

Offering suggestions that have worked for me

Posted by Fenix001 - 31 Oct 2023 19:39

Shalom u'Vrachah!

Please feel free to share this with as many people and in as many places as you can!

Please note:

I may update this from time to time with more tips, so please feel free to look back every now and again.

I am by no means an expert on these things, not by a long shot, but I wanted to post these methods that have helped – and are still helping – me to stay away from looking at and "acting" upon inappropriate things in the hope that they may help others as well.

That said, here are some of the things that have helped me, and that I would recommend – in no particular order, with the exception of the first one – for others to try;

1. Say *Tikkun HaBris* every morning after *Shacharis*

In my opinion, this is probably the easiest one to start with. The reason is that all it requires is for one to say the words. You don't have to know what the words mean for it to work, all you have to do is say them.

That said, while it is always better to know what one is saying while they are *Davening*, to start with, this is not required for this particular *Tefilla*.

Try reciting *Tikunei HaZohar* # 48 (*Tikkun HaBris*) each morning after *Shacharis*. See here for a PDF of it in Hebrew: dailyzohar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Tikkun-48-2.pdf (*this is also attached to this post if you are unable to access the link, courtesy of DailyZohar.com. In addition, there is a transliterated copy - Aramaic to English - attached as well*). This takes all of 5 to 8 minutes to recite, and works wonders!

In addition to helping prevent one's thoughts from wandering to improper things, it also helps

with success in business dealings, helps to correct anything that has already been done with regards to looking at or acting upon inappropriate things, protection from negative forces (*Mazikin*), and more.

Lately, I have found that the recitation of this *Tikkun* has helped immensely with both curbing desires as well as banishing inappropriate thoughts.

One thing to note about this is that one should try very hard to concentrate on and recite it properly instead of rushing through it and reciting it mostly by memory – though it is certainly praiseworthy to concentrate on any *Tefillah* that one says instead of just rushing through it.

In my personal experience, whenever I rush through it in the mornings, it seems as though any urges that happen throughout the day are stronger and less easy to avoid – even to the point of *Chas v'Shalom* a fall.

In order to concentrate better, I suggest – as works for me – that if one is reading the Hebrew version, try to read it slowly and use a copy that has the *Nekudos* (vowels) and concentrate on making sure to glance at the *Nekudos* under each word as it is said to be certain that the words are said properly (*the PDF from DailyZohar.com that is attached to this post has Nekudos*). I have noticed that I have made several mistakes in my pronunciations of this – and other *Tefillos* as well – and that going back over the *Nekudos* has helped me to correct the pronunciations (*and sometimes I have even noticed a real difference in the way I Daven or the effects of my Davening*), and I do this from time to time to be sure I am saying all my *Tefillos* correctly.

When the correct *Nekudos* have been committed to memory, try switching to concentrating on the Hebrew letters themselves to be sure that it is being said properly (*e.g. make sure not to mix up the letters "Bais" and "Veis" or "Shin" and "Sin" and so on*).

Another thing that I notice that seems to work for me, is that since this particular *Tefilla* does not need to be said *b'Tzibbur* (*with a congregation – i.e. it can be said alone*), if one can, try to find a quiet corner of the *Shul* or some other place that is quiet so that concentrating is easier.

2. Try to avoid touching the lower area

With the exception of the shower, I find that it is helpful to not touch the lower area at all.

If one has difficulty when using the restroom while standing, they can use a piece of tissue paper instead of touching directly. The same goes for sitting down.

If one must put medication there, use disposable gloves, and wash the hands immediately after throwing the gloves away.

3. Study *Shmiras HaLoshon* daily

I have found it exceptionally helpful (*at the suggestion of 2 separate Rebbeim*) to study the laws of *Shmiras HaLoshon* on a daily basis.

I find that the easiest way to do this is to subscribe to the emails on the 2 Daily Lessons and the Q & A session from the *Chofetz Chaim* Heritage Foundation (*these also sometimes include audio versions of the text so that one can listen to them if they prefer*).

