

Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by Nesher - 24 May 2012 13:08

Baruch Hashem, I am clean from P&M for over 60 days and I never felt better.

However, as soon as I felt strongly in my ability to continue abstinence from P&M, my YH is now bothering me about my lack of Shmiras Eynayim. I hear this voice inside of me: "Look at you, you think you accomplished so much in abstaining from P&M and you are such a big tzaddik, but you can't even go a day without staring at inappropriate things that cross your path daily! You have accomplished nothing!"

1. I drive to and from work on a road where people constantly go jogging and it is extremely difficult not to look. I can't get to work using a different road.

2. I see people walking around me on the street and in the office, now that the weather is getting warmer, it is getting ridiculous. I don't know how to keep myself from looking there.

3. Very often I am bored at work and I spend my time reading news with all of the pictures and ads that go along with it. I don't know how to occupy myself during that time. I have to be seen as if I am working in front of a computer.

4. I see the stupid ads everywhere and feel like in today's world you are surrounded by shmutz.

I accomplished a lot. I am winning my fight over P&M one day at a time, but with all of these stimuli constantly surrounding me, I can see myself in the future just falling and stumbling again if I don't get full 100% control over my eyes.

I need some practical advice please.

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by Machshovo Tova - 24 May 2012 14:17

Dear Nesher,

Sorry I do not really have "practical" advice. But I do feel the need to say - and all the experts here say the same - that in this game there are no half measures. Looking is lusting, and lusting - in all forms - is poison for us. I've been in this business for quite some decades, and at least I learned what does 'not' work. One cannot let his eyes stray to his heart's content and expect that P* and/or M* will not follow. Perhaps if we were convinced that our lives were endangered by looking, that might help us make a commitment not to look. Well, if looking will inevitably lead to slipping down the slope again and again, our lives are indeed very much endangered by lack of shmiras einayim.

Been there, done that - many many times - doesn't work - believe me.

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by ZemiroShabbos - 24 May 2012 16:46

Nesher,

that sounds like a tough set of circumstances.

There is a great book called Windows of the Soul (available for free download here:www.guardyoureyes.com/ebooks/item/windows-of-the-soul) it is written really well and broken into small chapters for daily study. it is highly recommended.

Another idea to remember is that a positive approach can sometimes make things easier. Instead of thinking "uh-oh, here comes another sight i would love to see but i cannot", think "here is a chance to build my kedusha, to guard my personal devotion to HKBH".

wishing you much haztlocha

ZS

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by gibbor120 - 24 May 2012 21:13

Yes, shmiras aynayim is a daily struggle. With some practice it can become more automatic. Most of us struggle with shmiras aynayim at times, but the idea is to stay as far away from the cliff as possible.

you say...

[Nesher wrote on 24 May 2012 13:08:](#)

3. Very often I am bored at work and I spend my time reading news with all of the pictures and ads that go along with it. I don't know how to occupy myself during that time. I have to be seen as if I am working in front of a computer.

This seems like an area that is within your control. Perhaps you should start working on this. I can relate to this one. Can you learn something on hebrewbooks.org or post here when you are bored? Maybe you need to try and get more work

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim
Posted by Kevin Pond - 30 May 2012 01:29

[ZemirosShabbos wrote on 24 May 2012 16:46:](#)

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zS

this eitzah of yours, Zemiros Shabbos, is tops!

a very refreshing and different attitude

i hope to adopt it right away

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by helpmeplease - 03 Jun 2012 05:35

[Nesher wrote on 24 May 2012 13:08:](#)

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I would like to comment on this part (if you don't mind). Tips are good, but I would like to talk about a deeper issue.

I am a teacher and I have kids in my class that will do anything for attention. Talking out of turn, making funny sounds, walking around, throwing things, etc. the reason for all of these things is the same: attention. I used to get upset at the kid, but when I realized what was going on, I spoke to him calmly w/o giving any negative attention and he eventually stopped.

The YH is like a little kid except his only goal is to get someone to do an aveira. He has many costumes or ways of getting to that goal. It might be depression, anger, riches, debt, piety, humility, rationalizing, emotions, etc. (if you want examples for any of those things, i would be glad to share)

One of the YH's greatest weapons is to belittle oneself! We might pass it off for humility or honesty, but in reality the YH wants to diminish everything that you have accomplished.

I used to fall for this trick, a lot, but soon I realized the pattern, that after I get depressed I feel the need to act out (I definitely didn't want to learn Torah when I was upset). So now, whenever I hear inside of me the words "You have accomplished nothing!" (or similar) I just laugh and feel happy, because I must be doing something right if the YH is trying so hard to get me to do an aveira, he must feel very threatened.

Remember Ivdu Es Hashem B'simcha isn't just a nice catch phrase rambam (who is a sefer **HALACHA**) brings it down

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The joy that one should enjoy when performing mitzvot and in loving God who commanded them is a great service. One who hold himself back from this joy deserves punishment, as it says "because...(our verse)"

And remember we must be doing something right if the YH is getting more aggressive. He will never go away, it's his job to harass us. However, if we know his tricks we won't fall for them!

Hope this helps...

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim
Posted by alexeliezer - 03 Jun 2012 14:25

I have similar situations outdoors.

It's do-able. It takes extreme commitment.

I find it most helpful to try not to look at people altogether. If I'm driving and I can tell there's a jogger on the sidewalk -- if I look to see whether it's a man or a woman, 50% of the time I'm going to be in trouble. My best hope is not to look at all. It's just a few seconds of discomfort, then it passes forever (ul'olmei olamim). It's like exercising any muscle, the more you do it, the easier and more natural it becomes.

I love Zemmy's advice above. Each person we pass can be an opportunity to achieve greatness.

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by geshertzarmeod - 03 Jun 2012 15:29

[helpmeplease wrote on 03 Jun 2012 05:35:](#)

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I like this approach!

Have to try to apply it.

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim
Posted by Machshovo Tova - 04 Jun 2012 19:01

[alexeliezer wrote on 03 Jun 2012 14:25:](#)

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Right on!

Very often I am tempted to take a second look because I am not even sure that it's something forbidden. But I tell myself it is a ???, and ????? ????????? ???????

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 04 Jun 2012 19:35

That's one of the YH's sneaky slimy tricks. "Hmmm I think that was something I ought not pay attention to... Let me look again just to make sure...". Gets me every time :-[

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Re: Struggling with Shmiras Eynayim

Posted by E-Tek - 14 Jun 2012 23:28

These days, every day I thank Hashem for the gift of poor eyesight.

I can't imagine how hard this would be if I had perfect eyesight!

8) (with glasses)

Meir

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