have a problem, sincerely want to change for the right reasons, and are willing to do whatever it takes to get there. This will only work though, if you truly believe that your problem can eventually be fixed. Really fixed. In fact, a part of the therapy process is visualizing yourself not having these obsessive lust desires.

How do I know this? Because, I not only have “not fallen” in 21 years, it’s over 17 years that I have not even been tempted.

The OP: “Don’t be about to fall and you won’t fall” is one of the healthiest posts I have read on your site.

But, l'Maan Hashem, in response to the words of the last reply: "YOU ARE POWERLESS", *Chas v'Sholom! I don't even want to think where I would be today were I to have been told this 21 years ago.*

Does that mean that I think we can do this on our own without Hashem? No, definitely not. This is not different than any other aspect of our lives. We need Hashem’s assistance for everything. I ask Hashem to help me constantly in both ruchniyus and gashmiyus endeavors. I have been doing this for many, many years. And I mean real tefilah – not just mouthing words, not just going through some ritual. Speaking to Hashem in English – really asking Him for help. And genuinely believing that I really need His help. But telling someone “You are powerless” will certainly lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by longbeach - 29 Aug 2011 02:00

I am only on day 8, but when I am about to fall, I log on and just start thinking aloud. It clears my head, it gives me something positive to do, and it gives me a chance to read other posts and offer chizuk (I hope that is what I am doing!).

Will it always work? Who knows, but it seems tto be working for now.

Good night, all!

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by zev_17_years - 29 Aug 2011 02:23

Dear Reb Longbeach, I beg to differ with one word in your posting: "Only". It's not "only on day 8". It is "Wow! I am on Day 8!!" Mazal Tov! The rewards of staying clear of these activities are huge. You should be beginning to feel a sense of control. Keep strong! Also, please know that at the beginning it can be physically difficult and you may experience withdrawal symptoms, so do whatever you need to do, but hang in there - it's so incredibly worth it. Chazak from all of us!

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by YMG - 29 Aug 2011 20:03

I also like what you have to say about "I am powerlessness" vs "I can do this with Hashem's help!".

I've written about this elsewhere on the site, and your post rings absolute truth.

I'm really glad we have you here!

Tomim2B

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by the.guard - 29 Aug 2011 21:19

[zev_17_years_wrote_on_28_Aug_2011_20:56:](#)

l'Maan Hashem, in response to the words of the last reply: "YOU ARE POWERLESS", *Chas v'Sholom! I don't even want to think where I would be today were I to have been told this 21 years ago.*

Does that mean that I think we can do this on our own without Hashem? No, definitely not. This is not different than any other aspect of our lives. We need Hashem's assistance for everything. I ask Hashem to help me constantly in both ruchniyus and gashmiyus endeavors. I have been doing this for many, many years. And I mean real tefilah – not just mouthing words, not just going through some ritual. Speaking to Hashem in English – really asking Him for help. And genuinely believing that I really need His help. But telling someone "You are powerless" will certainly lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Great story. Thanks for sharing... We'd love to hear more (one day).

I think you are misunderstanding how the word "powerlessness" is used on this site and in the

12-Steps. It obviously doesn't mean powerless in the way you think. If it did, what help would that be for anyone? Do you think the 12-Step groups are trying to get people to fall by being "self-fulfilling prophecies"? If so, they wouldn't have any success, would they?

So first we need to admit that there is obviously a misunderstanding of how this word is being used.

All they mean by "powerless" is two things, which I believe you will also agree with. Powerless means:

1) because we have ingrained our brains with these desires (and self-medicating) for so many years, the pathways are there - and may be there for life. We can close the door on these pathways, but the moment we start opening the door again (taking the first drink), we may find ourselves back at square one. So powerlessness doesn't mean we can't change, it just means we are powerless over lust. If we start lusting, we will awaken all the old desires and likely feel out-of-control.

2) And Powerless means like you said, that without Hashem we can't do it. We need his help all the time, and true tefilla, like you do, is priceless.

Keep up the good work!

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by Dov - 29 Aug 2011 23:59

Dear Zev,

Your post is beautiful, and thanks for it. Just for the record and to try to clarify, I would never say to anyone, "You are powerless." To try to convince someone of their inability to fix themselves is like trying to fit a round peg in a square hole. But admission of powerlessness to me means that I cannot do it - not that it cannot be done. / am the one who is powerless, not Hashem. And that is how I live, so far.

But if a person gives up on *ever* being saved from their problem - on *ever* being fixed - they will likely be lost (but I have seen Hashem save even many of those, too). In the depths of my addiction to lust, I must have retained a tiny kernel of hope that though I, shrinks, and medication all failed to fix me, *Hashem must* be able to do for me what I could not (and still cannot) do for myself.

I must say that for many who do not see their innate emunah in Hashem yet, the feeling of total failure and hopelessness is exactly what they report brought them to recovery, and through that - to Hashem.

At some level, it's sometimes semantics: saying "*I can't do it*" vs "*it can't be done*". As deep as we all like to think we are, not all of us are truly philosophers when faced with the cold reality of our pain. So to some people deep inside them, "*it can't happen*" is the same as "*I can't do it*" - and that's when they finally get willing to start depending on a miracle of Hashem's Chessed though they certainly do not deserve it and most likely never will.

I hope you see how I am not arguing anything, but only suggesting . I may be completely wrong. This is just what my experience teaches me, that's all.

Continued hatzlocha!!

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Re: Don't be "about to fall!" and you won't fall.
Posted by gibbor120 - 30 Aug 2011 16:47

[guardureyes wrote on 29 Aug 2011 21:19:](#)

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out-of-control.

I found this exact explanation in the sefer *esa einay* quoting the *erech apayim*. He basically says that our bechira is in not taking the first sip (my words), but once we do and are in the heat of the moment, we are (in his words) *muchrach lachato*. This sefer really has a lot of what I have seen on this site.

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