In addition to reading them, after I read each of the emails, I paraphrase what it said in my own words. This helps me to remember what I read better.

It takes about a total of 10 – 13 minutes to go through all 3 emails (*including the part where I paraphrase it in my own words*).

To sign up for these emails, go here: cchf.global/individual/email/?#signup_form

If you prefer WhatsApp (*though mostly not the same content as the emails, with some exceptions*), go here: cchf.global/individual/whatsapp/?#singup_form

If you are interested in more, there are other options – most of them free – and these can be accessed by going to the top of the page on the *Chofetz Chaim* website and going to either the "Programs" or "Daily Learning" sections.

(Please Note: I am not affiliated in any way with the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation with the exception that I also receive and study the daily emails and WhatsApp messages from them, and that these lessons have helped me in my daily life.)

4. Memorize 2 short paragraphs of *Tanya*

At the suggestion of another *Rebbe*, I have also started going over and memorizing the first 2 paragraphs of chapter 41 in the *Tanya* and going over them each day right after *Shacharis*.

I find that for me, the best way to memorize *Tanya* is to go line by line (*or sentence by sentence*) and when there are certain parts that could be understood in more ways than one, I ask a *Rebbe* or someone who knows what they mean, and then each time I read that particular sentence, I briefly go over in my mind what the person I asked said and say what they said using my own words.

It takes all of 3 minutes to read, and if you want to spend more time on it, or memorize more, all the better!

5. Stop watching things that one shouldn't - even TV shows and Movies

If one watches animated or cartoon-like shows or movies such as anime (*I have found anime to be the most problematic for me*) and/or CGI (*looks more real than drawn cartoon-type animation, but still easily recognizable as not real*), or reads books with *Meis* scenes in them or even slightly suggestive scenes – reducing the amount of time spent watching and/or reading these shows/movies/books a little at first and then gradually more and more until one does not watch/read them anymore, helps a lot as well.

In my own personal experience, I have found that the less I read these types of books and/or watch these types of shows, the fewer and less strong urges I have.

If you still feel the need to watch something, the best option is to try and find *Torah* videos to watch, but if you can't do that, try watching things like shows on nature or how things are made.

If you have access to YouTube, there are plenty of shows like that on there that are completely free.

As for how to limit one's watching of these things, I will share the way it worked for me;

- To start, I simply put a limit on the number of shows/episodes I watched per day. At first, I was watching as many as I wanted to per day, then I started by setting a limit of 5 episodes per day of things that I had already watched and 2 new ones (*the shows I watched had episodes about 23 minutes long each*). Then after a period where I felt comfortable, I limited myself to either 2 new ones **or** (*i.e. not in addition to as previously stated*) 5 that I had already seen.
- After I had gotten used to limiting how much I watched, I limited myself to watching these things only *before* I had done my daily *Torah* learning (*for me, this was the Shmiras HaLoshon Yomi that I learned each day at about 5pm*), and trying hard to not even read about or start the purchase/download of new episodes until the next day.
- When I had gotten used to this, I limited myself to watching the shows only if I had already watched some of it before I *Davened Minchah* (*I usually Daven as early as possible due to my work*). If I did not watch any before then, then I would not watch any that entire day.
- After this, I limited myself to ones that had no inappropriate language, references, or scenes in them (*i.e. inappropriate language or references in the words spoken, images of people with less than Tznius clothing on or worse, etc.*).
- Then, I limited myself to 1 new one **or** (*i.e. not in addition to*) 3 that I had already seen - that did not have anything outright inappropriate in them, and so on.
- Now I only watch one episode or so every week or two of family-friendly and almost completely *Yiddeshe Neshamah*-friendly shows - and those only when I simply need to

get my mind off of something very stressful.

If one watches more or less than this, at different times, or different types of shows, then change the numbers, times, and types accordingly.

6. Putting on *Tzitzis* and *Tefillin* every day

If one does not do this already, I have also found that putting on *Tzitzis* & *Tefillin* helps as well.

Here is a video from the *Admor HaRav Pinto shlita* on the amazing protective power of *Tzitzis*:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a1duVVzxtOBdqpB0dJQXT47Tb_XMwN8R/view?usp=sharing

In my personal experience with this, I first started putting on *Tzitzis*, and when I started putting them on, the urges noticeably diminished quite a bit. Then after a while, I also started putting on *Tefillin* – and the urges and thoughts diminished even more.

As it is known, keeping one *Mitzvah* will lead to the keeping of other *Mitzvos*.

7. Try to avoid even looking at the lower area

When using the restroom, taking a shower, changing clothes, or doing anything else that requires the lower area to be uncovered for any period of time, I find it helpful to not look at that area. For me, I close my eyes or simply look at other places (*walls, ceiling, etc.*).

If you have difficulty specifically when in the shower, a *Rebbe* once suggested to me the following;

If you are working on a project or have something at work that you are in the middle of, whenever thoughts of an inappropriate nature arise, try to divert these thoughts and instead think about the project you are working on (*for me, I am writing a few books, so I sometimes think about that, or I think about an issue that I am having with regard to a specific project I am working on at that time*).

I use this suggestion even when I am simply in the shower or wherever these thoughts occur most often for me and don't have any inappropriate thoughts as a way to help myself get used to thinking these things in place of those thoughts (*change this to the place where these thoughts and urges happen most for you*). That way, it has become easier for me to avoid thinking about things I shouldn't altogether.

If doing that does not help, then try postponing acting on the urge until you have completed shampooing your hair. If you succeed there, try postponing acting on the urge until you have finished washing your upper body. Keep trying to postpone the urge as long as you can, and it should gradually diminish.

If you have difficulty in a different place than the shower, break down the steps of what you do in whichever place you have difficulty and try postponing the urge after each of these steps.

The same applies when having these thoughts and urges outside of the bathroom (*or wherever you are having them*). Try as hard as you can to put them off - even for a few minutes to start with, and keep trying to put them off for as long as you can. Gradually, you will begin to notice that you are able to avoid these things more and you will also find that you are able to put them off for longer and longer periods of time.

If you need more help to begin with (*for example, a reason to stop*), see suggestion number 14 in this post.

A slight note:

With specific regard to having difficulty in the shower, if possible (*i.e. if you can keep your balance while washing yourself*), try to keep your eyes closed as this may help prevent you from seeing that area. If absolutely necessary, try opening your eyes to tiny slits - just enough to see what you need (*e.g. to find the soap, get a towel, etc.*). If you can, even keeping your eyes closed until you have gotten both the upper *and* lower parts of the body covered seems to work the best (*i.e. after getting both shirt and pants on*).

8. Say the full *Krias Shemah* every night

Recite the full *Krias Shema al HaMitah* each night and do a *Cheshbon HaNefesh* (*this is done by thinking about what Aveiros one has committed each day and making oneself a list of what one has done and what needs to be done to rectify it, either between man and Hashem e.g. one looked at something they shouldn't, thought something they shouldn't, or between man and his fellow - e.g. one spoke angrily to a family member and should ask their forgiveness for speaking that way and hurting them, taking something without permission, etc.*). This helps to complete the rectification process of things that have already been done and helps one to realize and remember to fix things they have not fixed yet.

Another thing with regard to *Krias Shemah al HaMitah*, is that one should try to concentrate on the words as much as they are able to.

I am no *Posek*, *Rav*, or *Rabbi* at all and not qualified to give *Halachic* ruling or advice, but I think if one finds they have difficulty concentrating on the whole *Shemah*, then to start, one should try to concentrate from the part where they cover their eyes up until the end of the first paragraph.

[p]For more information on

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